From the holdings of the Department of Special Collections , Princeton University Library, Princeton, NJ

These documents are either in the public domain, or can only be used for educational and research purposes (Fair use) as per U.S. Copyright law (text below). By accessing this file, all users agree that their use falls in the public domain or within fair use as defined by the copyrightlaw. We do not charge any permission or usage fees for the publication of images of material inour collections, including those provided by Princeton University Library, via our website, catalog, or directly from staff.For more information regarding copyright, credit, and citation please review the information onthe Copyright, Credit and Citation Guidelines page of our website.
https://library.princeton.edu/special-collections/policies/copyright-credit-and-citation-guidelines. If you have any questions, including how to order higher-quality images from the collection, contact Special Collections Public Services via our Ask Us! Form. https://library.princeton.edu/special-collections/ask-us

---

Doctoral Dissertations, 2011-2026 East Asian Studies

2022

Conciliators and Fixed Points: Dispute Resolution in Fifteenth Century Japan

Gilbert, Megan Elizabeth

Princeton, NJ : Princeton University

---

http://arks.princeton.edu/ark:/88435/dsp01x059cb55w

U.S. Copyright law: The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, §108, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specified conditions is that the photocopy or reproduction is not to be used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research. If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of fair use that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve a violation of copyright law. https://www.copyright.gov/title17/title17.pdf

CONCILIATORS AND FIXED POINTS:
DISPUTE RESOLUTION IN FIFTEENTH CENTURY JAPAN

Megan E. Gilbert

A DISSERTATION

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY
OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

RECOMMENDED FOR ACCEPTANCE BY
THE DEPARTMENT OF
EAST ASIAN STUDIES

Adviser: Thomas Conlan

September 2022

Copyright by Megan E. Gilbert, 2022, All Rights Reserved

Abstract

This dissertation examines the role of intermediaries and ritual in reconciling conflicting interests in fifteenth century Japan. The first half of the century was a moment of comparative peace but also desperate improvisation. Administrative and judicial institutions survived but overlapped and were mutable, bending to the erratic demands of warlords. The dissertation argues that oaths and ceremonies provided certainty where institutions no longer could, structuring communities to enable conflict resolution at relatively predictable intervals. Unofficial intermediaries, here called conciliators, stepped in for devalued official ones, using their prestige to intercede with authority figures and buffer disputes or reinforce settlements. These pragmatic expedients fueled the personalization of power, revealing the process by which individuals absorbed the power of institutions.

Central Japan in the fifteenth century produced an unusual preponderance of materials that reveal the negotiations underlying official action. These include diary-chronicles (*kanbun nikki*), many of them by professional intermediaries and others by people who relied on their aid; the lists, drafts, social poetry, and other semi-ephemeral documents on the reverse sides of the paper used to produce the diary-chronicles (*shihai monjo*); and the meeting records of councils that governed a large and wealthy temple. These, supplemented by sources more focused on final outcomes, are analyzed through two primary lenses: ritual and communication via intermediaries. Both intermediaries and ritual, individually and in concert, bridged the gaps between institutional structures and what the people inhabiting them could achieve and accept. By examining the ways that these strategies served communities' needs while widening the very gaps they bridged, the dissertation illuminates a change often dismissed as mere decline: the loss of interconnected multi-regional institutions—even as inter-regional trade and communication expanded—in favor of the increased authority of individuals over their immediate communities.

Table of Contents

Abstract....3

Acknowledgments....6

Introduction....8

Communication and Frantic Experimentation....9

Ritual as Spackle....13

Ceremony Between Individual and Institution....16

Sources....19

Overview....22

Word Choices....24

Chapter 1. Muromachi Intermediated Governance and Its Deficiencies....26

Imperial Court: An Enduring Frame....26

The Great Temple-Shrine Complexes....32

The Shogunate: From Constrained Police Power to Wide-Ranging Government....34

The Muromachi Imperial Court: The Northern Emperors....40

The Fusion: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu....41

The Fifteenth Century: Overlapping but Separate Frameworks....44

Structure of the Fifteenth-Century Shogunate....48

Shogunate and Shugo....49

Shogunate and Bureaucracy....52

Court-Shogunate Liaison (Buke tensō)....54

Kantō Messenger (Kantō shisetsu or Tōshi)....59

Commissioners (Bugyō)....61

Chapter 2. Conciliators: Unofficial Intermediaries Recognized by All in Fifteenth-Century Japan....69

What Made a Conciliator?....71

Cases of Conciliators....75

Manzei: The Shogun and the Warrior Lords....75

Jōsō: The Shogun and the Court....78

Tamuke Tsuneyoshi: Prince Sadafusa and the Estate....82

Lady Takahashi: The Shogun and the Capital's Ladies....86

Akamatsu Mitsumasa: The Shogun and Everyone?....91

Large-Scale Negotiations....96

Negotiating Property: Conciliators in Harmony.....*96*
Negotiating Culpability: Conciliators in Conflict.....*101*
Conciliator as Forum.....*104*
The Value of Conciliators.....*108*

Chapter 3. Written Oaths as Evidence to Act.....**112**
Written Oaths and Community.....114
The Public Experience of the Oath.....119
Written Oaths and Status Distinctions.....125
Subject of Investigation: Adultery.....128
The Finality of Oaths.....134
Conclusion.....137

Chapter 4. Rituals as Moments of Decision.....**140**
Conflict Concentrated Before the Release of Living Beings (Hōjō-e).....145
Ceremonies Publicizing Status.....156
Controlling Yearly Observances.....161
Rituals on Fushimi Estate.....163
Yearly Festivals.....*166*
Tanabata.....*169*
Linked Verse Gatherings.....*170*
Sacred Lotteries and Public Scrutiny.....174

Epilogue.....**179**
Background.....180
The Akamatsu Family.....*180*
Attempted Consensus: The Kakitsu Era Name.....*182*
The Aftermath.....185
Punishing the Akamatsu.....*185*
Tokusei Ikki.....*188*
In Closing: The Long-Term.....192

Bibliography.....**195**
Primary Sources.....195
Organized by author for diary-chronicles, and by title for other compilations.....*195*
In Translation.....*197*
Secondary Sources.....199

Acknowledgments

Any dissertation takes a village, and many people have gone above and beyond in their support as I wrote this one. First, I thank my advisor, Thomas Conlan, whose mentorship and support made it possible. His wholehearted engagement with my research questions and discoveries spurred me refine them, and his seminars and advice have given me the tools to find more answers than I would have imagined. My last semester, co-teaching a seminar with him, was an education in how to allow my scholarship to enrich my teaching and vice-versa. Jacqueline Stone has offered thoughtful questions and insight throughout the dissertation, cutting through tangles of details to make me think about the core of what I am saying. Federico Marcon has found time for countless conversations both intellectual and practical, and helped me wrestle with the challenges of making the distant past intelligible to a modern audience without erasing its fundamental differences. Brian Steininger helped me make my first deep dive into Muromachi *nikki*, and I have regularly returned to what I learned from him while writing. I am very grateful to them all.

Ebara Masaharu hosted me at the Historiographical Institute in Tokyo for a critical year of research, and I thank him very much for giving guidance, introducing me to graduate students and other young scholars, and welcoming my participation in his zemi. I am deeply indebted to Horikawa Yasufumi for his help every time I ventured into a new type of source, first in Japan and later in the U.S. His enthusiasm and patience as I chased themes through unexpected collections bolstered me, and his expertise is inspiring. Kikuchi Hiroki helped point me in a productive direction when I arrived in Japan, and remained a supportive presence throughout. Students in Ebara-sensei's *Kanmon nikki* zemi at Chuo University, members of the Muromachi Kenkyukai, and my fellow visiting researchers at the Historiographical Institute enriched my time and work in Tokyo. Atsuta Jun, Jillian Barndt, Szymon Czerkawski, and Nagahara Aya left particularly outsized marks. Wakabayashi Masahiro of the Kyoto Institute, Library and Archives, and Nishiyama Tsuyoshi of The Museum of Kyoto generously gave their time and suggestions concerning Fushimi and the archives of Kyoto.

I am grateful to the Fulbright U.S. Student Program for funding my year of research at the Institute, and to the staff of the Japan-U.S. Educational Commission for their support. The East

Asian Studies Program at Princeton has funded language study abroad, pre-dissertation research, and dissertation writing at home, for which they have my deepest gratitude. I also could not have finished amid a global pandemic without the assistance of the librarians at Princeton and elsewhere, particularly Setsuko Noguchi. The Center for the Study of Religion (now Culture, Society, Religion) at Princeton in its Religion and Culture workshop provided dedicated workspace, funding, and a seminar of like-minded scholars to think through the role of religion in society. The third and fourth chapters bear their particular influence.

The first threads of this research were presented at the 2016 Japan Studies Graduate Student Conference at UCLA, where the engagement of fellow participants shaped it going forward. Portions of the first and second chapters were presented at the 2021 annual meeting of the Association for Asian Studies and the Princeton East Asian Studies Department colloquium. The third was presented at a comparative workshop on oaths in Vienna organized by Philippe Buc. I am grateful to all my fellow panelists and audience members for their questions and comments, which spurred my thinking, and for all I learned from their presentations in turn. My undergraduate advisor, Edward Kamens, introduced me to the academic study of premodern Japan, and his training has been a foundation to me throughout.

I have learned much from my fellow students of medieval Japanese history at Princeton, David Romney and Nate Ledbetter, whose work has challenged my assumptions and exposed me to exciting new areas of research. I have been equally fortunate in the camaraderie of my cohort, and in the mentorship of my seniors at Princeton. Claire Cooper and Takashi Miura have given advice both scholarly and practical. Sooji Han, Liza Mankovskaya, Mira Nencheva, Paula Perez-Rodriguez, Alyssa Wang, and Xue Zhang kept me thinking and writing through the isolation of pandemic. Uenishi Junko and her family have given me a home away from home whenever I am in Japan. Other friends and colleagues alongside whom I learned in classrooms, workshops, and library research rooms, and from whom I received advice are too numerous to name individually, but I can see their stamp in my work. Finally, I would like to thank my mother, from whom I learned to write. If this dissertation is readable to any but the most devoted specialist, I owe it first to her.

Introduction

One day late in the summer of Eikyō 2 [1430], shogun Ashikaga Yoshinori attended a celebration of the deity of war and wealth at a small temple in the hills northeast of Kyoto. Yoshinori was disgruntled at one such lord, who had two weeks earlier marred Yoshinori's celebration of his accession to head of government by refusing at the last minute to participate in a procession. Yoshinori had been arguing since the marred procession with his other lords, many of whom were at the temple celebration, that the recalcitrate family should be subject to severe sanction. He wanted a plan put together that day for punishment.

One adviser not at the event was Manzei, head of the powerful temple of Daigoji. Ensconced in his Kyoto residence, Manzei coordinated communication among the shogun and two well-connected warrior lords: Hatakeyama Mitsuie and Yamana Tokihiro. All three—shogun, Hatakeyama, and Yamana—had been discussing the matter via messengers for weeks: first the family's position in the procession and later their punishment. All three were also at the temple together; Hatakeyama Mitsuie had even been responsible for the shogun's travel arrangements. Yet they did not confer at the temple or on the way in or out. Instead, all three sent messages to and received them from Manzei, who mediated the discussion. The value of Manzei as intermediary overrode the shogun's desire for a speedy resolution or any benefit the warrior lords might have seen in making a private appeal.[1]

The image is striking: three men in the exact same place arguing through a monk well over a mile away. It was not, however, unusual: Manzei frequently functioned as the fulcrum of a

1 Manzei, *Mansai jugō nikki* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928-30), 2:166 (Eikyō 2 [1430].08.07).

discussion between the shogun and one or more of his warrior lords. He was an extraordinarily effective negotiator, but he was not alone.

Communication and Frantic Experimentation

Communication has been a dilemma throughout Japanese history. Part of the challenge was logistical, common to every pre-electronic culture: messengers clutter the pages of even the earliest records, carrying word from one location to another. Part was structural, especially visible in courtly cultures across East Asia: ceremony buttressed power but also circumscribed the lives of individuals of high status. Intermediaries thus carried word across the status gulf between rulers and their subjects or between the separate power bases of an imperial minister and the head of a major temple. Yet another part was social, a perennial wariness of setting important or controversial messages to paper that led instead to letters authorizing the messenger to convey the core information.

All of these needs manifested during the Muromachi era (1336-1573). People of high standing rarely spoke directly to each other and often relied instead on intermediaries. To take an obvious example: a face-to-face meeting between the shogun and the emperor was a major state occasion.[2] Even for those of comparatively lower stature, personal meetings were not common, and they were even less so between people of different households. When someone of lower visited someone of higher status—if, for example, the manager of a household's stables met with the owner of an estate—a messenger carried words between the two, who might sit in the same room or in adjoining rooms. Though the shogun required most of his powerful warrior lords to live within the capital of Kyoto after the end of a civil war that lasted for over half the fourteenth

2 Matthew Stavros and Norika Kurioka, "Imperial Progress to the Muromachi Palace, 1381: A Study and Annotated Translation of Sakayuku Hana," *Japan Review*, no. 28 (2015): 3–46.

century, those men still ruled distant provinces and estates through their deputies. They also left the capital themselves for military campaigns, creating a voracious demand for messengers.

Yet the purpose of intermediaries went beyond such physical and hierarchical necessities. Families throughout Japanese history based their power and prestige upon their roles as intermediaries. An eighth-century ancestor of the Wake family faithfully reported a controversial oracle about who should become the next emperor. The family then relied on that prestige to cling for generations to the post of envoys from the capital to distant Usa Hachiman shrine.[3] The Saionji courtier family of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries derived influence from being official messengers who dominated communication between the imperial court in Kyoto and the warrior government in Kamakura.[4]

When the Muromachi shogunate (1338-1573) succeeded Kamakura (1185-1333), the convergence of the imperial court and the Ashikaga shogunate in the capital—Kyoto—resulted in two overlapping authorities in virtually the same location; they needed intermediaries to resolve jurisdictional conflicts and to keep a set of leaders required to stay in the capital connected to their broader organizations across the archipelago. As peace took hold and rebellion had not yet coalesced under the later rule of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408) and his sons Yoshimochi (1386-1428), and Yoshinori (1394-1441), institutional intermediaries proliferated. Ashikaga leaders interfaced with the fractious branch of their own family governing the East through official Kantō Messengers and accepted select courtiers as official liaisons (*buke tensō*)

3 The Wake family genealogy is available in Hanawa Hokinoichi, ed., *Zoku gunsho ruijū* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1923): 7.1 (Keizubu):315–345.

4 Rieko Kamei-Dyche, “Tools of Authority: The Saionji Family and Courtier Society in Early Medieval Japan” (Los Angeles, University of Southern California, 2013): 64-69, 106-109, 113. While scholars disagree about how heavily the Saionji depended upon their role as intermediaries to consolidate family influence, all agree that it contributed to their success.

between imperial court and shogunate. They assigned administrative commissioners (*bugyō*) to interface with parties in property disputes, then encouraged commissioners to specialize in affairs connected to specific temples or families. Both liaisons and commissioners held significant rank to begin with, but their positions as channels—between imperial court and shogunate or between major institutions and shogunate—won them stature greater than their official court ranks.[5]

Yet these official intermediaries were not enough to patch together the disparate pieces of different institutions. Powerful or ambitious people reached for unofficial intermediaries, recognizable to all, to further smooth out communication. Unlike, however, a liaison between imperial court and shogunate, unofficial intermediaries did not link together institutions. They linked together people, and even as they smoothed out the functioning of Muromachi governance, reducing potentially destructive conflicts, they increased the extent to which power and influence rested in *individuals*, rather than the positions they held.

Fine-grained institutional history of the Muromachi era is an impossibly moving target. Most histories of the central government organize themselves along the lines of successive Ashikaga rulers, for good reason.[6] The institutional position from which each Ashikaga exercised his powers changed with each generation, and sometimes even within a single reign. Was he a shogun, head of one disproportionately powerful sub-bureaucracy among the many private bureaus within the imperial court, with access to military power and responsibility for public

5 Sakurai Eiji, *Muromachibito no seishin* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2001): 67, 134. Chapter One of my dissertation analyzes the multi-center format of Muromachi government and the concomitant necessity for and development of intermediaries in significantly greater detail.

6 See, for example, Kenneth Grossberg, *Japan's Renaissance: The Politics of the Muromachi Bakufu*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2001), whose self-consciously institutional description of Muromachi governance depends upon a chronological first third, walking the reader through each Ashikaga shogun from Takauji to Yoshimasa.

affairs?[7] Was he the head of a network of family obligations, with most of the powerful families of the era owing allegiance to him as a senior figure in the clan?[8] Was he a retired sovereign, operating in the mode of a former emperor, whose open influence controlled the imperial court and all its subordinate institutions?[9] The answer is yes, on a sliding scale of different proportions at different times.

Yet the well-developed, sophisticated structures that have been the subject of much Japanese institutional history did not vanish. Some were subsumed under new management; others lost authority, and their leadership posts became nominal positions. Still other institutions kept their names but took up different responsibilities. The way that historical actors, trying to solve immediate problems, repurposed their institutions was critical to the development of personalized power in medieval Japan.

The classic study of medieval personalized power—power wielded through a network of personal obligations and social ties, that is still also abstracted and theorized as going beyond the individual human being—is a case study of an English idea: *The King's Two Bodies*. Kantorowicz traces backward from an early modern English vision—held by such varied luminaries as playwright William Shakespeare and jurist William Blackstone—of a concept that had come down to them through their own history, seeking its philosophical development

---

7 Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers, and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000); Ebara Masaharu, *Muromachi bakufu to chihō no shakai*, Nihon chūsei shi 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016).

8 Ogawa Makoto, *Ashikaga ichimon shugo hattenshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980); Okano Tomohiko, *Genji chōja: Buke seiken no keifu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2018).

9 Imatani Akira, *Muromachi no ōken: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu no ōken sandatsu keikaku* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1990); Thomas Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol: An Age of Ritual Determinism in Fourteenth Century Japan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Ogawa Takeo, *Ashikaga Yoshimitsu: Kōbu ni kunrin shita Muromachi shōgun* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2012); Momosaki Yūichirō, *Muromachi no hasha Ashikaga Yoshimitsu: Chōtei to bakufu wa ika ni tōitsu sareta ka* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2020).

through the Middle Ages in England and thereby illuminating the ways in which it mediated between finite individuals living within society and an enduring social unit with a past and future that stretched beyond mayfly human lives.[10]

Documentation in Japan of the changing exercise of power from an era of well-constructed and highly valued institutions (thirteenth-century Kamakura) to one of deep dependence upon personal experience and connections (fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Muromachi) is excellent. As further detailed in the "Sources" section below, semi-private records of diary-chronicles and council discussions, written by individuals or small groups, have a secure place in the Japanese historical record, and they proliferated during the Muromachi era. It is thus possible to trace the developments forward: to see the way that people's efforts to make institutions work for them collectively reshaped the institutions into another facet of personal power, unique to each individual's social ties and life experiences.

Ritual as Spackle

Scholars have agreed for over a century that ritual and community are deeply entangled. The foundational theorists usually considered ritual a manifestation or instantiation of community, a performance that mirrors the community and its values and thereby enhances its members' social ties and emotional connections.[11] The step from reinforcement and enhancement to influence and impact is a short one, and most scholarship since the spread of postmodernism has emphasized the ability of ritual to *shape* a community in various ways. One bucket of ways is discursive, a vision of ritual as the symbolic language through which to carry out community

10 Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, Princeton Classics Edition (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

11 Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. Joseph Ward Swain, 5th ed. (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd, 1964). (First translated edition 1915; original 1912.)

discussions or negotiate a person's position in the world.[12] Another bucket is instrumental, in which ritual establishes a reality not through expression or interpretation, but as its own action: prototypically, saying "I do" to create a marriage.[13] A third bucket is performative, conceiving ritual as a lived act, in which the physical and sensory experience shapes the participants, and the separation from ordinary reality gives their actions an elevated impact.[14]

Performance theory has been particularly influential in Muromachi Japanese history, because the era saw the development of performing arts with a distinct ritual influence that are still valued today. The most famous is *nō* drama, a classical form of theater recognized both within Japan and internationally as important cultural heritage. While the exact development of *nō* is hotly debated, most agree that it includes contributions from *dengaku*, *kagura*, and *sarugaku*, performed within shrines and during major ceremonies or festivals.[15] The most famous Muromachi playwright and theorist of *nō*, Zeami, emphasized its sacred heritage.[16] There were also many parallels between transmission of ritual knowledge and of knowledge of the performing arts: families of musicians and actors kept secret transmissions, in much the same

12 Clifford Geertz, "Ritual and Social Change: A Javanese Example," in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 155–86.

13 Stanley J. Tambiah, "Form and Meaning of Magical Acts: A Point of View," *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7, no. 3 (December 1, 2017): 451–73; S. J. Tambiah, "The Magical Power of Words," *Man* 3, no. 2 (1968): 175–208.

14 Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004).

15 Ashton Lazarus, "Folk Performance as Transgression: The Great Dengaku of 1096," *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 44, no. 1 (2018): 1–23; Noel J. Pinnington, "The Early History of the Noh Play: Literacy, Authorship, and Scriptedness," *Monumenta Nipponica* 68, no. 2 (2013): 163–206; Karen Brazell, *Traditional Japanese Theater: An Anthology of Plays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 3-43.

16 Zeami Motokiyo, *On the Art of the No Drama: The Major Treatises of Zeami*, trans. J. Thomas Rimer and Masakazu Yamazaki (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

way as lineages of esoteric monks.[17] Thus, the study of Muromachi performing arts requires the study of ritual, and the study of ritual reciprocally draws from performance.

The very example of marriage shows how blurry the lines between these are. Lawsuits were literally fought in medieval Japan over the question of whether two people were married.[18] Certain acts—like a man visiting a woman three nights in a row—could create a marriage, even if one or both participants would prefer they did not.[19] Yet without expressing it to the wider community, they might not. The visitation remained significant, even as the shape of marriage changed, and families improvised ways to publicize the joining that would still incorporate the critical act of "visiting."[20] Each marriage ritual can be interpreted as a negotiation between the two families, as an act that changed the social identity of the participants, and as a performance of the relationship that would shape the marriage to come. This dissertation does not strictly use a single framework. Theories of performance and practice have had the greatest impact upon my interpretations, but I borrow from the discursive approach when examining rituals as sites for negotiation. I also borrow from the instrumental approach to understand the power of rituals to

17 Mark Teeuwen, "Knowing vs. Owning a Secret: Secrecy in Medieval Japan, as Seen through the *Sokui Kanjō* Enthronement Unction," *and* Susan Blakeley Klein, "Esotericism in Noh Commentaries and Plays: Konparu Zenchiku's *Meisuku Shū* and *Kakitsubata*," in *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernhard Scheid and Mark Teeuwen (New York: Routledge, 2006), 172–203, 229–254.

18 Jeffrey P. Mass, *The Development of Kamakura Rule, 1180-1250: A History with Documents* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979), 140-43, 272-73. By a strict definition, the lack of precise rules could mean that medieval Japanese marriage was not ritualized, and, indeed, as the act of marriage became more consequential, the rules of a marriage ritual became more well-defined. Nevertheless, when public and accepted by the family, the three visits created a marriage, which certainly makes it ritual by a broader definition.

19 See the example of Princess Ochiba in Chapter 39 (Yugiri: Evening Mist) of Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler, Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition (New York: Penguin, 2006).

20 H. Mack Horton, "Portrait of a Medieval Japanese Marriage: The Domestic Life of Sanjōnishi Sanetaka and His Wife," *Japanese Language and Literature* 37, no. 2 (2003): 130–54; Hitomi Tonomura, "Re-Envisioning Women in the Post-Kamakura Age," in *The Origins of Japan's Medieval World: Courtiers, Clerics, Warriors, and Peasants in the Fourteenth Century*, ed. Jeffrey P. Mass (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 138–169.

persuade at the level of action—cause people to act a certain way—without necessarily persuading at the level of communication—making people believe what the ritual is acting out.

Ceremony Between Individual and Institution

The performance of ceremonies, particularly large and elaborate ones, binds together the personal and the institutional. Institutions transmit the words and actions of the ceremony: they connect those who know the proper conduct and those who wish to learn it, preserve ritual tools across generations, and maintain libraries of both writings that describe and writings that authenticate the performance. They also collect the resources necessary to perform a major ceremony, acting as a familiar nexus for donors, suppliers, and participants, many of whom will never meet. Yet *people* perform the ceremonies: an enthronement ceremony emphasizes the new ruler as an individual as much as it does the lineage or government.[21]

While enthronements are some of the clearest and most-studied examples of ceremonies, ambitious people with influence and determination could bend many other ceremonies into reenactments and reinforcements of their power. Studies of Fujiwara Michinaga (966-1028), Emperor Shirakawa (1053-1129), and Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408), among others, have emphasized their successful use of enormous ceremonies to enhance their power and control.[22] A crucial part of this success was ensuring the right people attended and participated. The impact

21 Catherine Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 148-56. For convenience, I use "ceremony" to indicate a pre-planned, choreographed event that involved multiple people, while "ritual" includes ceremony but is also broader, encompassing spontaneous or solitary activities as well. I try to use "rite" for something in between: the pre-planning of ceremony but also smaller, even solitary performance.

22 Asuka Sango, *The Halo of Golden Light: Imperial Authority and Buddhist Ritual in Heian Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2015); Thomas Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol: An Age of Ritual Determinism in Fourteenth Century Japan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Helen Craig McCullough, *Ōkagami, the Great Mirror: Fujiwara Michinaga (966-1027) and His Times*, 2nd ed., (Michigan Classics in Japanese Studies, No.4) (Orig. Pub. 1980.) (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1991), 3-62, 184-240.

was largely in aggregate: in Yoshinori's case, lacking one warrior lord was merely unfortunate, where lacking all of them would be disastrous. Yet each attendee's choice was individual, and reinscribed the relationship between sponsor or presider and attendee. Even a less ambitious presider still performed the rite as an individual. Most records of Muromachi ceremonies, if they include any detail, include who (at least among those with rank) played what role.

Connection between individuals through ceremony is not merely a modern heuristic. Many Buddhist rites sought to create a karmic connection (*kechien*) among those contributing to them, as well as to the deity being honored.[23] Ideally, the collective merit of the entire group supported each person's efforts to achieve enlightenment or rebirth in Amida's Pure Land. Those who succeeded might also carry others with them. In practice, the connection was social as well: small groups familiar with each other would purchase and dedicate a statue of a buddha together, or a ruler's agent would encourage an entire village to contribute to the ruler's project.[24] This is not to say that the concepts of *kechien* communities and ritual communities are identical. Karmic connections can be created outside ritual—through handling objects or reading a book.[25] By contrast, ritual communities are often ephemeral or built through a ceremony directed to a deity whose attention one prefers to avert, a direct contrast to the linchpin of human karmic connections being a beneficent deity, usually a buddha or bodhisattva dedicated to saving everyone from the eternal cycle of rebirth. The parallel, however, does mean that participants in

23 Chieko Nakano, "'Kechien' as Religious Praxis in Medieval Japan: Picture Scrolls as the Means and Sites of Salvation" (The University of Arizona, 2009), 57-67.

24 Janet R. Goodwin, "The Buddhist Monarch: Go-Shirakawa and the Rebuilding of Tōdai-Ji," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 17, no. 2/3 (June 1990): 219–42.

25 Jacqueline I. Stone, *Right Thoughts at the Last Moment: Buddhism and Deathbed Practices in Early Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016), 71, 193-94.

rituals would be familiar with the idea of being connected thereby, even to people with whom they might otherwise have nothing in common.[26]

Even on a smaller scale, ritualized interactions can deny transgression, to paraphrase Pierre Bourdieu, bringing actions that would otherwise be violations of the social order within it.[27] Rituals and ceremonies helped to smooth out the rapid social reconfigurations of fifteenth century Japan. Decentralization, acceleration of trade, and the hollowing of government institutions led to dramatic changes in who held wealth and power, creating the usual social mismatch between those with historical prestige, financial influence, and access to legitimate violence that comes with such upheaval.[28] Small-scale rituals, both annual events and more flexibly scheduled gatherings, channeled interactions between groups who were having to relate in new ways. The obligation of most participants in a Tanabata celebration to bring flowers, preferably in a fine vase, smoothed out the social awkwardness of a moneylender providing most of the fine art for an imperial prince's party to enjoy. The formality of a linked verse gathering gave space for an attendant monk to be more erudite than a courtier poet.

Both the large-scale ceremonies and these smaller rituals recreated order by giving the individuals new categories that re-framed the relationships. The wealthy townsman was a head of household participating in a Tanabata gathering, not a prince's moneylender who held imperial and aristocratic treasures in pawn. The ritual did not rewrite the social categories, which remained relevant in other parts of life, but it reconfigured them long enough to let individuals

---

26 Lori Meeks, *Hokkeji and the Reemergence of Female Monastic Orders in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010), 255-56.

27 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990), 233-50.

28 Sakawa Yukiko, *Muromachi sengokuki no dosō to sakaya* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 2020); Ebara Masaharu, *Muromachi bakufu to chihō no shakai*, Nihon chūsei sh 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016); Sakurai, *Muromachibito no seishin* (2001).

form relationships. Such relationships helped ensure a cohesive society, but they did so as ties between individuals or immediate families, which further advanced the personalization of power.

Sources

The peculiar sources of the fifteenth century, as much as the unsettled political circumstances, make it a particularly rich moment for studying the details of communication. The reconfiguration under the Ashikaga shoguns of who qualified as an authority to create records resulted in a spectacular expansion of both writers of and subjects discussed in diary-chronicles. These long records are often called courtier diaries (*kuge nikki*), written in *kanbun*, the classical Chinese that the imperial court, powerful households, and monasteries used as the language of official business.[29] Diary-chronicles began to proliferate in the classical Heian era in part to compensate for the decline in official chronicles in the classical Chinese format. They were daily records, written as the days happened rather than in retrospect, and usually underwent minimal editing once committed to paper. Edited sections are also identifiable, since they were rewritten in clean copy, while most first-run diary-chronicles include lines written in variable print size to fit within a day's entry.

While many diary-chronicles were recopied and excerpted in formats easier to reference for ceremonial, political, and religious precedents, most of those from the fifteenth century survive in original holographs.[30] Where chroniclers in the Heian (794-1185) and Kamakura

29 The English term "diary" is misleading: these were records written by individuals about their own observations or notable events heard secondhand, not official chronicles, but they were meant as semi-public records, to buttress the authority of oneself and one's heirs, not as tools for personal reflection. I thus use diary-chronicle to capture the blend of personal and public. For an overview of diary-chronicles and their uses, see Matsuzono Hitoshi, *Nikki no ie: Chūsei kokka no kiroku soshiki* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1997).

30 Prince Sadafusa's *Kanmon nikki*, for example, is in his own hand. The first several years, up to the end of Ōei 32, were rewritten cleanly, identifiable by the documents on the reverse side being from later years, and by differences in Sadafusa's own calligraphy. The later years are messier, with (Sadafusa's own) notes and interpolations, with the documents on the reverse side coming from the

(1185-1333) eras were aristocrats who served in the imperial court, Muromachi writers included high-ranking priests and shogunal officials, as well.[31] More importantly, the topics covered in diary-chronicles expanded. Court ceremonies and religious practices were still central, and chroniclers still described maneuvering for power and prestige in court events, but now oaths sworn at a village shrine, the demands of monks and priests on strike at a major temple, or the exact methods by which the shogun cajoled his recalcitrant warriors were acceptable topics to document in a diary-chronicle. Since power—be it literacy, ritual performance, taxes and rents, or weapons—had expanded beyond the imperial court, the willingness of Muromachi chroniclers to document actions outside the court in the same language as those within it is invaluable to a historian trying to understand how stakeholders communicated in a dispute.

The four longest, most complete and detailed diary-chronicles of the early fifteenth century were written by four very different men: Sadafusa, a disinherited imperial prince living on the Fushimi estate outside Kyoto; Manzei, the head of the major temple Daigoji and adoptive brother of two shoguns; Madenokōji Tokifusa, an aristocrat who served as official messenger between the imperial court and shogunate before becoming a first rank minister; and Nakayama Sadachika, another aristocrat who served as an imperial secretary (*kurōdo*) and poet. The latter two hewed closer to the mold of the aristocrat-chronicler, but Sadafusa and Manzei broke the mold decisively.

---

year or so prior to the entries. See Yokoi Kiyoshi, *Muromachi jidai no ichi kōzoku no shōgai: "Kanmon nikki" no sekai* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2002), 281-82 for details.

31 One important decline in the sources is the disappearance of the women's memoirs and travelogues, written in classical Japanese, that have so enriched the picture of Heian and Kamakura Japan. The last of the great medieval women's memoirs, *Takemukigaki*, was by Hino Nako, who died in 1358. (See Hino Nako, *From the Bamboo-View Pavilion: Takemuki-Ga-Ki*, trans. Royall Tyler (Columbia, SC: Blue-Tongue Books, 2016).) I do not know of any women's diaries, memoirs, or other long-form nonfiction writing in the fifteenth century.

Sadafusa's choice to keep a private chronicle at all was a political act: he was living outside the imperial court, on an estate a few hours' travel from the capital, and his grandfather had renounced all rights to the throne during the recent civil war. Emperors and courtiers kept chronicles. Sadafusa was neither, but he nursed an ultimately successful ambition to see his son raised to the imperial throne. His subjects were daring: he documented clashes between villagers of his estate and neighboring ones, as well as the pursuit, mysterious acquittal, and later execution (in a different jurisdiction and for other crimes) of an accused thief, along with the activities of his own household and goings-on within the capital.[32] Manzei's private chronicle, too, was unorthodox. He began writing in the relatively conventional role of a head monk documenting ceremonies at his temple, but his entries swiftly expanded beyond the temple to encompass some of the most important political decision-making within Kyoto. He served as intermediary for much of it. Manzei wrote, for example, about trying and failing to intercede when shogun Ashikaga Yoshimochi forced his retainer Akamatsu Mochisada to commit seppuku while Mochisada frantically attempted to placate him, and he documented the negotiations between Ashikaga Yoshinori and his warrior lords when Yoshinori tried to address unrest in the east, among other topics.[33]

Beyond diary-chronicles, the good record-keeping of the wealthy and powerful temple of Tōji, combined with a council-based ruling structure, resulted in a extensive internal documentation. The *Tōji nijūikku kusōkata hyōjō hikitsuke [Enquiries of the Twenty-One Person Council of Tōji Central Monks]* is essentially the minutes of an administrative council as it addressed problems, including tax appeals, thefts, or zoning for businesses near the temple. The

32 Go-Sukōin, *Kanmon nikki*, 7 vols., Zushoryō sōkan (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 2002–2014), 2:53 (Ōei 27 [1420].06.19-20) and 3:291 (Eikyō 3 [1431].06.04-05).

33 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:459 (Ōei 34 [1427].11.12) and 2:255 (Eikyō 3 [1431].06.12).

discussions recorded were semi-public, including both open hearings and closed-door conversations about handling them. These survive within Tōji's famous "hundred boxes" archived documents (*Hyakugō monjo*) and have been recently transcribed and published.[34]

Other sources, less intimately focused on day-to-day negotiation and interaction, supplement diary-chronicles and meeting minutes. These include letters, compilations of judicial decisions, tales, contemporary histories, and families' official documents, such as wills and testaments or appointments to office. On rare occasions, an outcome will appear in official documentation, such as a judicial case, while the background events leading up to it appear in one or more diary-chronicles, making visible the negotiations that produced the official decision.

Overview

The first half of the dissertation examines official and unofficial intermediaries. Medieval Japanese government incorporated official intermediaries to connect its shifting components, yet these official shortcuts were unreliable, because powerful individuals could ignore even appointed messengers. The first chapter gives a broad outline of the surviving institutions of central governance at the start of the fifteenth century in Japan, followed by case studies of official intermediaries. Unofficial intermediaries, whom I call conciliators, achieved independent standing—too prominent to disregard—through portfolios of cultural accomplishments, family connections, and political office, including as head of a powerful Buddhist temple, scholar of Chinese classics, or dowager concubine of a shogun, and the trust of a formal power holder. The second chapter examines the activities of these conciliators: the ways they forestalled and

34 Itō Toshikazu, Tomita Masahiro, and Kondō Toshihiko, eds., *Tōji nijūikku kusōkata hyōjō hikitsuke*, 4 vols. (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2002–2019).

resolved significant conflicts but also accelerated the transfer of power from institutions to individuals.

The second half—chapters three and four—focuses on ritual tools of conflict resolution. The third chapter examines written oaths, which became increasingly important in establishing facts and sincerity. These took varied forms as semi-private letters calling upon deities, or highly visible, public ordeals of reaching into boiling water to verify testimony, or more often somewhere in between. The spectrum was linked by the act of writing and invocation of deities, with levels of rigor that accommodated differences in status and severity of offenses while offering consistency. While oaths provided evidence but did not guarantee outcomes, other rituals forced moments of decision, the subject of chapter four. Events included commemorative ceremonies, sacred lotteries, and scheduled yearly rites as large as the great Release of Living Beings ceremony in Kyoto or as intimate as small Tanabata parties within Fushimi Estate. These events, which had to occur on certain dates, forced everyone involved to publicly establish their relationships. Failure to put on a ceremony revealed very public rifts. Success made public the statuses and responsibilities that participants held with respect to each other, in a way that lasted until the next analogous ceremony.

An epilogue traces the failures of this conciliator-and-ritual system. In Kakitsu 1 [1441], a powerful family assassinated a ruler whose intermediaries increasingly acted as barriers rather than channels to reach him. His subordinates fumbled the response to both the assassination and subsequent unrest. The most skilled and well-respected conciliators had died, and their combination of individual reputations and personal ties were impossible to replace. As powerful figures left Kyoto, they removed themselves from many of the capital's ritual communities.

Written oaths alone could not carry the trust necessary to resolve conflicts. Tensions exploded into over a decade of civil war beginning in the late 1460s.

Word Choices

As is conventional, I use monk or nun for Buddhist clergy and priest for clerics who serve shrines. Given the existence of shrine-temples such as Iwashimizu Hachiman, with clergy who took Buddhist orders but transmitted their authority to children rather than disciples, and Buddhist monks who specialized in rites for *kami*, performed at shrines on temple grounds, there is some crossover. Similarly, a temple is a Buddhist institution, while a shrine is dedicated to kami. The distinction is imperfect but convenient, and the imperfections can be addressed using conventional terminology.

Less conventionally, I use aristocrat for anyone from a family whose social status rested on appointments specifically in the imperial court's bureaucracy; courtier as a general term for all those who jockeyed for status and position within the central government, both the imperial and shogunal courts; and noble *only* for someone who held or retired from the top three ranks of the imperial court's bureaucracy. Muromachi rulers deliberately blurred the lines between the imperial court and the highest levels of the shogunate: the Ashikaga sought noble-level rank in the imperial court, prominent members of the shogunate took courtesy titles as provincial governors or served within the imperial palace's Gate Guard bureaucracy, and members of families that had provided imperial ministers for generations served as attendants for the Ashikaga and joined their rituals. Both a retired imperial regent and a Hosokawa warrior lord living in the capital spent most of their lives serving an Ashikaga ruler and attempting to influence government (that is, serving within a court), unlike attendants who, like their ancestors,

held sixth rank within the imperial court and spent most of their lives serving within a noble's household. Yet those sixth-rank attendants *could* dream of their descendants advancing within the imperial court to fourth or fifth rank, while imperial regents started their careers as children holding the fifth rank, so that they could accrue the seniority to reach their lofty first rank. Courtier and aristocrat are overlapping but distinct categories.

Chapter 1. Muromachi Intermediated Governance and Its Deficiencies

Both governing and dispute resolution frameworks in fifteenth century Japan were patchworks of prior legal regimes and pragmatic workarounds, overlapping geographically, in jurisdiction, in personnel, and in philosophy. It is a moment that depended upon a unique plethora of communications channels, both official and unofficial, to tie its component parts together, but those parts are impossible to understand without a broad overview of the centuries of institutional, political, and social developments behind these components. This chapter will therefore begin with that overview, before moving onto the specific structures that existed at the start of the fifteenth century and some of the official communications channels that tied them together.

Imperial Court: An Enduring Frame

The imperial court has changed and adapted but endured throughout Japanese history. The classical court of 1000 C.E., in which great aristocrats controlled the workings of government and used their wealth to fund lavish festivals, beautiful temples with innovative sculptures and paintings, and genre-defining literary projects, is perhaps the most famous.[35] The court of the fifteenth century, however, was a vastly different one, thanks in part to developments later in the eleventh century: the rise of retired emperors.

Retired emperors were the product of a constrained but ambitious imperial family.[36] The imperial court was nominally and ritually centered around the reigning emperor, but his

35 Ivan I. Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan*, 2nd ed. (New York: Kodansha International, 1994); Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, trans. Royall Tyler (New York: Penguin Classics, 2006); Helen Craig McCullough and William McCullough, *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes: Annals of Japanese Aristocratic Life in the Heian Period*, 2 vols. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1980).

36 G. Cameron Hurst, *Insei: Abdicated Sovereigns in the Politics of Late Heian Japan, 1086-1185* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976).

aristocratic ministers monopolized governance, primarily through the office of regent (*sesshō* or *kanpaku*), which was authorized to act on behalf of a minor (*sesshō*) or adult (*kanpaku*) emperor.[37] The model of the classical regent, though he only briefly held the title, was Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1028), who exploited both family ties and bureaucratic position to control the reigning emperor. His sister and daughter were mothers of emperors and four other daughters married emperors or princes, whom they influenced on Michinaga's behalf. Michinaga also pressured any emperor who challenged his control of the bureaucracy into early retirement. His son followed in his footsteps. Faced with this block to acting through the imperial court, emperors began using early abdication to escape the constraints of the throne and ensure it went to their chosen heir.

Part of the process of abdication was taking vows as a Buddhist monk, and most retired emperors' residences became vibrant monasteries dedicated to supporting the retired emperor's rites.[38] Once off the throne, a retired emperor retained the rights to substantial income, drawn from large estates, and the authority to establish a private administrative bureau (*mandokoro*) to manage his household affairs. He also retained familial authority, especially if the reigning emperor was his son or grandson, and was entitled to deference as a senior member of the imperial line.[39] These prerogatives combined to create a figure adjacent to the official imperial bureaucracy with significant influence over its actions, a major socio-religious role in sponsoring and performing rites to protect and sustain the realm, the staff to formulate and implement

37 Joan R. Piggott, "What Did A Regent Do?: Fujiwara No Tadahira in the 930s," in *Teishinkōki: The Year 939 in the Journal of Regent Fujiwara No Tadahira*, ed. Joan R. Piggott and Yoshida Sanae (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2008), 23–77.

38 Heather Blair, "Religion and Politics in Heian-Period Japan," *Religion Compass* 7, no. 8 (August 1, 2013), 288–90.

39 Hurst, *Insei*, 94–100, 217–236, 254–274.

policies, and insulation from social tools of factional struggle that aristocrats might use against each other. Strong-willed retired emperors leveraged these advantages to still greater wealth and power.[40]

The imperial court's core—the people who defined themselves by their relationship to the imperial lineage and bureaucracy—had two measures of advancement: rank and office. Rank was numerical, from first to sixth, with some levels subdivided into upper and lower ranks. It was hierarchical: an ambitious courtier generally wanted to advance from the senior fifth rank upper to the junior fourth lower, and so on. Directors of ceremonies looked at rank when arranging participants, and certain privileges, such as face-to-face access to the emperor, were accessible only to those above the requisite rank.[41] Imperial rank did not, however, guarantee comfort, power, or superiority over those outside the imperial circle. Many holders of the sixth rank, in particular, were attendants of those of higher rank, rising or falling based on their patrons' fortunes but with little opportunity to influence outcomes. Their sixth rank restricted their options as much as it secured their positions, a dilemma that would become increasingly stark in the fifteenth century.

Offices complicated the straightforward ladder of rank, because certain offices allotted to those of low rank were highly influential, whereas many offices held by those of higher rank had become essentially empty, nominal titles without responsibility or income. Chamberlains (*kurōdo*) typically held a fifth or sixth rank, for example, but wielded disproportionate power due

40 Janet R. Goodwin, "The Buddhist Monarch: Go-Shirakawa and the Rebuilding of Tōdai-Ji," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 17, no. 2/3 (June 1990): 219–42 analyzes one important example spanning the end of the twelfth century.

41 Helen Craig McCullough and William McCullough, "Some Notes on Rank and Office," in *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, v2: 789–831. The characters for fifth rank upper are 正五位上, and for junior fourth lower 従四位下.

to their influence over the documents that emperors, retired emperors, and prominent aristocrats produced. They were the functionaries who staffed both imperial bureaus and the private administrative bureaus of retired emperors and high aristocrats; service in the right bureau offered substantial power. A minister of the right, by contrast, held a second rank and was the number three official of the bureaucracy, yet had very little ability to influence the actions of a first-rank grand minister (*daijō daijin*).

Ambitious members of the imperial line in the eleventh and twelfth centuries faced two major challenges: they needed to influence the upbringing of their heirs and they needed access to funding. They solved both problems in cooperation with provincial governors. Provincial governors were appointees; those eligible might come from the same clans as ministers but could not aspire to such high-ranked heights. By the eleventh century, appointed governors were tax farmers, who committed to providing a certain sum to the central government and in exchange received sanction to demand as much money from taxpayers on public lands as they could extract.[42] The only limits on their authority to extract resources—as opposed to the many practical limits on their *capability*—were the borders of estates (*shōen*). Private estates were under the protection of patrons in the imperial court, generally important religious institutions or the most powerful aristocrats, who collected revenue directly and bypassed the provincial governor and his tax collectors. At their strongest, estate officials could refuse entrance to provincial governors for any reason, including law enforcement or pursuit of fugitives. The growth or contraction of estates influenced the limits of provincial governors' wealth: a province whose land was parceled out into estates had no tax base.

42 Bruce L. Batten, "Provincial Administration in Early Japan: From Ritsuryō Kokka to Ōchō Kokka," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 53, no. 1 (June 1993): 103–34. See particularly p. 121-134.

Retired emperors acquired authority over estates in stages. An unusually activist emperor, Go-Sanjō (1032-1073), established an office of records (*kirokujō*) within the imperial bureaucracy in 1069, which held the power to authenticate the records that granted private estates their tax exemptions and to confiscate those with improper documentation.[43] Though Go-Sanjō died shortly after his own abdication, his successor Shirakawa (1053-1129) continued to innovate, first as a reigning emperor for fourteen years and then as a retired emperor for decades longer.

Shirakawa and his successors used the office of records to curtail or confiscate many estates. They also used their positions as the head of the imperial family and of a major temple to construct their own estates.[44] These included both estates that paid rents to the retired emperors' households directly and estates for others that retired emperors affirmed with documents that would be more difficult for the office of records to deny. Since retired emperors also had the ability to put forward and veto candidates for provincial governor, they had near-total control over aspiring governors: they influenced who became a governor, when, over which province, and how much revenue the governor would have the authority to extract. This influence over the tax revenues of provinces was for centuries—until the latter half of the fourteenth century—more lucrative than estates, because provincial governors redirected a substantial portion of their profits to the retired emperor patron who had helped them obtain their posts.[45]

43 Hurst, *Insei*, 110-118, 146, 182-85.
44 Hurst, *Insei*, 126-129, 149-153.
45 Thomas Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol: An Age of Ritual Determinism in Fourteenth Century Japan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 35-36, 155-157.

Retired emperors also assigned as the wet-nurses of imperial princes the wives of provincial governors or men of similar rank.[46] This undermined the families of the princes' mothers, who were often the regents and other ministers with whom retired emperors competed. Instead, princes were raised by families whose fortunes depended upon the retired emperor; wet-nurses' husbands or fathers could expect appointments as provincial governors, from which they gained the funds for the upkeep of these princes. Provincial governors who wanted to be appointed to another term or a better province had every incentive to cooperate with the retired emperor who was their patron, by raising his potential heirs as he wished, by participating in his rituals, and by providing him a portion of the revenue collected from provinces.

The network among retired emperors, provincial governors, and chamberlains provides a model for how creative aspirants to power could grasp critical points in the imperial court and bureaucracy to wrench it to their desires while still operating within its framework. Retired emperors stood outside the imperial bureaucracy but derived their power partly from having reigned at the head of it. Provincial governors, who held a fourth or fifth rank in the bureaucracy, derived their influence from access to wealth from the provinces. Chamberlains, who held a fifth or sixth rank, staffed the bureaus that issued critical documents, including appointments to office or tax exemptions for estates, and kept the records that informed future policies. Even after provincial governors lost their critical role in the fourteenth century, the access of retired emperors to the estates their predecessors had created and the role of chamberlains in the administration of retired emperors' private bureaus lingered, as did the prestige of retired

46 Thomas Conlan, "Thicker than Blood: The Social and Political Significance of Wet Nurses in Japan, 950-1330," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 65, no. 1 (June 2005): 159–205.

emperors and their administrations. The model remained an influential one as ambitious leaders sought new choke points.

The Great Temple-Shrine Complexes

As successive retired emperors—figures of both imperial administrative and Buddhist authority—dominated the tax base through provinces and estates, other institutions were consolidating their own organizations. Religious institutions were the main beneficiaries of estates; the most powerful eventually also acquired control over revenue from the public lands of entire provinces. These institutions, as well as the most powerful ministerial families, managed their holdings through private administrative bureaus very similar to those of retired emperors. The format, wherein each bureau could make decisions and issue documents that would be accepted as official by the imperial bureaucracy, was flexible enough to accommodate competing hierarchies and geographic dispersal. The bureau of Kōfukuji, for example, administered across several provinces both the labor of humble attendants sent to collect supplies for festivals and the prerogatives of the aristocratic men appointed to leadership of the temple.[47]

The power of the imperial court and of major religious institutions was independent yet mutually entangled. Imperial princes and the scions of powerful families dominated leadership of temples and frequently used their positions to the benefit of their families, but they also used their connections in court to defend the prerogatives of their institutions.[48] Retired emperors enhanced their authority with Buddhist rites, but Buddhist monks were among the few who could

47 Allan G. Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 71-118.

48 Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers, and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 21–74.

freely criticize retired emperors' actions.[49] Temples and shrines held land and exercised social control under the rules established by the imperial court—estates and provinces—but they also shaped the development of such rules to their benefit.

In short, the imperial court was never as narrow as a single emperor and the aristocrats surrounding him. Instead, it had a core of people who defined themselves in relation to the imperial lineage and bureaucracy. This core was surrounded by and entangled with a larger, more varied organization built over centuries by people who, though not solely committed to imperial authority, were invested in it and engaged with its administrative structures and legal procedures. The court encompassed reigning emperor, retired emperors, imperial princes, and aristocrats who gained power or prestige by holding court rank or a position within the imperial bureaucracy. At its edges, a broader imperial polity also encompassed monks who held high offices by virtue of family ties with or patronage from the court, priests with hereditary right to offices in shrines formally supported by the imperial line, and temples and shrines whose revenue came from estates or taxes assessed by the imperial bureaucracy. Imperial documents authorizing trade monopolies, property ownership, or family headship circulated still more widely. The remnants of gubernatorial administrative offices survived in many provinces, even into the Muromachi era, after imperial governors had ceded power to the shogunate's agents. Participants were not exclusively imperial: the same temples conducted prayers for the emperor's and the shogun's health, funded by imperial taxes on estates patrolled by warrior deputies. They were nonetheless tied to the court.

---

49 Naoko Gunji, "Horrified Victors: Spirit Pacification of Heike Losers," in *Lovable Losers: The Heike in Action and Memory*, ed. Mikael S. Adolphson and Anne Commons (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 166–84.

The Shogunate: From Constrained Police Power to Wide-Ranging Government

Warriors fought their way into the imperial-Buddhist institutional balance of power in the late twelfth century with the establishment of the Kamakura shogunate (1185-1333) in the late twelfth century.[50] At first, the shogunate was extraordinarily limited: it had its own private administrative bureau and official control over income from three provinces.[51] The shogunate's right to a private administrative bureau stemmed from the shogun, who held a second rank within the imperial court; any aristocrat who held third rank or above could establish his own bureau. Unlike the aristocrats in Kyoto, however, none of the shoguns after the first controlled their own bureau; instead, it was controlled by low-ranked warriors, whose status within the imperial court was so low that they were not even permitted an audience with the emperor and who largely stayed away from the court.

This moment, in which imperial family members and aristocrats, religious institutions, and the warriors' shogunate all shared access to private administrative bureaus, provincial tax revenue, and estate rents, is called the era of the *kenmon* system.[52] All such power centers operated within the ambit of the imperial court, but each had substantial independent administrative authority and all collaborated somewhat in the maintenance of a stable polity.

---

50 For a brief introduction to the *kenmon* system and the place of shogunates within it, see Suzanne Gay, "Muromachi Bakufu Rule in Kyoto: Administrative and Judicial Aspects," in *The Bakufu in Japanese History*, ed. Jeffrey P. Mass and William B. Hauser (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985), 50-52. For more in-depth coverage, see note 18 below.

51 Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol*, 35.

52 The definitive book on the *kenmon* system in English, from origins in the eleventh century through decline in the fourteenth, remains Adolphson, *The Gates of Power*. For further engagement with the Japanese scholar who originated the idea, see James C. Dobbins, "Editor's Introduction: Kuroda Toshio and His Scholarship," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 217–32; Kuroda Toshio and Jacqueline I. Stone, "The Imperial Law and the Buddhist Law," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 271–85; Kuroda Toshio and Suzanne Gay, "Buddhism and Society in the Medieval Estate System," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 287–319.

Their cooperation was not harmonious. Sometimes it manifested in ritualized violence, when armed gangs of monks left their temples to march into Kyoto to express their fury at some imperial policy.[53] Nonetheless, it was cooperation: even when they were struggling viciously for power, the imperial and aristocratic sons who led major temples and shrines near the capital shared a common sense of rules of the struggle with imperial courtiers.

The Kamakura shogunate entered the dynamic as a moderating force. The shogunate's position as a *kenmon* made it merely one among equals; there were, after all, well over sixty provinces, most of which were at the retired emperor's disposal, and many religious institutions had acknowledged rights to the income from at least one. What set the shogunate apart was archipelago-wide jurisdiction over certain types of property rights and police power over certain crimes: most critically, rebellion against central authority.

Limited though it was, the Kamakura shogunate established a template for warrior government that subsequent generations continued to invoke for generations.[54] Its most significant contribution was perhaps the creation of a sophisticated judicial system separate from imperial adjudication. Kamakura had its own law code, the *Goseibai shikimoku*, which laid out substantive crimes for which the penalties included fines and seizures of property. The earliest grants of partial income from estates (*jitō* rights) to supporters had been in perpetuity, in contrast to the imperial court's willingness to annul the rights of small landholders. Kamakura adjudication and administration therefore reinforced the rights of property-holders to retain and bequeath their property in the absence of substantive crimes, and established a regime of document submission and evidence requirements for any disputes over property rights.

53 Adolphson, *The Gates of Power*, 240-287.

54 Jeffrey P. Mass, *Yoritomo and the Founding of the First Bakufu: The Origins of Dual Government in Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

It also created a precedent for joint jurisdiction: warriors who owed their positions to the Kamakura shogunate were scattered across the realm, living alongside property-holders who operated within the imperial bureaucratic framework.[55] Kamakura limited the types of cases over which it would exercise authority, but claimed preeminent decision-making power for those cases it chose to decide. It also borrowed the imperial court's regime of exemptions: some estates were simply off-limits to agents of the shogunate. Like the imperial court, also, it enlisted religious institutions in its service: the shrine-temple complex of Usa Hachiman in northern Kyushu served in the role of warrior when it performed rituals to ward off invading Mongol forces in the middle of the thirteenth century, and it was rewarded accordingly.[56] Kamakura enforced an administrative separation from the imperial court: different courtrooms, different laws, and different property rights, all headquartered in a different capital city: the small eastern city of Kamakura. Yet it mirrored the court in many ways, using the same provinces, the same estates, and the same collaborative-competitive relationship with religious institutions.

One element of warrior government that changed dramatically between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, beginning in the late thirteenth century but accelerating sharply in the fourteenth, was the office of the *shugo*.[57] During the Kamakura era, the shugo were appointed

55 Mass, *Yoritomo and the Founding of the First Bakufu*, 133-167.

56 Kyotsu Hori, "The Economic and Political Effects of the Mongol Wars," in *Medieval Japan: Essays in Institutional History*, ed. John Whitney Hall and Jeffrey P. Mass (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974), 184–98. See particularly p. 186-187.

57 One might explain a shugo during the fifteenth century as "the semi-hereditary warrior governor of a province," but the term is essentially untranslatable, encompassing too many nuances and changing too much over time. The word literally means "protector," and at first, they were constables, responsible for keeping order in a province but not for policy or governance. Later, they were governors of provinces on behalf of the shogunate, keeping order, mobilizing resources, and settling conflicts over land. Many shugo posts went from being purely appointed positions to being the hereditary domains of certain warrior families. Each generation of the family still needed appointment to the position, but they responded violently when they did not receive it. In this latter state, warrior lord or shogunal governor would both be appropriate translations, neither of which captures the full scope of shugo authorities and responsibilities. There is no consensus on translation in the

provincial constables, responsible for extraordinary police actions and emergency response rather than day-to-day governance: they handled rebellions, not thefts. Near the end of the era shugo powers expanded slightly, but their role only changed decisively in the fourteenth century, during the sixty-year civil war that ended the Kamakura and began the Muromachi era, as central leaders handed over increasing authority to provincial leaders to mobilize resources and maintain armies in the field.[58]

The changes were social, legal, and economic. Kamakura central administration had always been dominated by one family, the Hōjō, and in the late thirteenth century they had begun appointing members of the family to shugo posts in the provinces. At the same time, they changed the law to give shugo jurisdiction over more common and less significant crimes than rebellion: the authority to punish minor border disputes offered shugo a foothold into intervening in rent and tax collection, but they could only act at the behest of the central government and were restricted in the penalties they could impose.[59] All Kamakura efforts to centralize and empower shugo at the expense of those in their provinces proved controversial and may have contributed to the unrest that ultimately toppled the regime.

The Muromachi shugo was a far more powerful figure, but that change came alongside many others. The Kamakura shogunate fell in 1333, followed by a brief centralized government under Emperor Go-Daigo, which splintered within a few years into a long civil war. Ashikaga Takauji, Go-Daigo's onetime ally in toppling Kamakura, rebelled against him in 1335, obtained

---

scholarship, so I use the transliteration. To avoid emphasizing the term's foreignness, I italicize "shugo" only the first time I use it in each chapter.

58 Morten Oxenboell, *Akutō and Rural Conflict in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018), 23-24.

59 Nelson, "Bakufu and Shugo Under the Ashikaga," in Mass, *The Origins of Japan's Medieval World*, 88-90.

an edict from a competing member of the imperial family in 1336 legitimizing his opposition, and forced Go-Daigo out of the capital.[60] 1336 marked the start of the new Muromachi shogunate, named for the district of Kyoto in which it was centered, and of the Northern Court that depended upon it. Go-Daigo's line led the opposing Southern Court. The war between them would last, with hot and cool phases, until 1392. Both sides struggled to balance centralized control with efficiently raising and supplying armies in far-flung areas.

Ashikaga Takauji, first shogun of Muromachi, established the law code of his regime in 1336 as an addendum to Kamakura's code, a clear statement of his government's position as the former shogunate's heir. With the ruling family of Kamakura dead or irrevocably removed from power, Takauji was free to distribute leadership of most provinces and powerful shugo posts to branches of the Ashikaga family and their closest allies. In the rare cases when a provincial family retained enough prominence to threaten his appointees, Takauji offered the family a shugo post but strengthened his relative's competing position with critical authorities, such as the right to muster troops.[61]

Economically, the shugo increased their jurisdiction over taxation. The fledgling Muromachi shogunate gave them authority to execute forcible transfers of property in accordance with the shogun's policies. The most crucial economic turning point was a little less than two decades after that: the establishment of the *hanzei*, or half-tax, which authorized shugo to seize half the revenue from their provinces to provision troops in the field.[62] The immediate

60 Pierre Souyri, *The World Turned Upside Down: Medieval Japanese Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 112-113, 117; Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol*, 9-10. Takauji was not named shogun until 1338.

61 Nelson, "Bakufu and Shugo Under the Ashikaga," 78-90; Ogawa Makoto, *Ashikaga ichimon shugo hattenshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980), 1-25.

62 Thomas Conlan, *State of War: The Violent Order of Fourteenth-Century Japan* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2003), 98, 224-225.

consequences were decisive: shugo had the income to support their armies regardless of what was happening in the capital. The precedent was even more important: though Ashikaga rulers subsequently walked back the legal authorization, the status quo had changed. By default thereafter, shugo collected provincial revenue and absorbed up to half for their own use and continued to do so throughout the fifteenth century. Shugo were becoming *de facto* governors of their provinces, usurping the economic position of imperial provincial governors and sometimes even assimilating their administrative offices.[63] Unlike provincial governors, however, they were appointed for life, not for limited terms, and their sons could aspire to their positions. The position of shugo gradually developed into a peculiar combination of an appointed governorship and a hereditary lordship.

The shugo was not the only legacy of Kamakura to be repurposed and remade. As Takauji was making his kinsmen shugo, his brother Tadayoshi was recruiting hereditary functionaries from Kamakura's adjudication system. These former Kamakura administrative families were primarily located in the western, subordinate offices near Kyoto and Hakata, far from the center of shogunal power in the eastern Kamakura. Many switched their services smoothly to the Ashikaga in the fourteenth century, and they brought with them a wealth of administrative knowledge. The balance of influence among these families changed, but their administrative dominance did not, even when the offices through which they executed policy were shifted and reshuffled.[64]

63 As the Akamatsu family did in Harima Province, for example. See *Himeji shishi: Honpen*, vol. 2 (Himeji: Himeji-shi, 2018), 359.

64 These families included the Fuse, Inō, Jibu, Matsuda, Nakazawa, Saitō, and Sei; Inō and Saitō will appear most often in this dissertation. Tanaka Makoto has an ongoing series on the activities of these administrators, currently up to 1392. Tanaka Makoto, "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin zaishoku kōshō-kō (1): Genkō 3-nen (1333)-Kōei 3-nen (1344)," *Ritsumeikan Bungaku*, no. 651 (March 2017): 1110–1090; Tanaka, "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin zaishoku kōshō-kō (2): Jōwa 1-nen (1333)-Bunna 1-nen (1352): Tsuki bugyōnin shizoku kenkyū (Yasutomi-shi)" *Ritsumeikan Bungaku*, no. 653 (September

The Ashikaga family's own private administrative bureau grew increasingly important in managing the shogunate's finances, which added Ashikaga retainers to the mix of administrators; the Ise family in particular played a managerial role. Their staff, however, included the descendants of those former Kamakura functionaries. These shogunal bureaucrats strengthened their professional identity in the fifteenth century, preserving collections of judicial decisions as precedents and even beginning to keep diary-chronicles for future generations as powerful imperial ministerial families had.

The Muromachi Imperial Court: The Northern Emperors

Ashikaga Takauji allied with one member of the imperial family, Emperor Kōmyō, when he rebelled against Go-Daigo. He was able to do this because succession disputes had riven the court throughout the early fourteenth century, splitting the imperial family first into factions and then, after Go-Daigo's abortive centralization, into the Northern and Southern Courts that gave the period its name: Nanbokuchō (1336-1392). The Northern Court split again in 1351 after the Southern Court attacked the capital and kidnapped the northern emperor and retired emperors. The shogunate and its partisans enthroned a new northern emperor to continue their fight, but this required disinheriting a senior branch of the imperial line, members of which eventually returned to the capital upset at their marginalization.[65] While the succession of the *reigning* northern emperor was smooth, supported by the shogunate's money and arms, the less defined,

---

2017): 130–100; Tanaka, "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin zaishoku kōshō-kō (3): Bunna 2-nen (1353)-Jōji 6-nen (1367): Tsuki bugyōnin shizoku kenkyū (Jibu-shi)," *Ritsumeikan Bungaku*, no. 663 (August 2019): 248–216; Tanaka, "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin zaishoku kōshō-kō (4): Ōan 1-nen (1368)-Meitoku 3-nen (1392): Tsuki bugyōnin shizoku kenkyū (Fuse-shi)," *Ritsumeikan Bungaku*, no. 669 (September 2020): 242–193. In English, see Kuwayama Kōnen and John Whitney Hall, "The Bugyōnin System: A Closer Look," in John Whitney Hall and Toyoda Takeshi, eds., *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, 2nd ed. (University of California Press, 2001), 54.

65 Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol*, 135, 162-64.

more amorphous and consensus-driven question of the *ruling* member of the family, be he reigning or retired, was politely contested.[66] The Northern Court did not split into rigid factions such as had precipitated the Nanbokuchō war, but its fragmentation sent ambitious aristocrats unapologetically into the service of the dynamic Ashikaga shogunate, whose philosophical and ritual underpinnings they helped to develop, and opened further space for shoguns and their allies to sway court actions. Shogunal influence reached its apogee in Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, who hosted the emperor in his mansion in a pointed display of ascendancy, then negotiated the end of the split between the Northern and Southern Courts a few years later.[67]

The Fusion: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu

In moving his shogunate from the east into the imperial capital, Takauji had already begun to undermine the separation between court and shogunate that the Kamakura regime had so assiduously maintained. The profound dependence of the Northern Court on the Ashikaga for its defense and sustenance and the consequent Ashikaga influence further blurred the boundaries, as did Takauji's close relationship with a powerful Shingon monk who would normally be expected to prioritize the imperial family but who instead supported Takauji's ambitions.[68] Takauji's grandson Yoshimitsu then stepped entirely outside the role of shogun to instead dominate both court and shogunate together.

By the start of the fifteenth century, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu led both the imperial court and the shogunate.[69] He had served as shogun while climbing the ranks of the imperial aristocracy,

66 Matsunaga Kazuhiro, *Muromachi-ki kōbu kankei to Nanbokuchō nairan* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2013), 97-136.

67 Matthew Stavros and Norika Kurioka, "Imperial Progress to the Muromachi Palace, 1381: A Study and Annotated Translation of *Sakayuku Hana*," *Japan Review*, no. 28 (2015): 3–46.

68 Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol*, 86-89, 93-107.

69 For an examination of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu's political and ritual activities in English, see Conlan, "The Ashikaga Emperor," in *From Sovereign to Symbol*, 172-186. For the classic argument in

and abdicated as shogun in Ōei 1, after negotiating an end to the split between the Northern and Southern Courts in 1392.[70] Shortly thereafter, he assumed the highest aristocratic rank available, that of Grand Minister (*daijō daijin*), a prestigious position monopolized by the aristocratic regent families since the era of Fujiwara Michinaga's dominance nearly four hundred years earlier.

Within less than a year, Yoshimitsu relinquished that title and took Buddhist monastic vows, which permitted him access to the social and ritual prerogatives of retired emperors. He was taking advantage of the ebb of the civil war to reshape the governing structures of Japan: he collapsed the roles of the imperial court and shogunate, exercising near-total influence over imperial court posts as well as shogunal offices and making himself the final legal arbiter of property rights granted by both imperial court and shogunate. He developed new connections to Buddhist institutions, placing his sons into powerful temple headships previously reserved for the imperial family and establishing personal ties to the lower-level monks and shrine priests in charge of the smaller temples and shrines that made up larger complexes such as Mt. Hiei-Enryakuji.

Yoshimitsu supplemented his acquisition of ranks and offices with leadership in rituals and critical decision-making to lay stronger claims to court-based authority. He sponsored lavish

---

Japanese about the greatest reach of Yoshimitsu's power, see Imatani Akira, "Ashikaga Yoshimitsu no ōken sandatsu keikaku," in *Muromachi no ōken* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1990), 33-108. The past decade has resulted in two major biographies of Yoshimitsu: Ogawa Takeo, *Ashikaga Yoshimitsu: Kōbu ni kunrin shita Muromachi shōgun* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2012) and Momosaki Yūichirō, *Muromachi no hasha Ashikaga Yoshimitsu: Chōtei to bakufu wa ika ni tōitsu sareta ka* (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2020). Both highlight the importance of Yoshimitsu's fusion of imperial court and shogunate, and Momosaki also includes the continuance and changes in the mechanisms used to control the court after Yoshimitsu's death.

70 Ōei 1 is traditionally matched to 1394 CE. Because the start and end of the Japanese year do not line up with the modern Gregorian calendar, however, Yoshimitsu's shogunal abdication date of Ōei 1.12.17 technically falls at the start of 1395. Different references will thus give the year as 1394 or 1395.

rituals that forced even participants who disliked him to publicly support him, controlled advancement to court offices, and heavily influenced the assignment of income rights with even the slightest ambiguity of provenance, much as retired emperors had done in their heyday two centuries earlier. In short, Yoshimitsu exploited the malleable nature of imperial court authority to dominate it, using the wealth, force, and connections of the shogunate to get access to the machinery of court power, until he could redefine his power in imperial terms. He then began to lay the groundwork for his youngest son to do the same before dying abruptly in Ōei 15 [1408], in his early fifties.

Yoshimitsu's unexpected death split the different forms of influence he exercised at the peak of his power between his eldest and youngest sons. He had passed the position of shogun down to his eldest son Yoshimochi in Ōei 1 [1394], though he continued to wield power through the imperial court as a retired sovereign. He then moved his youngest son Yoshitsugu rapidly up through the court ranks from fifth to third rank, and finally had him briefly fostered in the palace and given a coming-of-age ceremony normally reserved for imperial princes in Ōei 15 [1408] before dying shortly thereafter. It was a clear effort to transmit to Yoshitsugu, then fourteen, his connections within the imperial court and the symbolism to which he had laid claim.[71] This in theory included moral authority over the shogunate and all other military actors, but the young Yoshitsugu did not have experience using those to sway people, and Yoshimitsu died before Yoshitsugu could exceed the shogun's second rank, leaving his elder brother Yoshimochi, then twenty-two, his superior by a formalist view of the court's bureaucratic ranks. Yoshimochi also presided over the administrative structure of the shogunate, with its ambiguous authority over

71 For quick biographies of each son and their relationships with Yoshimitsu, see "Ashikaga Yoshimochi" and "Ashikaga Yoshitsugu" in Ebara Masaharu and Shimizu Katsuyuki, *Muromachi bakufu shogun retsuden* (Tokyo: Ebisu Kōshō Shuppan, 2017), 113-156.

policing and taxation. Neither of them, at the time of their father's death, held one of his most important offices, that of head of the Minamoto lineage (*Genji chōja*), which went to the highest-ranked member of the Minamoto lineage and enjoyed the prerogatives to guide the education of imperial heirs and to appoint someone to the imperial bureaucracy each year.[72] The many threads of power that Yoshimitsu had gathered to himself were scattered, and everyone in the capital or connected to its government faced the problem of taking the extraordinarily fluid system Yoshimitsu had developed—and all the structures he had broken—and shaping it into something upon which they could rely without Yoshimitsu's centripetal presence.

The Fifteenth Century: Overlapping but Separate Frameworks

Ashikaga Yoshimochi held the office of shogun and defeated his younger brother after a hushed power struggle, solidifying in the process his own power base within the structures of the shogunate, but also entrenching a separation between his authority as shogun and the operation of the imperial court. This did not mean he was entirely outside the system of imperial ranks. The second rank provided by the office of shogun legitimated his private administrative bureau (*mandokoro*), upon which administration of the shogunate still depended. He still intervened in the court's workings through intermediaries such as the court-shogunate liaison and acquired the position of head of the Minamoto clan, with its accompanying courtly prerogatives, five years after his father's death. He chose to operate, however, within the—much expanded—constraints of the shogunate and one clan, rather than seeking an imperial position sufficient to dominate the court by its own internal rules. His successors were, to a large extent, bound by his choice, even as they preferred to cite his father Yoshimitsu or great-grandfather Takauji for their precedents.

72 Okano Tomohiko, *Genji chōja: Buke seiken no keifu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2018): 123-130.

Yoshimochi relinquished leadership of the court to Go-Komatsu, who was then the reigning emperor. He cooperated when Go-Komatsu abdicated in favor of his son a few years later, though this abrogated the agreement, to alternate who held the throne with the Southern Court lineage, that had ended the Nanbokuchō split. Go-Komatsu never handed over political power to his son, and he continued to rule the imperial court for decades, even as Yoshimochi consolidated his control over the shogunate. The imperial court and the shogunate had reverted to separate leadership, though they remained intertwined through both formal and informal mechanisms.

Though his successors walked back Yoshimitsu's efforts to fuse imperial court and shogunate and through them every other institution of the Muromachi era at the very top, the blurring of lines at other levels of society continued apace. Geographically, both estate proprietors and shugo used remnants of old provincial governors' offices and other administrative structures in the provinces and also built new ones. The Akamatsu family in Harima Province, for example, subsumed the provincial gubernatorial office into their shugo administrative network.[73] Conversely, the Kitabatake family in Ise Province continued to dominate the area administratively and militarily from the position of provincial governor, outmaneuvering even the shugo's network in the area.[74] Topically, though shugo by default held jurisdiction over thefts, murders, and other crime, prohibitions on entry into certain estates barred them from investigation and thereby left responsibility for resolution to other local authorities.

73 *Himeji shishi*, 2:359.

74 David Romney, "Deconstructing the 'Warrior' Rise: The Kitabatake House 1331-1392," unpublished draft.

When local shugo deputies entered regardless, proprietors could oppose their behavior as a violation of either the shogunal hierarchy or imperial estate privileges.[75]

The personnel each framework employed overlapped: retainers serving shoguns or retired emperors often held office within the reigning emperor's bureaucracy, and the monks who led powerful temples came from the same families as prominent courtiers. They shared philosophy and legal reasoning. Zen monks with excellent skills in Song Chinese language and philosophy taught the sons of prominent families and administered estates; Shingon and Tendai monks served as esoteric protectors for emperors and shoguns; and the same scholars researched legal precedents for members of the imperial family, aristocratic officials, influential monks, and shogunal councilors. In short, the fifteenth century advanced the fusion of legal and administrative structures that had developed as separate entities.

It is useful to sketch out the broad structures with their separate organizations and hierarchies, because people navigating these fused spaces often presented themselves specifically as moving within circles of shogunal authority[76] *or* deriving authority from the reigning emperor's bureaucracy,[77] though they functionally used multiple positions to achieve their aims. Different legal regimes also had different formal procedures, which participants could invoke to steer the course of a dispute. This occurred even when everyone involved understood that a different, less formal procedure was a more efficient route to decision. The temporary formalist

75 To further complicate matters, prohibitions on entry (*funyu*) could be more or less comprehensive: some applied only to tax collection (i.e, shugo could not enter to demand taxes but *did* have the authority to enter to investigate crimes), while others applied without exception (i.e., shugo had no authority to enter for any reason). Local administrators and deputies frequently argued about what type of prohibition on entry applied to a given area, since a deputy who entered on the pretext of a criminal investigation often seized tax income as well.

76 These included shogunal chancellors, shugo, deputy shugo, retainers to the shogun or various shugo, and holders of *jitō* rights, among others.

77 These included imperial chancellors, ministers, officers in the gate guards, secretaries and chamberlains, heralds and liaisons, and attendants, among others.

might accept a more circuitous process in hopes of a more favorable decision in one case and avoid it in another. The structures provided the venues in which people of the fifteenth century maneuvered.

The century saw two broad paths to legitimate overarching administrative authority: the imperial court or the shogunate.[78] Other people and organizations, both inside and outside the capital, also wielded enormous power. Large religious institutions, such as temple-shrine complexes, could sway the imperial court and the shogunate, since they were well-organized units whose members often exercised powerful moral authority over those within their spheres.[79] Yet it mattered, for example, whether a temple seeking to replace a misbehaving local manager derived its authority from a broadly imperial pathway, such as a proprietor's ownership of an estate, or a broadly shogunal one, such as *jitō* rights. These divisions funneled institutional religious authority back into the structures of imperial court and shogunate. Local councils had more direct impact over villagers' lives, but when faced with the depredations of outsiders or disputes with other villages, they pleaded their cases within an imperial or shogunal framework and often benefited if they, too, could switch between the two.[80] I will therefore first outline both

78 An entire genre of Japanese medieval scholarship examines court-shogunate relations (*kōbu kankei*) as a path to understanding Nanbokuchō and Muromachi governance. Prominent examples include Mori Shigeaki, *Nanbokuchō-ki kōbu kankei-shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Bunken Shuppan, 1984); Mizuno Tomoyuki, *Muromachi jidai kōbu kankei no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2005); Matsunaga Kazuhiro, *Muromachi-ki kōbu kankei to Nanbokuchō Nairan* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2013).

79 For case studies of Muromachi religious institutions in English, see for example: Martin Collcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Harvard Univ Asia Center, 1981), especially "Part II: The Structure of the Institution," 132-290; Allan G. Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), scattered throughout, but particularly in chapters 2 ("Kasuga Daimyojin: Protector or Ruler?") and 3 ("Protocol: The Sociocosmic Organon"), 106-118, 171-184; Adolphson, "Religious Elites and the Ashikaga Bakufu: Collapsing the Gates of Power," in *The Gates of Power*, 288-345.

80 Hitomi Tonomura, *Community and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan: Corporate Villages of Tokuchin-Ho* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992); Sonobe Toshiki, *Nihon no mura to miyaza: Rekishiteki hensen to chiikisei* (Tokyo: Kōshi Shoin, 2010).

frameworks separately, then use case studies of intermediaries to show how they were tied together, functioned in practice, and interacted with other forces.

Structure of the Fifteenth-Century Shogunate

While the court was a functional entity within itself, it was unquestionably subordinate to Ashikaga rulers in the fifteenth century. The court had processes to mobilize, reward, and resolve conflicts among its personnel, as well as a system of property rights and revenue collection that held sway over large populations through the cooperation of large temples, prominent families, and those who acquired property from them. Yet the ruling Ashikaga could overturn the imperial court's decisions even after they were made and routinely interceded in specific cases. Dissatisfied disputants within the imperial court could hope to appeal to the head of the Ashikaga family, if they were willing to risk his whimsy, and he could change the outcome of their case, though the exact mechanism of intervention—judicial, administrative, informal, or otherwise—varied based on time and personality.[81]

Ashikaga rulers from Yoshimochi onward exercised their power as shoguns, at the apex of the shogunate, a parallel organization that interpenetrated and overlapped with the imperial court. The shogunate within which the Ashikaga operated was itself two overlapping organizations: a bureaucracy that depended upon civil functionaries and military officials directly subordinate to the shogun, and a network of social connections that bound together the shogun and shugo and by extension the organizations that shugo used to govern their provinces. The former, which can be called the shogunal bureaucracy—in parallel to and distinctive from the imperial bureaucracy—based itself firmly upon the legacy of the predecessor Kamakura shogunate, as seen in the

81 Kenneth A. Grossberg, *Japan's Renaissance: The Politics of the Muromachi Bakufu*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2001): 90-104.

discussion of its development above. The latter, described in shorthand as the shogunate-shugo system, was based upon bonds of family, proximity, consensus decision-making, and revenue collection.

Shogunate and Shugo

All three families that ultimately monopolized the position of chancellor, the highest rank within the shogunate after the shogun himself, were branches of the Ashikaga. Two of the four families that shared the next rank down (eligible to become head of the *samurai-dokoro*, responsible for policing the capital region) were also related to the Ashikaga, and the other two had extraordinary close personal connections to the shogunal line. Shugo also came to expect that their chosen heirs—sons or brothers—would take up their dignities after they retired or died. The presumption was strong enough that when the fourth shogun, Ashikaga Yoshimochi, attempted to avoid confirming an Akamatsu family heir he disliked as shugo of nearby Harima Province in favor of bestowing it upon a friend from another branch of the Akamatsu, the heir burned his mansion in protest and fled the capital to his castle in the province. He remained there stockpiling weapons while all of the other shugo in the capital avoided carrying out Yoshimochi's orders to confront him. Eventually, Yoshimochi killed his friend and confirmed the disliked heir as shugo. A shugo post was still an office of the Muromachi shogunate, but once a family had held it for a couple generations, it was difficult to take it from them without battle.

Given that shugo had both consistent income and the means to transmit their authority across generations, the shogunate had to find a way to control them. For the first half of the fifteenth century, the answers to that were proximity and consensus decisions, combined with behind-the-scenes maneuvering to provoke inheritance conflicts within shugo organizations.

Shugo were required to live within the capital, leaving their deputies to govern their provinces. While in the capital, the strongest among them were entitled to a voice in shogunal policies, a voice strengthened by the convention of having the shugo collectively fund some shogunal priorities, such as the reconstruction of part of the shogun's mansion. Members of shugo families served as attendants to the shogun, which might have permitted the families to influence the shogun but more often seemed to give the shogun access to branch family members more congenial than a family's presumptive heir.

Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, in keeping with his aggressive expansion of power within the imperial court, pushed the limits in his relations with the shugo. Lacking outright central control over shugo income and appointment to office, Yoshimitsu instead intervened in their inheritance disputes to nudge events in his favor, elevating friendly claimants or weakening uncooperative families. He used his authority over the imperial court and religious institutions to add weight to his position in confrontations with powerful warriors, driving the conflicts to the point of open battle several times, though he kept an eye to how he could back down with grace if necessary. Essentially, he destabilized shugo families before they could move against him, even if that weakened their power in the provinces. Between the carrot of his ability to bestow property and offices, and the stick of his ability to mobilize forces to chastise his enemies, Yoshimitsu induced the cooperation of shugo in the control of their fellows.[82]

Yoshimitsu's two sons, Yoshimochi and Yoshinori, who held power sequentially as shoguns of the Ashikaga family for most of the first half of the fifteenth century, both owed their positions in part to the shugo. The shugo supported Yoshimochi against his youngest brother (Yoshitsugu), whose prestige their father had systematically bolstered with imperial rituals. After

82 Ogawa, *Ashikaga Yoshimitsu,* 152-176.

Yoshimochi's death, they shepherded Yoshinori through the process of leaving the Buddhist monastic community and taking up imperial and military rank, although monastic vows conventionally rendered a man ineligible for lay office in the imperial hierarchy. Between that and the lack of direct authority within the imperial court, these Ashikaga rulers had far less leverage to compel the shugo and their efforts at manipulating succession were correspondingly less successful. Both, for example, tried to redirect parts of Akamatsu family power to a friend from another branch of the family, and both failed conclusively.[83]

For most activity, then, they had to gain the cooperation, or at least non-opposition, of the shugo. Yoshimochi chose to allow the shugo to come to major decisions in a council that he did not attend, under the leadership of his chancellor (*kanrei*). Though he maintained a regular roster of visits to prominent shugo, shrines, and temples, keeping abreast of everyone's activities, he seldom tried to force through a decision that most of the shugo disliked.[84] Yoshinori preferred direct persuasion. He argued directly for his policies with prominent shugo; when he failed to persuade one, he moved onto another, only to return repeatedly after he had persuaded more shugo to his side. The shugo could resist his insistence only when enough independently felt strongly enough about the decision to assert themselves. Even that level of opposition grated upon Yoshinori, however, and he turned to strengthening the shogunate's bureaucracy, which owed its position more directly to the shogun, as a counterweight.[85]

---

83 For Yoshimochi, Akamatsu Mochisada; see Sakurai Eiji, *Muromachibito no seishin* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2001), 117–121. For Yoshinori, Akamatsu Mitsumasa; see Mori, "Akamatsu Mitsumasa shōkō," 943–1001.

84 Itō Kiyoshi, *Ashikaga Yoshimochi* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2008), 43-51.

85 Mori Shigeaki, *Muromachi Bakufu hōkai: Shōgun Yoshinori no yabō to zasetsu* (Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2011): 118-131.

Shogunate and Bureaucracy

The shogunal bureaucracy was not a static entity. Like many elements of Muromachi governance, the people and families involved were more of a constant than the exact legal avenue for a dispute, office promulgating a document, or any other bureaucratic structure. The most influential families were either hereditary retainers of the Ashikaga or the descendants of administrators in the Kamakura shogunate.

The administrators descended from those of Kamakura were most prominent within the realm of adjudication. The exact site of that within the Muromachi bureaucracy was perhaps the most changeable, and they occasionally acted under the leadership of Ashikaga retainers. Regardless of exactly which office they fell under, though, administrative commissioners managed the judicial process: collecting evidence, writing up decisions, and preserving them. Certifying and sending out the decisions was a more controversial matter, and the struggles over who had the authority to adjudicate extended out beyond the confines of the bureaucracy, to reconnect the two parts of the shogunate.

Where exactly these two parts—shogunal bureaucracy and shogun-shugo relationships—intersected and the power of each changed over time. Early in the fifteenth century, they intersected in the office of the shogunal chancellor (*kanrei*), who was responsible both for authenticating the documents that the shogunal bureaucracy produced and for coaxing or arguing his fellow shugo into line behind Ashikaga policies.[86] In the 1430s, the shogun appropriated the shogunal chancellor's bureaucratic authority in an effort to make the shogun himself the crucial intersection of the two structures.[87] The pivot position briefly returned to the chancellor in the

86 Itō Kiyoshi, *Ashikaga Yoshimochi,* 52-88; Kuwayama and Hall, "The Bugyōnin System: A Closer Look," 60.

87 Mori Shigeaki, *Muromachi Bakufu hōkai*, 128-131.

1440s, when he was serving as regent for an underage shogun after the boy's father had been assassinated, before the adult shogun again re-appropriated it in the 1450s as part of consolidating his power.[88]

There were also intersections at lower levels. Policing authority in the capital lay under the rotating leadership of four shugo families; the rank (*samurai-dokoro*, or [Head of the] Board of Retainers) was eponymous with the office responsible for handling violent crime. Its staff was a mix of personnel from shugo families and from the shogunate's administrative corps. Adjudication, however, was under the jurisdiction of civil administrators: primarily commissioners, discussed below. The blend worked surprisingly well in the vicinity of the capital, even during times of conflict between shugo and shogunate. Other organizations and families fit more or less neatly into the mix through their relationships with different actors within it. Boards of the Muromachi bureaucracy deputized moneylenders and merchants to act as tax farmers, in an arrangement that sometimes fell under the auspices of the shugo, through the Board of Retainers, and sometimes more directly under a shogunal administrator.[89] Taxation was similarly split: the shogunate had direct retainers throughout the archipelago expected to pay for its upkeep, largely in cities but also in farmlands, and the shugo also jointly supported significant projects with their own revenues. Ultimately, the Muromachi shogunate depended upon and integrated both its bureaucracy and its more fractious lords.

The many parallel parts of the Muromachi shogunate and imperial court networks, whose hierarchies did not always intersect smoothly, created a demand for intermediaries. Many intermediaries became institutional positions, with ranks, remuneration, and career tracks, as

88 Grossberg, *Japan's Renaissance*, 99-101.

89 Suzanne Gay, *The Moneylenders of Late Medieval Kyoto* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001); Gay, "Muromachi Bakufu Rule in Kyoto: Administrative and Judicial Aspects," 49–65.

well as checks on their potential power. Unfortunately, the jockeying for power and methods of exercising it did not cease changing merely because important positions were made official. Instead, the checks placed on intermediaries' powers to prevent them from exploiting their critical role in communication undermined their ability to do the jobs assigned to their positions. Liaisons, commissioners, and official messengers were critical to building or maintaining the reach of the Muromachi shogunate, yet those around them eventually chose to bypass them with unofficial intermediaries as everyone discovered the limits of their influence.

Court-Shogunate Liaison (*Buke tensō*)

The concept of a liaison between the shogunate and the imperial court began with the first shogunate. The Saionji family in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries mediated between the imperial court in Kyoto and the warrior government in Kamakura. Their role was initially unofficial, built upon friendships and familial ties, but was formalized with the title *Kantō moshitsugi* (the Kantō messenger) in 1246, after which the Saionji increasingly dominated communications between court and shogunate. The Saionji worked their way into high levels of the aristocracy, eventually eligible for all but the very highest court ranks and able to provide consorts to emperors, which in turn lent authority to their mediation.[90] Regulations, sometimes honored in the breach, specified that negotiations between members of the imperial court and officials in the shogunate must go through the liaison.[91] In short, while many courtiers developed intimate connections to the Kamakura shogunate and benefited from such relationships, the

90 Rieko Kamei-Dyche, "Tools of Authority: The Saionji Family and Courtier Society in Early Medieval Japan" (Los Angeles, University of Southern California, 2013), 64-69, 106-109, 113. While scholars disagree about how heavily the Saionji depended upon their role as intermediaries to consolidate family power, all agree that the *Kantō moshitsugi* role was both official and Saionji-dominated.

91 Kamei-Dyche, "Tools of Authority," 54.

official liaison steered communications between the imperial court in Kyoto and the shogunate in Kamakura.[92]

The liaison office in this era enjoyed the advantage of geography: court and shogunate were distant enough to hinder anyone trying to maintain equal influence in both places. When the Kamakura shogunate collapsed in 1333, the loci of power simultaneously shrank and expanded, which posed a challenge to a liaison positioned to mediate between two distinct centers. Instead, Kyoto became the sole imperial and bureaucratic center, while enforcement authorities devolved to highly localized armies all over the archipelago. Messengers remained vital, but a singular Kantō messenger was no longer preeminent. The position remained, while the court-shogunate liaison function moved on.

Two other positions rose in importance instead: the *buke shissō* and *buke tensō*.[93] Like the earlier Kantō messenger, these were official posts within the court hierarchy, appointed by the emperor at the request—or at minimum, approval—of the shogunate.[94] The Saionji, including first a powerful branch family and later the young scion of the main family, accepted the role of *buke shissō*. Yet they did not monopolize it: a member of the Kajūji family held the post as early as 1346.[95] The Kajūji were of lower status than the Saionji, eligible at most for the position of

92 For two examples of other courtier families who used ties to the Kamakura shogunate to amass cultural capital, see Steven D. Carter, *Householders: The Reizei Family in Japanese History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007) and Christian D. Ratcliff, “The Cultural Arts in Service: The Careers of Asukai Masaari and His Lineage” (New Haven, CT, Yale University, 2007).

93 The two titles translate to essentially the same thing (“liaison for warriors”), though the offices were in reality different. S*hissō* and *tensō* both mean "to convey [a message] to a higher-ranked authority," while *buke* means warrior or, in practical effect here, warrior leaders and authorities. The term *buke-shissō* first indicated a documentary form: a formal written intervention from the shogun to the Northern Court during the fourteenth century, and the use of the title for the liaison may have been derived from the documents they carried. The office of *tensō* had a much longer history within the imperial court, but a specific *buke tensō* to transmit court-shogunate communications was newer.

94 Mori Shigeaki, *Nanbokuchō-ki kōbu kankei-shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Bunken Shuppan, 1984), 493-499.

95 Mori, *Nanbokuchō-ki kōbu kankei-shi no kenkyū*, 371, 386.

major counselor (*dainagon*), and unlikely to see their daughters become imperial consorts. They were nonetheless crucial to the running of the imperial court as secretaries and chamberlains (*kurōdo*) and worked as liaisons (*tensō*) for the courts of reigning and retired emperors.[96] The era of the *buke-shissō*'s preeminence, therefore, marked a crossroads in the role of the court-shogunate liaison. The Saionji model suggested an authoritative liaison, with the clout to sway both imperial and warrior leaders, able to use his own family prestige to lend force to the messages he carried. The Kajūji model suggested an administrative liaison, navigating the institutions of governance, whose power to intervene was less dramatic. The *buke-shissō* was still singular, however: when Saionji Sanetoshi took up the role in 1352, Kajūji Tsuneaki left it.[97]

The office of imperial liaison (*tensō*), carrying messages to and from an imperial ruler, had existed for centuries, and had a history of being used to consolidate power. The earliest retired emperors had used it to compete with the aristocrats controlling the official imperial bureaucracy, and when a reigning emperor attempted to reestablish direct imperial rule at the start of the fourteenth-century civil war, he also used liaisons to carry reports to and messages from himself. At the same time, liaisons continued to connect the imperial court to major shrines and temples; the Iwashimizu Hachiman or Nara liaisons, for example, carried messages and gifts to and from the court. The position was flexible: court-shrine liaisons could set the wheels of the bureaucracy in motion and their formal function of reporting to a retired or reigning emperor subsumed many

96 This is the class of courtier whose advancement Thomas Conlan details in "The Rise of the Administrative Nobility," in Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol*, 32-51. He focuses most closely on the Hino family, who were exceptional in achieving marital ties to the Saionji, the Ashikaga, and even the imperial family. They did not pursue the role of bureaucratic court-shogunate liaison as a path to family power, but the role of Hino daughters as wives of those at the top of both imperial and shogunal hierarchies made the family an important intermediary force beyond the bureaucracy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. They also had a background as imperial *tensō*, though not liaising with the shogunate.

97 Mori, *Nanbokuchō-ki kōbu kankei-shi no kenkyū*, 386.

forms of communication. Imperial liaisons were also plural and subordinate; several operated at any given time and the documents and orders they issued enacted the policies of the more powerful people they served.[98]

All of these characteristics proved advantageous for Ashikaga Yoshimitsu and his successors as they knit the imperial court and shogunate into one unit with separate structures that nonetheless moved in roughly the same direction. In using liaisons, Yoshimitsu replicated the behavior of a retired emperor, as he did in the context of performing rituals and controlling court promotions. He also replaced the model of the singular, powerful Saionji-style liaison with a cluster of families that would serve together and compete with each other. There were usually three court-shogunate liaisons at any given time during Muromachi, from three different families: chiefly Hirohashi, Kajūji, and Madenokōji. These families were administrators in the imperial court, who specialized in keeping precise records of document production, negotiations, and rituals, which made them helpful for a government whose final form was still malleable. Yoshimitsu in particular switched offices at a dizzying rate, through shogun, Grand Minister, and retired overlord, potentially seeking the status of retired emperor, in the span of a few years.[99] His actions became precedents for his successors in part because he and they had subordinates invested in recording and reusing his activities *as* precedents.[100]

Yoshimitsu's successors, too, found court-shogunate liaisons invaluable for legitimization, even after they gave up Yoshimitsu's ambitions of taking over the role of retired emperor. Court-

98 Tomita Masahiro, "Chūsei kuge seiji monjo no saikento 3: 'hōsho': *tensō* hōsho," in *Nanbokuchō jidai no buke monjo*, ed. Uejima Tamotsu, vol. Chūsei 3, Nihon komonjogaku ronshū 7 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1986), 213–29.

99 Momosaki, *Muromachi no hasha Ashikaga Yoshimitsu*, 62-68, 95-112, 235-240.

100 Notably, three of the private chronicles surviving from shortly after the death of Yoshimitsu in the early fifteenth century, including the longest and most detailed, were written by court-shogunate liaisons: Hirohashi Kanenobu's *Kanenobu-kō ki* (1387-1428), Madenokōji Tokifusa's *Kennaiki* (1414-1455), and Nakayama Sadachika's *Sakkaiki* (1418-1443).

shogunate liaisons attained significant court rank (usually the post of counselor and its associated rank level) and served with an influential retired emperor before they were raised to liaison by the mutual consent of the shogunate and the imperial court. They were living evidence of the rapprochement between imperial court and shogunate, and they owed their careers to the Ashikaga rulers.

When Ashikaga Yoshinori essentially manufactured a crime and required a courtier to swear innocence to it under strict observation, he tried to send all three of his court-shogunate liaisons to supervise the oath-writing ceremony. Only one—the Kajūji liaison, whose family was of slightly higher status—argued that he was too highly ranked for glorified police duties. The other two, of the Hirohashi and Madenokōji families, dutifully assented; the Madenokōji liaison eventually even hosted a follow-up oath-taking and the observation to make sure there was no evidence of falsehood within his own home.[101] Their presence validated Yoshinori's shocking accusation and repeated demands for oath-taking and confinement, and their positions were dependent enough upon him that they did not refuse.

Yet court-shogunate liaisons also depended upon the retired emperors whom they had served. Retired Emperor Go-Komatsu had adopted the son of his cousin Sadafusa after the death of his own son, in order to bring the young prince into Go-Komatsu's lineage and make the ten-year-old boy his son's successor. He did so under some duress; Sadafusa's son, who became the new emperor Go-Hanazono in Shōchō 1 [1428] was the favored candidate of the Ashikagas. Go-Hanazono and many members of his household were loyal to Sadafusa, which put Go-Komatsu in the position of having to compete with Sadafusa for influence over the imperial court. Go-Komatsu was aging, tired, and had recently lost his son; within a few years, he was ready to

101 Chijiwa, "Daishi Kanjō Kishōmon," 170-177.

retire properly from the world, and the court was organizing a ceremony to honor the changing of the era. While technically a farewell to Go-Komatsu, the project was far more a celebration of Go-Hanazono. All the then-serving court-shogunate liaisons gathered to discuss plans for the ceremony, and the Hirohashi liaison mentioned that he had refused when asked to participate as an imperial liaison, citing his discomfort with the idea after having served Go-Komatsu's son.[102] Hirohashi Chikamitsu's loyalty to Go-Komatsu was not enough to make him oppose the shogun's desires, but it was enough to make him decline to participate in a send-off that Go-Komatsu did not want.

Court-shogunate liaisons had some leeway to pursue their own interests; they probably had more than the average courtier. Yet the job of liaison—to facilitate communication between parties from the imperial court and the shogunate—was peculiarly vulnerable to powerful people simply blocking the person holding the office. When Hirohashi Kanenobu provoked official displeasure in Ōei 27 [1420], he withdrew into his own home in helpless response, unable to leave while under a cloud and carrying no messages to the imperial palace or the retired emperor's mansion.[103] There were several other liaisons serving, so communication between court and shogunate did not break down, but all of Hirohashi's negotiations did. The implication was clear: a court-shogunate liaison depended upon the good will of his interlocutors.

Kantō Messenger (*Kantō shisetsu* or *Tōshi*)

Even when the function of court-shogunate liaison moved to a different office, the need for a Kantō messenger remained. From its early days, shortly after the establishment of the

102 Madenokōji Tokifusa, *Kennaiki*, Dai Nihon kokiroku 14 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1966), 2:211-212 (Eikyō 3[1431].03.07).

103 Go-Sukōin, *Kanmon nikki* (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 2004), 2:91 (Ōei 27 [1420].11.01). The entry is not clear whether the displeasure was shogunal or imperial.

Muromachi shogunate in Kyoto, it relied upon an office (*Kamakura-fu*) in the east to govern the area. This Kamakura Office was led by a branch of the Ashikaga family directly descended from the second son of the founder of the Muromachi shogunate and governed with the aid of several important families of retainers. It in many ways developed into the mirror of the Muromachi capital government: by the fifteenth century, the Ashikaga branch member at its head had claimed the same title (*kubō*) as the Muromachi rulers used, the retainer serving below him had become a shogunal chancellor (*kanrei*), and they staffed their offices with commissioners (*bugyō*).[104] The Kantō messenger became an intermediary between these two Ashikaga centers.

Fifteenth-century Kantō messengers were based in the east, in Kamakura, not the capital as the Saionji or the new court-shogunate liaisons were. They were, moreover, drawn not from those with high imperial court rank and office, or whose family held such rank, but from the administrative corps of the Kamakura area. Members of the Nikaidō family, for example, had carried reports from Kamakura to Kyoto during the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.[105] Their descendants in the fifteenth century served as very visible messengers from the Kamakura Office to the Muromachi Residence during times of strain between the east and west.[106] Even those living outside the capital could hear of a Kantō messenger's activities.[107] The ritual of the messenger's arrival and reception by the Muromachi shogun served to mark official notice of

104 Lorraine F. Harrington, "Regional Outposts of Muromachi Bakufu Rule: The Kantō and Kyushu," in *The Bakufu in Japanese History*, ed. Jeffrey P. Mass and William B. Hauser (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985): 81-85; Ebara Masaharu, *Muromachi bakufu to chihō no shakai*, Nihon chūsei shi 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016): 159-164.

105 Takeuchi Rizō, ed., *Kamakura ibun: komonjo hen*, 42 vols. (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1971–1991), 20:51 (#14895: Kantō shisha mōshikotoba-ki, Kōan 6 [1283].07.01) and 35:194 (#27182: Kantō shisha sōmon jōjō kotogaki, Gen'ō 1 [1319]. Intercalary 07.28).

106 Manzei, *Mansai jugō nikki* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928-30), 2:127 (Eikyō 2 [1430].01.25).

107 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:94-95 (Ōei 24 [1417].01.21), 1:130 (Ōei 24.06.07). Sadafusa had moved into the capital by Eikyō 3 [1431], but he was still living in Fushimi in Ōei 24, largely preoccupied by his father's (Ōei 23 [1416].11.20) and brother's (Ōei 24.02.11) recent deaths.

events in the east, which had often reached the capital already, permitting the shogun and his advisors to buy time to discuss a response.[108]

The drawback of visibility, however, is constraint, and a Kantō messenger was at the mercy of the Muromachi shogun's household and allies for access to him. An advisor could stonewall the messenger's access to the shogun, forcing the messenger to go through alternate channels even to learn what was happening, much less get a formal decision.[109] Such vulnerability, combined with a Kamakura Office administrator's lack of deep connections in the capital, meant that Kantō messengers were merely carrying messages, not serving as negotiators. Neither did they hold permanent posts as liaisons in the Kamakura Office; there are no writs appointing anyone to the office issued by the Kamakura Office, and enough different messengers appear in capital records to suggest they were chosen for single missions.[110] They held positions within the Kamakura Office's bureaucracy or the area's temples, but their status depended upon those positions, not their roles as temporary intermediaries. They embodied the continued connection between west and east, Muromachi capital and Kamakura Office, which served its own role in a time when relations between those areas was contentious, but they did not themselves, in their capacity as Kantō messengers, have much voice in decision-making.

Commissioners (Bugyō)

Administration during the Muromachi era depended upon commissioners. The term was a broad one, and responsibilities varied wildly. Every festival had its own commissioner (or

108 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:222-224 (Eikyō 3 [1431].03.20).
109 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:221-224 (Eikyō 3 [1431].03.17-20).
110 These include people from the Nikaidō (*Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:127, Eikyō 2 [1430].01.25), Noda (1:105, Ōei 24 [1417].03.22), Saito (1:256, Ōei 30 [1423].11.29), and Shishido (1:129, Ōei 24 [1417].06.13) families, as well as various named (Head Priest Kasō, 1:137, Ōei 25 [1418].10.12) and unnamed monks (the head of a storehouse, 2:83, Eikyō 1 [1429].09.16).

several), who managed all of the people and materiel necessary to its success; this was a temporary position, often prestigious but lasting only until the task was accomplished.[111] Individual administrative units also used their own commissioners; the commissioner of Fushimi Estate was the highest administrative authority on the estate, for example, with a more expansive portfolio of responsibilities than that of the head of the administrative office (*mandokoro*) of the estate.[112] The commissioner was an administrative role shared across imperial, shogunal, and provincial structures. Commissioners of different regions and bureaucracies had different enough roles that neither they themselves nor subsequent scholars have analyzed them as a collective, but they also shared a number of responsibilities, largely pertaining to the explication of rules and procedures and the collection and distribution of material for a given purpose, with a moderate level of authority over subordinates. The role was flexible enough to encompass the idea of serving a higher authority and getting things done, in a way that was mutually intelligible to members of different systems, despite the dramatic variety within and among them.

The term held a more particular meaning within the shogunate, where it usually referred to a set of secretarial officials who specialized in administration.[113] These men were scattered across several different offices of the shogunate; during the fifteenth century, the most prominent were

111 See, for example, *Kanmon nikki*, 2:54 (Ōei 27 [1420].06.25), where the Fushimi monk Zenki was responsible for organizing the estate's contributions to offertory renga poetry.

112 Yokoi Kiyoshi, *Kanmon gyoki: "Ōja" to "shūsho" no hazama nite*, vol. 16, Nikki kiroku ni yoru Nihon rekishi sōsho: Kodai chusei hen (Tokyo: Soshiete, 1979), 290.

113 The variant term *bugyōnin* nearly always referred to one of these shogunate *bugyō*, so modern scholars have picked it up as a technical term for them. The more general term *bugyō* was used just as often to refer to the shogunate's administrators, however: i.e., (nearly) all references to *bugyōnin* indicate the shogunate's commissioners, but only a subset of contemporary references to shogunal commissioners use the term *bugyōnin.* The use of *bugyōnin* as a term of art for shogunal commissioners thus creates a deceptive precision that erases how civil administrative authorities bled into each other across multiple contexts. Note that the term *bugyō* can mean simply "administration," which has an even broader meaning than "commissioner," but it is usually possible to distinguish from context whether the word refers to a person or an action.

the Council of State (*hyōjō*) and several bureaus of adjudication (*hikitsuke*). A full career usually included service in several, with changes of status as a commissioner moved between offices and took on roles of greater or lesser responsibility. Regardless of their specific position, however, commissioners who served within the shogun's secretariat formed a coherent population: members of a handful of families, all of whom could trace their lineages back to the judicial officialdom of the preceding Kamakura shogunate, who held responsibility for the day-to-day functionality of Muromachi dispute resolution, even as the exact locus of legal argumentation and extralegal negotiation shifted.

Commissioners became prominent in the shogunate's documentary records well into the fifteenth century. The sixth shogun, Ashikaga Yoshinori, attempted to shift power from the shugo to the shogunate's administrators: that is, from constable-governors forced to live in the capital but whose power bases lay in the provinces, to civil commissioners and military commanders directly beholden to the shogun. To position commissioners as counterweights to the shugo, he and they needed to supplement commissioner prestige and authority. This manifested itself in the production and preservation of documents. Most compilations of Muromachi legal cases date to the mid- or late fifteenth century, multiplying as the commissioners' resources and their role in decision-making grew. Eventually, a few wrote their own private chronicles, preserving the semi-public precedents of shogunate administration just as the functionaries of the imperial court preserved that bureaucracy's precedents.

Commissioners were not only producing decisions; they were validating them. Both Ashikaga Yoshinori and his son Yoshimasa, when they had the clout, sent out orders through their own household bureau (*mandokoro*), countersigned by commissioners rather than their

chancellors. The only people who could be chancellor, after all, were the scions of three of the most entrenched shugo families. Commissioners were hereditary as well, but many families competed for the positions, and they were less individually powerful. Relying upon them was meant to strengthen the shogunate as a centralized bureaucratic entity, because commissioners depended upon the existence of a shogun and the administrative structure around him. Most information about who exactly the commissioners were, from which families they came, and how they saw their own job dates from this period, roughly the 1430s-1480s.[114]

Before commissioners grew powerful enough to dominate the documentary record, however, they already held an important role as intermediaries who navigated the shogunal bureaucracy. Commissioners competed to specialize in interfacing with important religious institutions, especially in areas within easy reach of the capital. These included Tōji, Enryakuji, Ise Shrine, the Iwashimizu Hachiman shrine-temple complex, Kōfukuji and the other shrines and temples of Nara, various Zen and Shingon temples, and assorted shrines.[115] These specialist commissioners handled the institution's appeals to the shogunate when conflict reached the point of judicial intervention, and they also advised the institutions on how to navigate more minor requests to the shogunate. While the shogunate's commissioners were the most well-defined, many shugo organizations also encouraged commissioners to specialize in close ties with certain

114 Kenneth A. Grossberg, "Bakufu Bugyōnin: The Size of the Lower Bureaucracy in Muromachi Japan," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 4 (1976): 651–54, https://doi.org/10.2307/2053677; Kuwayama and Hall, "The Bugyōnin System: A Closer Look," 53-63; Kenneth A. Grossberg, *Japan's Renaissance: The Politics of the Muromachi Bakufu*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2001): 99-104.

115 Aoyama Yoshiki, "Muromachi bakufu 'betsu bugyō' ni tsuite no kisotekikōsatsu," in *Muromachi jidai no buke monjo*, ed. Uejima Tamotsu, vol. Chūsei 4, Nihon Komonjogaku Ronshū 8 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1987), 168–89; Imatani Akira, "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin hōsho no kisoteki kōsatsu," *Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan Kenkyū Hōkoku*, no. 1 (June 1982): 175–237.

institutions.[116] Such men had a strong incentive to keep relations between both organizations friendly: it increased their influence with both groups, as well as their income from both.

Shoguns sent their administrative commissioners as messengers to parties in a conflict: when the head of Daigoji appealed to the shogunate for help with absconding villagers on one of his temple's estates, the shogun sent two commissioners with orders to pacify the villagers. The orders were performative: the temple head wanted cover to punish the rebels without ruining his own relationship with them and hoped that the shogun would provide the stick to his carrot. That two commissioners—the same number that would later countersign the shogun's more important commands—brought the message to the temple together suggests that the shogun was using a level of formality midway between private negotiation and documented decision.[117] This sort of performance allowed for more dialogue to fine-tune a solution, while still bringing to bear the weight of the shogunate. Less violently, the shogun also sent commissioners to convey greetings on auspicious occasions or other such social maintenance.[118]

The association between "intermediary" and "commissioner" was strong enough that even some officials who specialized in mediation rather than shogunal administration were tagged with the title of commissioner as long as they were serving as intermediary between the shogunate and disputants. Kajūji Tsuneoki, a court-shogunate liaison, was termed "commissioner" when he handled a conflict between Prince Sadafusa and the Akamatsu family over tax assessments on land that Sadafusa held as an estate proprietor and the Akamatsu ruled as provincial shugo.[119] Over a decade later, Akamatsu Mitsumasa, whom Ashikaga Yoshinori was

116 For example, the Uehara Novice who served the Akamatsu and specialized in relations with Tōji.
117 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:427-428 (Ōei 34 [1427].04.09).
118 *Kanmon nikki*, 6:198 (Eikyō 10 [1438].09.09).
119 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:31 (Ōei 27 [1420].04.04), 2:50-51 (06.09).

using as his regular personal messenger, similarly handled discussions between the Kujo aristocratic family and two shugo concerning taxation rights.[120] Such cases were exceptional, and largely restricted to the most highly-ranked families; though shogunal commissioners held courtesy title as provincial governors, they were low-ranked enough and far enough outside the core imperial courtly society that the court-shogunate liaison or someone else with similarly good aristocratic connections usually handled mediation with courtly families. This could be a mixed blessing for high-ranked families; though the courtly liaisons were closer to them in status, administrative commissioners were generally better placed to handle cases. Kajūji ultimately needed the backup of both an actual administrative commissioner *and* an unofficial intermediary with greater credibility to placate Prince Sadafusa when he did not get what he wanted. This similarity of activity and confluence of terminology illustrates the entanglement of the different types of intermediaries upon which the shogunate relied for its relations with other significant figures with their own administrative authority.

The role of steering disputants through the shogunate's processes grew more lucrative as commissioners' leeway to shape judicial decisions grew more pronounced. As commissioners began writing judicial decisions for the shogun's signature or countersigning orders from the shogun in the Eikyō era (1429-41), the institutions for which they mediated increasingly paid them stipends to ensure persuasive representation. Anyone without prior connections to an influential commissioner was at a disadvantage within the judicial system, even if they had excellent outside connections. Though disputants with enough resources tried sending gift money to encourage better treatment, an uncooperative commissioner could become a dead end for their

120 Kunaichō Shoryōbu, ed., *Kujō-ke rekisei kiroku*, Zushoryō sōkan (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1989), 2:65 (Eikyō 4 [1432].09.11 letter).

appeals: when Sadafusa failed to win his case through Kajūji Tsuneoki, the shogunal chancellor told him to bring it through the proper channels with a commissioner, who then stonewalled the appeal until it died. Because of the complexities of a commissioner's position, it is impossible to say at exactly whose behest this happened, but given the clear awareness of both shogun and his chancellor of the conflict, it seems likely that they used the commissioner to bury it.[121]

Even those with excellent long-term connections with their commissioners, such as the wealthy temple of Tōji, could only rely on them to provide guidance. Commissioners had limited capacity to pressure an Ashikaga ruler or a shugo lord, especially when the ruling Ashikaga was unwilling to give them a judicial decision or an order to write.[122] Those with fewer resources regularly found their cases drawn out so long that they became moot.[123] The connections were still well worth maintaining for the institutions that had them, even as the power of the Muromachi shogunate waned in the late fifteenth century, because their documentary and administrative expertise enhanced the institutions' claims to longstanding authority.[124] As a pathway to sway the decisions of government or reciprocally to persuade the government's subjects of its decisions, however, commissioners were unreliable.

***

Ultimately, commissioners, court-shogunate liaisons, and Kantō messengers shared a fatal weakness: they held no independent authority. Saionji Sanekane, a late Kamakura court-shogunate liaison, was a powerful courtier in his own right: besides the position of liaison, he also taught two emperors music, produced poetry preserved in imperial anthologies, and fathered

121 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:63-64 (Ōei 27 [1420].07.20, 07.23), 2:70 (08.10).
122 *Tōji nijūikku hikitsuke*, 1:99-100 (Ōei 11.06.23); 3:120-121 (Eikyō 7.11.24).
123 Sakurai, *Muromachibito no seishin*, 133-34.
124 Kuwayama and Hall, "The Bugyōnin System: A Closer Look," 62.

an imperial consort.[125] Other Saionji liaisons were similarly accomplished. All three families who shared the position of shogunal chancellor, too, had their own bases of power: they ruled multiple provinces, collecting taxes and enforcing the law, and maintained military forces. They sponsored scholars of political philosophy and history and donated to shrines and temples, which performed rites on their behalf. A shogunal chancellor, like a Saionji liaison, had the clout to push back against an order he disliked, but he also had the power to make people unhappy with a shogun's orders listen and cooperate. The commissioners, liaisons, and messengers of the Muromachi era had no such power: only the force of the shogunate ensured their voices would be heard. While they had important formal functions and, in the case of commissioners, the expertise to maneuver through the shogunate's increasingly labyrinthine complexities, everyone knew they did not have the power to change the shogunate's course.

125 Kamei-Dyche, "Tools of Authority," 188, 217-18.

Chapter 2. Conciliators: Unofficial Intermediaries Recognized by All in Fifteenth-Century Japan

Most messengers were expected to act as accurate conduits, even when they sought advancement through the position. For every narrative of messengers who tweaked the words they carried, countless other records elide the existence of the messenger entirely, merely noting that two people of rank "spoke" to each other. In Muromachi written sources, the basic word for "to say" (*mōsu*) confirms nothing about the manner of saying: records use it for face-to-face spoken words, words spoken through messengers, words written in letters, or words in a hybrid spoken-written form. Ancillary details—the receipt of a letter, the name of a messenger, the description of sitting down across from each other or in separate rooms—illuminate what form the speech took.[126] A terse description of a discussion in a Muromachi chronicle conceals a multitude of possibilities for how that discussion took place.

For all their omissions, however, private chronicles offer a glimpse of the processes behind official decisions. One compilation of cases argued before the shogun (*Gozen rakkyo kiroku*), for example, includes a nullified case from Eikyō 3 [1431].09.06 regarding Sakata Village. A decision had been made to remove tax-collecting authority over the village from the *shugo*[127] and assign it to the temple that held the estate that included Sakata. A headnote three months later indicates that the decision was reversed because the shugo had replaced his local deputy, whose misbehavior was at issue in the complaint. The private chronicle of prominent

126 See Go-Sukōin, *Kanmon nikki* (Tokyo: Kunaichō Shoryōbu, 2004): 2:35 (Ōei 27 [1420].04.03) for examples of speaking through letters; 2:47 (Ōei 27.05.01) for speaking face-to-face; 2:50 (Ōei 27.05.15) for speaking through a messenger from a distance; and 2:73 (Ōei 27.08.07) for using a messenger to speak in the same space. Other chronicles and other years can provide a similar profusion of meanings.

127 See Chapter 1, note 57 for a full explanation of shugo.

Buddhist monk Manzei reveals that the shugo in question appealed to Manzei to convince the shogun to return the authority, and Manzei persuaded Yoshinori to do so on 11.28.[128]

Much historiography elides the maneuvering that led to official decisions, as though a lawsuit over the rights to revenue were fundamentally fought between two parties before the shogun, and anything—or any*one*—else was simply a mechanism to achieve or obstruct that goal. In this view, intermediaries would indeed be mere conduits, a means of accommodating disputants who could not be in the same room for either geographic or hierarchical reasons, or they would be an obstruction.

The case of Sakata Village undermines such a view. The temple holding the estate in which the village fell framed its suit as one against the local deputy of the shugo with authority over the region, not against the shugo himself. The deputy had already earned the shogun's wrath in another context, and the temple charged that the shogun's punishment had left the deputy outside the protection of the law. The headnote widens the frame of the dispute to place it between the temple and the provincial shugo. The shugo in question, Hosokawa Mochiyuki, did not argue his case before the shogun, however, and not due to lack of opportunity. Mochiyuki would be appointed to the second-highest position in the shogunate (*kanrei*[129] or shogunal

128 Kuwayama Kōnen, ed., *Muromachi bakufu hikitsuke shiryō shūsei* (Tokyo: Kondō Shuppansha, 1980): 1:26 (*Gozen rakkyo kiroku*, #33); Manzei, *Mansai jugō nikki* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928-30), 2:315 (Eikyō 3 [1431].11.28).

129 *Kanrei* is often translated as deputy shogun. I prefer shogunal chancellor because the *kanrei* was not a military or ritual substitute for or successor to the shogun if he was absent or incapacitated. Instead, the *kanrei* was an administrative head of the shogunate, responsible first for the production and dissemination of documents and second for coordinating the opinions of all the shugo within the capital. The first *kanrei*, Hosokawa Yoriyuki, did serve as regent to the underage Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, and the *kanrei* remained the first-choice regent for underage shoguns, but a *kanrei*'s power came from his authority over documents and ability to persuade his fellow shugo, rather than as a stand-in or mouthpiece for the shogun. The post thus more closely resembles a royal or imperial (here, shogunal) chancellor, whose control over the documents of state afforded him significant influence and power, than a deputy, whose job it would be to act on his principal's behalf in meetings or locations where that principal was absent. See John Whitney Hall and Toyoda Takeshi, eds., *Japan*

chancellor) the next year, and had regular social access to the shogun. He had recently hosted the shogun as they observed the Gion Parade (06.14) together, and was an occasional participant in the shogun's poetry gatherings, among other opportunities.[130] Yet he chose to approach an outside party—Manzei—to present his appeal.

This choice was common. Communication in the Muromachi era was consistently mediated, particularly in the case of disputes. The previous chapter addressed the ways that such a structure was built into the government, through the mediums of the official court-shogunate liaisons, the commissioners (*bugyō*) who specialized in interfacing with major institutions such as individual temples and aristocratic households, and the Kantō messengers that connected the eastern regions to the capital. Yet even these institutionalized intermediaries were insufficient, in part because those for whom they mediated recognized their potential power *as* messengers who shaped their messages and sought to undermine it. This chapter focuses on a subset of unofficial intermediaries whom I call conciliators. No single position or character trait qualified a conciliator, and their contemporaries did not necessarily recognize them as similar figures, but an external view identifies striking similarities.

What Made a Conciliator?

Conciliators were, first and foremost, trusted and respected by both the leader whom they served and their society at large. Conciliators were not independent figures; each was linked tightly to a higher-ranking figure and derived authority from a common recognition of their ability to influence that figure. Manzei, above, had a demonstrated history of both supporting and

in the Muromachi Age (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977): 45-52, 59-61, 70, for multiple perspectives on the *kanrei*'s function and activities. I reserve the word "deputy" for cases such as the deputy shugo (*shugo-dai*), where the appointee was indeed exercising power on behalf of a geographically distant principal.

130 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:255-56 (Eikyō 3 [1431].06.14).

persuading the shogun, and served as conciliator to two successive shoguns, Ashikaga Yoshimochi and Yoshinori. Another conciliator, Lady Takahashi, had been their father Yoshimitsu's concubine and was described as one of the few people able to keep him happy; she exerted considerable influence upon his sons until her death. Yet another of Yoshimochi's conciliators was his old tutor, Jōsō. Not all conciliators were connected to a shogun. Tamuke Tsuneyoshi, who served the disinherited Fushimi prince Sadafusa, acted as a manager for his estate as well as his negotiator.

Despite the importance of this personal connection, conciliators also required an independent prestige to command the respect necessary for the job. Manzei was not only the head of a major temple, but had also served as a protector-monk (*gojisō*) for both the shogun and the emperor. Yoshimochi's tutor was one of the most innovative scholars of classical Chinese learning in the imperial court, invited by the highest officials in government to give lectures on the classics of statecraft. Lady Takahashi appeared as a model of human insight in the theatrical treatises of the famous playwright Zeami. Tamuke Tsuneyoshi held a high imperial court rank, and his wife was one of the most active event organizers on the Fushimi estate. None of these reputations alone made these figures conciliators; all, however, helped lend them the credibility to do the job.

In short, then, the routes to become a conciliator were varied but included a few categories of necessary qualifications. First was the trust of the leader whom they served. Second was an independent reputation: that is, a reputation built upon the conciliator-to-be's own activities, not solely upon ranks and offices granted by the aforementioned leader. Third was perhaps a subsidiary of the second: literary ability. A conciliator need not be a famed scholar, but most

would struggle to do the job if they could not compose a stanza at a poetry party or—for men—read classical Chinese competently. Fourth was rank: necessary rank varied based upon the rank of the leaders whom they served and the others with whom they spoke, but a rank that made it socially acceptable to associate with such people was essential. Fifth and final was what one might call disqualification: conciliators had to be ineligible to compete with those for whom they negotiated. Often this came in the form of Buddhist vows, which could establish a break between a conciliator's access to imperial office and a new stage as monk or lay monk, but monks, too, could vie for power. Other actions, such as backing down promptly during certain conflicts over resources, buttressed the conciliator's claim to have withdrawn from the field of competition. This last (dis)qualification ensured that no single person could conciliate for everyone: everyone with the necessary rank and reputation could compete with *someone*: those people required a different conciliator.

Consistent physical access was, notably, not a critical qualification, though the problem of physical access haunts global discussions of rulers and governance. Norbert Elias's vivid depiction of King Louis XIV in early modern France controlling his courtiers by doling out the privilege of attendance in his chambers undergirds modern conceptions of royal courts.[131] Even Japanese observers from the eleventh century saw this sort of access as vital: the *Ōkagami*, an anonymous account of the rise of the great Heian aristocrat Fujiwara no Michinaga (966-1028), includes a tense scene wherein Michinaga's sister Senshi forces her way into the bedroom of her

131 A. J. S. Spawforth, "Introduction," in *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*, A. J. S. Spawforth, ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 1-16; Norbert Elias, "The bonding of kings through etiquette and status chances," in *The Court Society,* Edmund Jephcott, trans. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983): 117-145.

son the emperor and coerces him into granting Michinaga control over the imperial government.[132] Four centuries later, the rank of courtier authorized to enter the emperor's presence (*tenjōbito*) was still an important privilege for which many strove. Most conciliators operating at the level of the shogun or imperial court held the privilege or its religious equivalent. The potential for access was, however, more important than the access itself for influence. While the trust that all conciliators held usually came with physical access, Yoshimochi continued to rely on Jōsō even after the tutor was well into his seventies and too frail to regularly attend upon the shogun, and Manzei did much of his mediation via lower-level messengers. Conversely, powerful shugo or imperial ministers with direct access to decision-makers often declined to make their arguments in person.

People relied upon conciliators to present proposals faithfully and effectively. Hosokawa Mochiyuki, in the above example, trusted Manzei to convey his words to Yoshinori more effectively than Mochikore himself could. “Faithfully” in the case of a conciliator, unlike an ordinary messenger, did not mean without modification. All messengers could, of course, shape the messages they carried, and most people sought to use messengers whom they trusted for that reason. Trusting a messenger to accurately convey one's words and keep documents confidential was not the same thing as trusting that person to make policy, however. Kai Hideyuki, in his discussion of the Ōuchi family's representatives in Kyoto in the late fifteenth century, emphasized the necessity of distinguishing between messengers who solely transmitted documents and words and another group who conveyed information but were also trusted with responsibility to negotiate and manipulate events.[133] Both official intermediaries and conciliators

132 Helen Craig McCullough, Ōkagami*: The Great Mirror* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980): 198-99.

133 Kai Hideyuki, “Chiiki kenryoku no zasshōsō to sono katsudō,” *Ōryō shigaku* 25 (Sept. 1999): 206.

fell into the latter category, but where restrictions on their office limited official intermediaries' choices, conciliators held independent status to support their roles as intermediaries. They used their own positions to lend weight to the messages they presented. A crucial difference between conciliators and messengers, then, was that conciliators were expected to shape the message, to use their own judgment about when and how to present it, with flexibility that even official intermediaries lacked. A messenger, by contrast, was supposed to be a conduit rather than an advocate. As a practical consequence, a messenger who too obviously and too often shaped the messages earned resentment, a conciliator who did so earned gratitude, and a messenger trying to act as conciliator waded in dangerous waters.

Cases of Conciliators

I introduce here in detail the conciliators whom I have referenced and will continue to discuss. Because the position was entirely informal, no rank or office functions as a proxy. Instead, conciliators appeared in their histories and their actions. They eased the sting of what might otherwise be controversial choices, by building consensus for them, softening their effects, or providing a channel through which to negotiate without direct defiance. They also provided a route through which a leader could privately indicate resolute determination, either to back up a similar formal order or to avoid the brinksmanship of a proclamation that might be disobeyed. Each introduction below includes an example of conciliators' actions to begin to build a sense of their role.

Manzei: The Shogun and the Warrior Lords

Manzei was a prototypical conciliator, exceptional only in his prominence. Known to contemporaries as the "Black-Robed Prime Minister," for his monk's robes and his great

influence, Manzei was the head of Daigoji, a wealthy and influential Shingon temple just south of Kyoto, with an active ritual calendar.[134] The temple also had a fortified subtemple, Hōshin'in, that was Manzei's residence within the city, mere blocks from the palaces of the Muromachi shoguns and even closer to the imperial palace.[135] The close proximity was helpful in his role as a *gojisō*, a protector-monk who regularly performed rituals for the protection of emperor and shogun. He also served twice (Ōei 16-18 [1409-11] and Ōei 24-27 [1417-20]) as titular head of the ruling council of Tōji, the most powerful Shingon temple within Kyoto; its list of temple heads during this era was essentially a who's-who of prominent Shingon monks.[136] Notably, his first term at Tōji directly predated the start of his private chronicle, which began in Ōei 18 [1411], as well as most of his significant political activity. The position functioned as a bridge between the administrators who generally ran Tōji and other powerful people in the capital; it was a prime position from which to build political connections, and doing the job well required adroit diplomacy. Manzei did it twice.[137]

Manzei was the adoptive brother of Ashikaga Yoshimochi and Yoshinori, the two shoguns who reigned for most of the first half of the fifteenth century, and descended by blood from a highly placed aristocratic family, a branch of the Fujiwara that regularly reached the elite third rank (out of six) of court officials. While Manzei's combination of resume and family ties were exceptional, they were not singular. The roles of protector-monk and head of a major temple were often combined, and many well-born temple heads in the fifteenth century had been

134 Mori Shigeaki, *Mansai: Tenka no gisha kubō koto ni goshūshō* (Kyōto-shi: Mineruva Shobō, 2004): i-iii, 20.

135 See Conlan, *From Sovereign to Symbol*, 100-101 and Stavros, *Kyoto: An Urban History of Japan's Premodern Capital* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014): 110-111 for maps that make this proximity dramatically visible.

136 "Tōji chōja bunin," 666-73, available in *Zoku zoku gunsho ruijū* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1923): 2:470-708.

137 Mori, *Mansai*, 63-65.

adopted into the Ashikaga family to tie them more closely to the shogunate. The crucial final factor was Manzei's demonstrated ability to convince the shogun to listen to him.

During the Eikyō 2 [1430] negotiations that opened this dissertation, for example, shogun Ashikaga Yoshinori and many of his shugo lords were at a lecture in honor of Bishamon, deity of war and wealth, in the hills northeast of Kyoto. Yoshinori and various prominent shugo had been arguing about the Isshiki, after the head of the family refused to participate in Yoshinori's procession. Isshiki power had been declining for years, but they were still a family that had branched off from the Ashikaga, and the head was the shugo of three provinces. They also retained the hereditary right to be appointed to an office responsible for peacekeeping in the capital.[138] Yoshinori wanted the Isshiki punished for defying him, and he wanted his shugo subordinates to cooperate. Most of them, however, did not want a fight with the Isshiki.

From his own residence in central Kyoto, Manzei mediated the argument among the shogun and two influential heads of shugo families at the Bishamon event together. Ashikaga Yoshinori, Hatakeyama Mitsuie, and Yamana Tokihiro had been discussing the Isshiki via messengers for weeks: first the family's position in the procession and later their punishment. All three sent messages to and received them from Manzei, attenuating the dangers of direct confrontation between shogun and powerful shugo, and eventually settling on a token punishment that Yoshinori could accept.[139]

---

138 This was the *samurai-dokoro*, an administrative post somewhat below the shogunal chancellor with ambiguous responsibilities, amounting to managing Ashikaga retainers within the capital, interpreted broadly. Among those responsibilities, the *samurai-dokoro* should lead this procession. The Akamatsu held the office at the time of the procession; the Yamana had held it at the time of the procession they referenced. See Imatani Akira, "Zōtei Muromachi bakufu samurai-dokoro tōnin narabi Yamashiro shugo tsukedokoro bunin enkaku kōshōkō," in *Shugo ryōgoku shihai kikō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1986), 22-23.

139 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:166 (Eikyō 2 [1430].08.07).

Manzei did need some proximity for his work; if a major controversy arose while Manzei was outside the city in his own Daigoji temple, several hours' travel away, he would usually commute into the city to make himself more readily available. Shugo sometimes chose to visit Manzei's Kyoto subtemple directly to make their arguments, and Manzei had regular physical access to the shogun at separate monthly gatherings for both linked-verse (*renga*) and classical *waka* poetry. More often, however, messengers both unnamed and named carried word between Manzei and the conflicting parties.

Jōsō: The Shogun and the Court

Jōsō was the religious name of Kiyohara Yoshikata, who took vows as a Buddhist lay monk in Ōei 4 [1397], whereupon he retired from his official courtly positions. For simplicity, and because he did his work as a conciliator after taking vows, I will use his Buddhist name throughout. Before his retirement, Jōsō was a well-known scholar, respected both for his mastery of the Kiyohara family's corpus of scholarship, built up over centuries, and also for innovation in incorporating new strands of thought from continental China. In Ōan 6 [1373], he presented then-emperor Go-Kogon with a version of the *Old Classic of Documents* (*Kobun Shōsho* | *Guwen Shangshu*), a Chinese classic closely associated with good governance. Such a presentation was a milestone in the career of a traditional court scholar, and Jōsō gave lectures that year for some of the highest-ranked members of the imperial court. A few years later, he began as well to tutor the shogun and other members of the warrior aristocracy. His major topics included the *Analects* of Confucius and the *Record of Rites*; like the *Classic of Documents*, these were difficult Chinese classics considered fundamental for good government.[140] Jōsō also held

140 See Wajima Yoshio, *Chūsei no Jugaku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1965): 169-70 for Kiyohara Yoshikata's scholarly career. See Konoe Michitsugu, *Goshinjin'in kanpaku ki*, ed. Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999): 240-41, 245, 248, 258, 271 (Entries for Ōan 6

the formal court post of Major Secretary (*daigeki*) of the Council of State. As in the case of Manzei, this resume was not singular: most Major Secretaries were specialists in the Chinese classics and so gave lectures and wrote treatises for the imperial court and shogunate. Zen Buddhist monks were increasingly taking up the mantle of experts on Chinese learning, particularly using new texts imported from the continent; the Kiyohara family needed to grapple with the new ideas to remain relevant as scholars. The private chronicle of Gidō Shūshin, influential Zen monk and friend of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, shows Yoshimitsu asking the Zen monk to respond to court scholars' statements about Chinese learning, which emphasizes how competitive the field of classical Chinese studies had become.[141]

Hosokawa Yoriyuki (1329-1392), then serving as regent and chancellor (*kanrei*) for the child shogun Yoshimitsu, seems to have brought Jōsō into the shogun's orbit. The scholar's close relationship with the Hosokawa family would continue for generations, even after Yoriyuki's fall from power, but Jōsō survived as the shogun's scholarly adviser even after his initial patron's fall. An adult Yoshimitsu, having ousted his powerful regent and taken over the reins of power, took Jōsō into his own household as a retainer, part of a larger project to bind useful aristocrats to him outside the format of court ranks. He designated Jōsō tutor first to the new emperor, Go-Komatsu, and then to his own heir, Ashikaga Yoshimochi, a few years after that. Though Yoshimochi's relationship to his father's legacy was ambivalent at best, he seems to have trusted Jōsō, relying only more heavily on him after Yoshimitsu's death.[142]

[1373].02.03, 02.10, 02.21, 03.06, 04.21, and 06.21) for one series of lectures to an imperial regent and his household.

141 Gidō Shūshin, *Kūge nichiyō kūfū ryakushū*, ed. Tsuji Zennosuke (Tokyo: Taiyōsha, 1939): 147 (Eitoku 1.09.22); for a more recent annotated version, see Kageki Hideo, *Kunchū Kūge nichiyō kūfū ryakushū* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1982): 239-240.

142 Ochiai Hiroshi, "Kiyohara Yoshikata denkō," *Nō: Kenkyū to hyōron* 16 (1988): 13-16.

At the height of the summer of Ōei 25 [1418], Jōsō sent an urgent letter to imperial prince Sadafusa in Fushimi, telling him to send two of his most trusted men to the capital immediately. There Jōsō told them that the shogun had tasked Hirohashi Kanenobu, a liaison between imperial court and shogunate, with discreetly investigating the emperor's complaints that one of his ladies (*naishi*) has gotten pregnant at a drunken party in the Fushimi area. All three — shogun, liaison, and Jōsō — agreed that Jōsō would be the best person to inquire: he maintained a cordial relationship with Sadafusa, who had sent the shogun and his family gifts via Jōsō earlier in the year. Jōsō strenuously recommended that Sadafusa and his close retainers write denials of the charges, which had already roused the concern of the emperor's father and the most powerful member of the imperial family, Retired Emperor Go-Komatsu.[143]

Sadafusa, along with his retainers and the head of the temple at which the lady had stayed, quickly wrote oaths denying the accusations. Jōsō had alerted Sadafusa on the fourteenth day of the seventh month; Sadafusa sent a private letter with a detailed explanation of how he could not have been involved back to Jōsō the next morning. Sadafusa then talked to the head of the temple at which the lady had stayed, had him write out a sworn statement of events, and discreetly had his own people write out their oaths of denial before sending two men back to the capital to

143 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:222-224 (Ōei 25 [1418].07.14-16). Go-Komatsu (1377-1433) reigned as emperor around the turn of the fifteenth century (1382-1412), but he dominated the imperial court until his death. After resigning the throne in favor of his son, who became Emperor Shōkō, Go-Komatsu exerted authority as an *in*, or retired emperor. Though vulnerable to the monetary and martial power of the Ashikaga shoguns, Go-Komatsu's moral and social power waned only at the end of his life, after his son died without an heir and Go-Komatsu had no choice but to adopt a member from another line of the imperial family as his successor. For the classic English-language treatment of retired emperors, before the advent of shoguns, see G. Cameron Hurst, *Insei: Abdicated Sovereigns in the Politics of Late Heian Japan, 1086-1185* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976). For further discussion of the role of retired emperors within the Muromachi imperial court and the court's interactions with the Ashikaga, see chapter 1 of this dissertation. For extensive discussion of Go-Komatsu's relationship with the shogunate, in particular, see Ishihara Hiiro, "Ashikaga Yoshimochi to Go-Komatsu 'Ōken,'" *Shigakku zasshi* 116, no. 6 (2007): 1033–63.

deliver the oaths to both Jōsō and the official messenger. After Jōsō reiterated to Sadafusa's retainers, and they to Sadafusa, the level of severity the rumors had reached, Sadafusa wrote out a new, more formal oath denying all the charges on the back of an ox-tailed charm (*goō hōin*) from Kitano Shrine in Kyoto, to give added force to the formulaic words calling down the wrath of the deities if he lied. This prompt, decisive denial helped to squash the entire scandal quickly: the shogun concluded his investigation within the month, though the relationship between Go-Komatsu and Sadafusa took much longer to repair. Jōsō remained the private channel by which Sadafusa learned about developments in the investigation and the shogun kept abreast of events in Fushimi throughout. The visible use of an official messenger alongside a conciliator underscored the severity of the accusations, but Jōsō managed the effective communication that defused the situation.

The accusation of adultery within the imperial family was potentially explosive, which was why both shogun and the official messenger immediately enlisted the aid of Jōsō as conciliator. Though Sadafusa's formal, written denials went to the shogun through the official channel of the messenger, the immediate reactions and most up-to-date information went through Jōsō. All involved in investigating Sadafusa — Sadafusa himself, his retainers, the court-shogunate liaison, and the shogun — expected that Jōsō's first priority in this case would be the shogun's interests: finding the details of the incident quickly and in a persuasive format. The emperor was widely considered temperamental, but the shogun could neither ignore the emperor's and retired emperor's concerns, nor casually alienate the Fushimi branch of the imperial family, which remained respected despite being removed from succession to the throne and losing many of its former lands. Jōsō's quiet effort to sift through the gossip and present the

shogun with essential information let the shogun address the matter quickly and with confidence. Within seven days of Sadafusa's detailed statement to Jōsō, the shogun personally interviewed the *sarugaku* performer accused of performing at Sadafusa's drunken parties, who confirmed that he had never met the prince. Equally important, Sadafusa trusted that Jōsō would accurately and persuasively convey his protestations to the shogun, listened why Jōsō told him stronger proof was necessary, and remained quiet while Jōsō spoke on his behalf. Notably, the relationship between Sadafusa and the shogun stabilized far more quickly after this than did the relationship between Sadafusa and Go-Komatsu, which did not benefit from a conciliating intermediary.[144]

Tamuke Tsuneyoshi: Prince Sadafusa and the Estate

Tamuke Tsuneyoshi was, according to the prince he served, the heir of Grand Counselor Niwata Shigesuke of the Ayanokōji family, hereditary retainer of Prince Sadafusa's branch of the imperial family. The Ayanokōji, like many aristocratic families during the Muromachi era, had split, branched, and specialized, simultaneously taking up new family names and returning to the well-established older ones. While one branch of the Ayanokōji family split off to specialize in the arts and kept the Ayanokōji name, Shigesuke renamed his line the Niwata and achieved the family's highest political rank of a grand counselor (*dainagon*), four generations after an Ayanokōji scion had last held the rank, shortly before his death of old age. The achievement was bittersweet: the emperor whom Shigesuke's daughter had married had been dethroned, and her son—Sadafusa's father—was disinherited.

The Niwata branch split again in the generation of Tsuneyoshi's father, who took the name Tamuke. Neither Tsuneyoshi's father nor his uncle, who kept the name Niwata, achieved the

144 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:224-226 (Ōei 25 [1318].07.17 & 07.22).

office of grand counselor, but the Niwata branch once more wedded a daughter in the next generation to Sadafusa. That daughter bore Sadafusa's eldest son, making her brother Niwata Shigeari into Sadafusa's brother-in-law and the future emperor's uncle. In the family history that Sadafusa wrote for his son after the boy ascended the throne, Sadafusa specified that Tsuneyoshi was the heir (*chakuson*) of the Niwata ancestor whereas Shigeari was an ordinary descendant (*shoshi*), at the same time that he emphasized that Shigeari was Go-Hanazono's maternal uncle and thus deserved Go-Hanazono's kindness. This had tangible consequences: Shigeari was posthumously promoted to the first rank in the imperial court, beyond where anyone in his family had gone or would go in the future. Tsuneyoshi received the second rank.[145]

Tamuke Tsuneyoshi used both his family connections and his lack thereof to serve as a conciliator for Prince Sadafusa. As the heir to Niwata Shigesuke, he had a place within the imperial court hierarchy and access to offices and ranks that gave him the stature to speak to courtiers. He appealed to his distant Ayanokōji cousin to give him the family's secret transmissions in *Eikyōku* music, a large category of popular ceremonial music that enabled him to perform at imperial banquets, and he was an active participant in the Fushimi estate's monthly linked verse poetry gatherings. The linked verse events brought together the most powerful aristocrats and monks in Fushimi to collaborate in creating a long chain of poetry with lines in the style of both *kanshi* (Chinese classical) and *waka* (Japanese classical) poetry, a chance to simultaneously demonstrate erudition and build fellow-feeling.[146] Tsuneyoshi sent one of his sons

145 Go-Sukōin, *Shōchū Chin'yōki*, ed. Murata Masashi (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1984), 269, 313; Yokoi Kiyoshi, *Kanmon gyoki: "Ōja" to "shūsho" no hazama nite* (Tokyo: Soshiete, 1979), 128-134; Matsuzono Hitoshi, "Muromachi jidai no nyobō ni tsuite," *Ningen Bunka: Aichi Gakuin Daigaku ningen bunka kenkyūjo kiyō* 28 (2013), 173; and Nojima Jusaburō, ed., *Kugyō jinmei daijiten* (Tokyo: Nichigai Asoshiētsu: Hatsubaimoto Kinokuniya Shoten, 1994), 41-46, 488-89, 614-619.

146 See *Kanmon nikki*, 1:175 (Ōei 24 [1417].11.23), 1:193 (Ōei 25 [1418].02.07), 1:279 (Ōei 26 [1419].04.25), for a few examples across different months and years, or see 2:16 (Ōei 27 [1420].intercalary 01.13) for Tamuke Tsuneyoshi being included at the head of a list of "the usual

to be adopted into the Sesonji, a family of notable calligraphers with longstanding ties to the Fushimi princes, while his sister headed an important nunnery and other sons served in local monasteries. His heir was also prominent in Fushimi, expected to excel in music and serve at court just as his father had, and his wife was a foremost social authority on the estate. Tsuneyoshi had the rank, reputation, and personal ties necessary to be a credible voice.[147]

The fact that Tamuke Tsuneyoshi was *not* the blood brother of Prince Sadafusa's wife and uncle of his son counterbalanced his prominence and high office, giving him the hint of distance that a conciliator needed. When rumors began to swirl in Ōei 24 [1417] that Sadafusa had poisoned his elder brother, Tsuneyoshi was the person who warned Sadafusa they had begun. By contrast, Niwata Shigeari, Tsuneyoshi's cousin and Sadafusa's brother-in-law, was a fellow subject of the rumors. Tsuneyoshi was separate enough from Sadafusa to have access to the rumormongers, but trusted enough that Sadafusa sent him to convince the shogun that the rumors were fiction.[148]

Tamuke Tsuneyoshi frequently served as Prince Sadafusa's negotiator in areas where Sadafusa had income rights or authority, including for Fushimi Estate, where they lived; for the much broader portfolio of land rights Sadafusa's family held in nearby Harima Province; and

---

participants" in regular linked verse.

147 For the Sesonji son, other sons in monasteries, and sister, see John Douglas Creamer, "The Imperial Scribal Network: A Study of Writing and Textual Commerce in '*Kanmon Nikki*'" (Ph.D., Yale University, 2007): 47-51 and Matsuzono, "Muromachi jidai no nyobō ni tsuite," 173. Shiba-dono, Tsuneyoshi's wife, was either either from a well-connected local family (the Shiba) or, more likely, the elder sister of Sadafusa's wife. For the local family theory, see Matsuzono, "Muromachi jidai no nyobō ni tsuite," 146, 158-59, 176. For the sister theory, see. Ueda Shinpei and Ōsawa Izumi, "Fushimi no miya Sadafusa shinnō no shūhen: *Kanmon nikki* jinmei hitei no saikentō," *Shoryōbu kiyō*, no. 66 (2014), 16-18. Nagasuke, Tsuneyoshi's heir, appears in a number of entries in *Kanmon nikki* concerning music practice, participation in Fushimi events, and court service, including 2:37 (Ōei 27 [1420].04.11), 2:49 (05.11), 2:51 (05.21), 2:60-61 (07.03), 2:77 (08.21), 2:81 (09.03), and 2:83 (09.09).

148 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:106 (Ōei 24 [1417].02.18 and 02.21).

even for more distant holdings as far as Chikuzen Province in Kyushu. In Ōei 26 [1419], the question arose of revenue from Akama Estate in Chikuzen. Akama income was part of a package of land rights collectively granted to Sadafusa and his family, but control over the more distant parts of the package had grown lax over the century of near-instability as civil war raged and the Muromachi shogunate pulled together its own coalition. Most critically, the shogunate ceded half the revenue of a province to its shugo midway through the fourteenth century, originally in an effort to keep the revenue where the armies were. By the early fifteenth, this had made the shugo the dominant tax-collecting power in each province, though most were also required to live in the capital in an effort to prevent them from accumulating too much local power. Kyushu was perhaps the worst quagmire, as local families switched sides and territory changed hands long after fighting had quieted in the rest of the archipelago. In Ōei 8 [1401], in fact, the commander in Kyushu (*tandai*) had assigned the proprietor's share (*ryōke-hō*) from Akama Estate to an ally from a martial family that controlled a major shrine in northern Kyushu. The shugo of Chikuzen was simultaneously taking his usual cut of half the proceeds from his province, which left a very limited revenue stream flowing towards the old rights-holders, and both a Kyoto subtemple and Sadafusa laid claim to it.[149]

The dispute arose over whether a previous imperial prince's donation to the subtemple had been total, alienating Akama from the package of land rights, or partial, a manager's portion (*bugyō-shiki*). Both sides had documents, though the subtemple's were more complete, and both showed them to each other to prove their case. Throughout all of this, Tamuke Tsuneyoshi was

149 *Kanmon nikki* 1:315-18 (Ōei 26 [1419].11.21-22, 12.4, 12.7, and 12.19); “Akama ryōke-hō monjo” in *Munakata taisha monjo*, 2:277-78, 368. The man granted the proprietor’s share in Ōei 8 was Munakata Ujitsune, one of several claimants to headship of the Munakata family, which combined military power with priestly leadership of Munakata Shrine, one of the great shrines of northern Kyushu. The Kyushu commander who granted it was Shibukawa Mitsuyori.

Sadafusa's point person, going to the subtemple in Kyoto and hosting the subtemple's monks at his own home in Fushimi as part of the discussions. When Sadafusa donated a treasured sutra scroll to the subtemple to smooth the negotiation, he sent it via Tsuneyoshi, and when the subtemple eventually agreed to provide Sadafusa a lump sum in exchange for a fresh deed from Sadafusa donating the estate to the temple, they sent the money back via Tsuneyoshi.[150]

For a figure such as Prince Sadafusa, whose family heritage was both a powerful source of cultural authority and potentially a sharp sword at his neck should he push too hard, a conciliator such as Tamuke Tsuneyoshi was essential. He had limited ability to impose his will through force, constrained both by the number of his retainers skilled in arms and by the disfavor with which those around him would view someone of his status using violence.[151] He also had limited recourse to the legal system, because that would entail invoking his own authority against others in a head-on clash that might overreach the latitude his distant cousins the emperor and retired emperor were willing to afford his disinherited branch of the family. Thus, Tsuneyoshi's ability to win Sadafusa at least partial victories without testing the limits of his authority allowed Sadafusa to navigate the ambiguity of his social position, buttress his authority, and slowly raise his stature, to the point that when his imperial cousin died without heirs, Sadafusa's own son was a plausible candidate to inherit the throne.

Lady Takahashi: The Shogun and the Capital's Ladies

Lady Takahashi was probably a courtesan of eastern Kyoto before she caught the eye of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu and became his concubine. While Yoshimitsu lived, she was the Lady of

150 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:50 (Ōei 27 [1420].05.14), 2:53 (Ōei 27.06.05), 2:55-58 (Ōei 27.06.11, 27.06.14-15, 27.06.19, 27.06.22), 2:103 (Ōei 27.12.23), 3:138-39 (Ōei 32 [1425].07.04).

151 The same Ōei 27.06.19 entry above also includes a council Sadafusa held regarding a violent clash on Fushimi estate, in which the participants decided not to take up arms in response.

the West Residence, a favored intimate of the shogun and thus a convenient channel to him. After Yoshimitsu's death, however, Takahashi took on a semi-legendary status as one of the few who had never suffered his wrath. The playwright Zeami, who wrote the only near-contemporary account of her origins and who himself flourished under Yoshimitsu's patronage, described Takahashi as one whom Yoshimitsu "revered," who "understood everything concerning human feelings, knew the will of her lord, and indeed finished her own life without suffering any adversity."[152] Yoshimitsu's son paid public respect to her, regularly visiting her as part of his shogunal New Year's greetings; she joined Yoshimochi, his wife, and his heir at least once in dispensing prizes at a New Year's archery festival.[153] While the immediacy of Lady Takahashi's connection to Yoshimitsu gave her access to wealth and power, it was the respect she earned from and connections she built to others that enabled her to later act as Yoshimochi's conciliator, smoothing relations between him and the women around him.

Lady Takahashi used her connection to Yoshimitsu for two major objectives: interceding in property disputes and sponsoring religious activities. For the first, Takahashi joined a centuries-long tradition of being a voice in court: an intermediary who helped another obtain rights to income and expected to reap benefits from that. Manzei, for example, had acted in such a role for an estate in Kyushu.[154] While her activities here helped to build her fortune and alliances, they were less essential to her reputation than her religious involvement. Takahashi's few recorded property interventions had relatively small-scale effects: she helped a shogunal

152 Zeami, J. Thomas Rimer, and Masakazu Yamazaki, *On the Art of the No Drama* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984): 247.

153 Matsuoka Shinpei, "Muromachi shōgun to keijō Takahashi-dono," in Matsuoka, ed., *Kanmon nikki to chūsei bunka* (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2009): 357-359.

154 For Lady Takahashi, see Matsuoka, "Muromachi shōgun to keijō Takahashi-dono," 340, quoting Yoshida Kaneatsu's private chronicle, *Yoshida-ke hinamiki*. For Manzei, see "Ichiwakamiya no shō monjo" in *Munakata Taisha monjo* (Tokyo: Hatsubaijo Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1993): 2:257.

guard win a lucrative provincial title and a scholar specializing in Japanese deities and rules of religious purity gain some estate lands.[155] These were well-chosen beneficiaries: the warrior—or perhaps a member of his family—became a close shogunal retainer with dual loyalty to Takahashi, and the scholar had influence and connections within Ise Shrine, which was a major focus of Takahashi's religious efforts. To reap the full benefits of her choices, however, Takahashi first needed to build a reputation independent of being a voice in the ear of the shogun.

Lady Takahashi was most active in two pilgrimage circuits: the Kumano and the Ise pilgrimages. Kumano was a traditional destination for imperial women and increasingly during the Muromachi era women of many other statuses as well.[156] Ise, on the other hand, was central to Ashikaga Yoshimitsu's political and religious ambitions, and Takahashi's initial access seems to have been as part of Yoshimitsu's campaign of influence. She swiftly built upon that, not only at the Ise Grand Shrine itself, but also in pilgrimages to other sites linked to the same gods in eastern Japan.[157] When Takahashi traveled with Yoshimitsu, she was generally classed among his concubines, associated with the women and temple boys (*chigo*) of his household.[158] Pilgrimages, however, provided her the opportunity to travel with high-status women of both the

155 Quoted in Matsuoka, "Muromachi shōgun to keijō Takahashi-dono," 340-343. For the original warrior-related materials, see "19. Saishōkōinkata hyōjō hikitsuke" in *Tōji monjo*, v. 5, Dai Nihon komonjo, iewake, ed. Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, vol. 10 (Tokyo: Tokyo University, 1953): 105-115, concerning Niimi Estate and Haga Tamekiyo. For the scholar-related materials, see the excerpt from *Yoshida-ke hinamiki* in Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, ed., *Dai Nihon shiryo v. 7.5* (Tokyo: Tokyo University, 1934): 457.

156 D. Max Moerman, *Localizing Paradise: Kumano Pilgrimage and the Religious Landscape of Premodern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005): 181-232.

157 Matsuoka, "Muromachi shōgun to keijō Takahashi-dono," 337-339, 346-357.

158 See, for example, an Ōei 8 [1401].09.16 visit to Settsu Province in Higashibōjō Hidenaga, *Kōyō ki*, v. 1, Shiryo shūsei, ed. Ogawa Takeo, v160 (Tokyo, Yagi Shoten, 2011): 194; and a Meitoku 4 [1393].05.18 visit to Wakasa Province in "Wakasa no kuni saisho imatomi myōryōshu daidai shidai," in *Gunsho ruijū v. 4: Bunin-bu*, 3rd ed. (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1940): 351.

shogun's household and the households of powerful shugo, as she did when she traveled through central Japan alongside the wives of the Isshiki shugo and his heir.[159]

At the broadest level, Lady Takahashi's work as a conciliator relied upon the connections that she made. Takahashi was not of a prominent family and had no children, putting her outside the most common channels for conflict and advancement among women. Instead, she built strong ties to high-status women and men in the capital. The shugo, warrior lords of the provinces, were required to live with their wives in the capital; powerful monks and temple heads often had residences within the city; and the social ties between the capital's imperial courtiers and everyone else were intensifying and deepening. At the same time, Yoshimochi as shogun had a complicated relationship with his wife's natal family, the Hino. While he seems to have gotten along with his own wife, Eiko, his interactions with her elder sister and his stepmother, Yasuko, were more strained. Since Hino Yasuko was Yoshimitsu's formal widow, still the lady of Yoshimitsu's private palace at Kitayama, seems to have had a more forceful personality than her sister, and probably favored Yoshimochi's younger brother over him, Yoshimochi could not rely upon his wife and in-laws to maintain a network among the capital's women.[160] Takahashi helped to fill that gap.

Lady Takahashi's conciliation appears concretely in her pilgrimages. In Ōei 28 [1421], for example, a little more than one year after the death of Hino Yasuko, Takahashi organized a pilgrimage to Kumano for both Hino Eiko, the shogun's wife, and Eiko's cousin, Hinonishi Sukeko, wife of the retired emperor Go-Komatsu, who was senior member of the imperial line. Imperial Prince Sadafusa called Sukeko Mother of the State (*kokumo*) when describing the

159 "Wakasa no kuni saisho imatomi myōryōshu daidai shidai," 351 (Ōei 9 [1402].05 visit to Wakasa Province).

160 Tabata Yasuko, *Muromachi shōgun no midaidokoro* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2018): 39-47.

pilgrimage; a title that Yasuko had controversially held since shortly before Yoshimitsu's death in Ōei 15 [1408]. Alongside the shogun's wife, the retired empress and mother of the state, and Takahashi herself rode a respected daughter of the previous shogun, as well as his widowed concubine from the fractious Kitabatake gubernatorial family, among others. The pilgrimage was relentlessly female; the only men of rank were the monk leading the procession—a cousin of imperial prince Sadafusa—and one lay monk of the Hino family, though they were escorted by a squad of warriors, mountain ascetic priests, and thousands of servants. It was also done in close coordination with Yoshimochi's own pilgrimage to Ise; he returned from Ise just in time to meet the women's procession leaving the capital and see them off. The send-off was personal and political: Yoshimochi met them at their pre-pilgrimage retreat, then watched their departure while sharing a drink with his shogunal chancellor (*kanrei*) atop a platform set up for the occasion.[161]

Nor was the departure the only public moment. Two days before leaving Kyoto, the ladies made the rounds of sacred sites within the capital to much public furor and were then welcomed back to their retreat site in the capital with a meal by Yoshimochi's heir Yoshikazu, precisely while Yoshimochi himself was in retreat at Ise.[162] For context: there had been drought and crop failure the previous year, bad enough that the shogun had discouraged gift exchanges for the traditional eighth-month holiday for fear of overwhelming the starving tax base; the shogun himself had also fallen ill enough in the ninth month that several suspected of cursing him had been exiled and killed.[163] Famine was expected to last throughout the year, and the shogun had

161 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:123 (Ōei 28 [1421].03.16); *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:183-184 (Ōei 28.03.10-11, 16). For a detailed overview of the trip, see Matsuoka, "Muromachi shōgun to keijō Takahashi-dono," 327-336.

162 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:123 (Ōei 28 [1421].03.14); *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:184 (Ōei 28.03.14).

163 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:66 (Ōei 27 [1420].07.17: gift cancellation), 2:87-88 (Ōei 27.09.20), 2:91 (Ōei 27.10.10: illness, investigation, punishment).

only recently recovered enough to travel, so the shogunate had reason to both thank and beg mercy from the gods, and they needed the occasion to go well.[164] While no detailed account of Takahashi's work for this Ōei 28 [1421] pilgrimage survives, the same monk who led this procession also led another in Ōei 34 [1427], about which he wrote a detailed account. In the postscript, he acknowledged that Takahashi brought him to the notice of the shogunal family. She found the spiritual leader for this critical pilgrimage, and it went well enough that the ladies relied upon him again in Ōei 33 [1426] and 34. His account also includes organizational details, as when he and Takahashi consulted on the pilgrimage schedule: she asked for auspicious dates, he gave several, and she chose among them. It seems likely that she similarly helped coordinate the Ōei 28 [1421] event.[165] In this case, Takahashi acted most immediately as intermediary between the shogun's wife and a well-connected monk, for a project in which the shogun and his subordinates were deeply invested. She was critical to the execution of the Kumano pilgrimage: a grand demonstration of unified appeal to the gods by the most powerful women in court and shogunate, after a year with severe shogunal illness and widespread famine, all under the eye of the capital.

Akamatsu Mitsumasa: The Shogun and Everyone?

Akamatsu Mitsumasa was the cousin of the head of the Akamatsu family and a close friend of Ashikaga Yoshinori, from whom he derived much of his influence. An average member of the shogun's entourage under Yoshimochi, Mitsumasa came into his own soon after Yoshimochi's death and Yoshinori's elevation. He assumed one of his uncle's honorary titles,

164 Matsuoka, "Muromachi shōgun to keijō Takahashi-dono," 330-331.

165 Jitsui, "Kumano-kei nikki," in Kunaichō Shoryūbu, ed., *Fushimi no Miyake Kujōke kyūzō shoji engishū* (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1970): 187-207. The account by Jitsui (the monk) survives only because Prince Sadafusa obtained it and copied it for himself. See Matsuoka, "Muromachi shōgun to keijō Takahashi-dono," 332-333 for analysis in connection with Lady Takahashi.

Kazusa-no-suke, sometime around then and began to appear in regularly in private chronicles as a messenger and notable social contact within months of Yoshinori's appointment as shogun.

The title *Kazusa-no-suke* (deputy governor of Kazusa) highlights the tensions surrounding Akamatsu Mitsumasa's rising status. His uncle, who had held the title, had been the head of the Akamatsu family, and when he had died a year and a half earlier in the ninth month of Ōei 34 [1427], then-shogun Ashikaga Yoshimochi had initially refused to confirm his son and heir to his holdings. Yoshimochi reversed that decision a few months later, but not before the heir had gone to stockpile weapons in Harima Province, the center of Akamatsu prestige and power. The restored holdings included the posts of shugo of Harima, Bizen, and Mimasaka, and the *samurai-dokoro*, a supervisory office within the shogunate in Kyoto. It did not include the title Kazusa-no-suke, which was purely honorific, symbolic of the esteem in which the shoguns had held the father and did not hold the son. While no surviving sources indicate exactly when Mitsumasa received the title, the first reference applying it to him is from an Eikyō 2 [1430].02.13 chronicle entry and includes a note linking this new appellation (Akamatsu *Kazusa-no-suke*) to his old one, Akamatsu Ōkōchi, derived from an estate his branch of the family held in Harima.[166] Akamatsu Mitsumasa's father had held different honorific titles, so the assignment of *Kazusa-no-suke* to Mitsumasa edged him into the circle of potential heirs to his uncle's line. This impression was strengthened by his promotion a year later to *Harima-no-kami* (governor of Harima), which put him into symbolic conflict with his cousin, the shugo of Harima. While this title, too, was honorific, a few years later the shogun also bestowed upon him the position of shogunal representative (*daikan*) in Hyōgo Port in neighboring Settsu Province.

166 Madenokōji Tokifusa, *Kennaiki*, ed. Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1963-1986): 2:109 (Eikyō 2 [1430].02.13). For Kazusa-no-suke, see Yashiro Kazuo et al., ed., *Muromachi gunki Akamatsu seisuiki: kenkyū to shiryō* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1995): 144, 294.

The Hyōgo representative was a particularly lucrative and powerful position, giving Mitsumasa oversight over and a cut of the profits from the lively trade going through one of the largest port cities in Japan.[167]

At the same time as he accumulated titles and offices, Akamatsu Mitsumasa was also staking out a role in literary activities within the capital. He was a regular participant in the shogun's monthly gatherings for both classical *waka* poetry and linked-verse (*renga*) poetry. The gatherings provided a forum for the well-educated Akamatsu Mitsumasa to impress such important figures as the scions of the Hosokawa and Yamana families, the imperial regent and former regent, powerful priests including Manzei, and even his own cousin and head of the family.[168]

With Ashikaga Yoshinori's help, Akamatsu Mitsumasa had accumulated nearly all of the qualifications for a conciliator: rank, widely-recognized power, a literary reputation, and the trust of the shogun. Two problems remained, however. First, the form of Mitsumasa's rise left him utterly incapable of mediating between the shogun and his own Akamatsu family: all of his rank came as a challenge to his cousin and nothing about Mitsumasa's career suggested he was removing himself from consideration as head of the Akamatsu family. He did not, for example, use the name Ōkōchi in place of Akamatsu, though the many branch families did use a name derived from their landholdings to distance themselves from their originating families and many of the powerful men with whom he associated initially knew him as Ōkōchi, nor did he take Buddhist vows and thereby disqualify himself from further advancement in imperial court

167 Mori Shigeaki, “Akamatsu Mitsumasa shōkō: Ashikaga Yoshinori seiken no ittokushitsu,” *Fukuoka Daigaku jinbun ronsō* 42, no. 3 (12/2010): 950-53, 956-57.
168 Mori, “Akamatsu Mitsumasa shōkō,” 966-976.

rank.[169] He also proved quite willing to wield his inheritance aggressively against members of the imperial court: Prince Sadafusa records repeated clashes with Mitsumasa as he tried and failed to convince Mitsumasa to hand over taxes from estates in Harima whose revenue Sadafusa and Mitsumasa were supposed to share.[170] By contrast, when villagers from Sadafusa's Fushimi Estate clashed with villagers from Manzei's Fukakusa Estate, Manzei ordered the Fukakusa villagers to desist as soon as Sadafusa contacted him.[171]

Akamatsu Mitsumasa's second problem was perhaps even more of an impediment than his tensions with his family and certain others, however: all of Mitsumasa's qualifications derived from the shogun. He had his own literary skill, but Yoshinori gave him the platform to display it; he had wealth, derived from a position that Yoshinori granted him. His lack of independent stature left Mitsumasa on unstable ground when he treated with parties unhappy with the shogun's decisions.

Many in the capital were nonetheless willing to work with him. Manzei frequently collaborated with Mitsumasa to bring information to the shogun's attention. During one exchange, for example, Manzei sent a letter to the shogun via his own messenger, with the understanding that Akamatsu Mitsumasa would accept the letter and personally present it — probably read it — to the shogun.[172] The separate descriptions of the messenger's and Mitsumasa's actions makes it clear that Manzei perceived Mitsumasa as having the more active role. An important aristocratic family, the Kujō, also began using Mitsumasa as their conduit to

169 *Kanmon nikki*, 3:236 (Eikyō 3 [1431].01.13); *Kennaiki,* 2:109 (Eikyō 2 [1430].02.13); *Mansai jugō nikki,* 2:128 (Eikyō 2 [1430].01.26) for each writer's first mention of Akamatsu Mitsumasa.
170 *Kanmon nikki*, 4:8-9 (Eikyō 4 [1432].01.06), 4:93 (Eikyō 4.08.26), 6:270-71 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].04.10).
171 *Kanmon nikki,* 2:56-58 (Ōei 27 [1420].06.19-20).
172 *Mansai jugō nikki,* 2:160 (Eikyō 2 [1430].07.12).

the shogun and paid handsomely for the privilege. One long series of letters from the Kujō to Mitsumasa over two years chronicles their efforts to persuade the shogun to allow them to levy a set of temporary special taxes on two villages in Izumi Province and forbid the local shugo—a Hosokawa—from taking his usual cut of the revenue. Mitsumasa persuaded the shogun to authorize the extra tax, but follow-up letters show that the shugo seized most of the new revenue, such that the villages began to grow restive under their heavy tax burden and the Kujō still did not have the money they wanted.[173] The shogun was either unable or unwilling to restrain the shugo's activities, and Mitsumasa did not persuade him to do so, but the Kujō continued to send gifts both to Mitsumasa and, via Mitsumasa, to the shogun throughout the process.

The actions of the Kujō, Akamatsu Mitsumasa, the shogun, and the shugo here expose one of the central dangers of relying upon conciliators to govern. Those without access to conciliators were left vulnerable. Where Prince Sadafusa intervened with fellow courtiers on behalf of his own estate and negotiated through his own conciliator to obtain revenue from recalcitrant local landholders, the Kujō attempted to act through the central power of the shogun via Mitsumasa. They succeeded in requesting extra taxes, for the villages that would pay them had no representative in the shogun's circle, but the Hosokawa shugo had his own channels to reach the shogun, including through Manzei. The variety of negotiators helped to keep the peace in the capital, ensuring that the people there had access to the shogun, at the expense of making heavy demands upon villages in the provinces.

173 Kunaichō Shoryōbu, ed., *Kujō-ke rekisei kiroku* (Tokyo: Kunaichō Shoryōbu, 1990): 2:13, 17, 21, 27, 54, 63, 66-67 (Letters from Eikyō 3 [1431].02.[No Day], Eikyō 3.06.06, Eikyō 3.08.16, Eikyō 3.09.16, Eikyō 4 [1432].05.[No Day], Eikyō 4.08.11, Eikyō 4.10.07).

Large-Scale Negotiations

Negotiating Property: Conciliators in Harmony

The most complex disputes benefited from the diplomatic efforts of multiple conciliators. Shortly before Ashikaga Yoshimochi died in Shōchō 1 [1428], he seized rights to the income (shiki) from Tottori Estate in Izumi Province and donated them to the powerful Ise Shrine. When Ashikaga Yoshinori succeeded his brother as shogun, he decided to reverse his brother's decision and summoned Manzei to discuss how to do it.[174]

Manzei disliked the prospect of reversing a grant to an old and powerful shrine, but the donation had not been smooth. The dispossessed Tottori family had been jitō (estate stewards) who, like many similar families, believed their *jitō* rights were theirs in perpetuity so long as they committed no serious offenses. They were prepared to defend these rights by force.[175] Even the civil war that ended the Kamakura shogunate and birthed the Muromachi one could not dislodge this sense of ownership, especially for claims of such long standing that the family had taken the name of the land, as the Tottori had. In practice, by the time of Ashikaga Yoshimochi's death in 1428, many *jitō* had both the martial skill and the moral confidence to resist a seizure of their income rights, though they were not always successful.

The Tottori family resisted. They began raiding the lands, setting fires and taking materiel. While Ise Shrine had its own armed enforcers, neither they nor the shogunate could bring the Tottori to bay. The warrior lord whom the Tottori had served, Hatakeyama Mitsuie, repudiated all connection to them but did not stop their raids. Nor was public opinion necessarily on the side of the donation. Ashikaga Yoshimochi's successor Yoshinori found the Tottori family's position

174 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:500-502 (Shōchō 1 [1428].05.13); *Kennaiki*, 1:133-137 (Shōchō 1.05.14).

175 Thomas Conlan, *State of War: The Violent Order of Fourteenth-Century Japan* (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2003): 210-219.

pitiable, and Yoshimochi's former tutor Jōsō said that it was so unreasonable that the gods themselves would not accept it. While no direct evidence remains regarding what the people of Tottori Estate themselves thought, the fact that no one in Izumi Province caught the raiders over months of attacks suggests that they had local support as well. The Tottori family had been the *jitō* of Tottori Estate for generations, and many honored that.

Ashikaga Yoshinori wanted to settle the question once and for all by drawing sacred lots. Yoshinori himself had become his brother's posthumous heir after being selected by lot at the Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrine after Yoshimochi's death, and he championed the method as a way of ascertaining divine intent. Thus, Yoshinori argued lots could decide whether Tottori Estate deserved to return to the Tottori family or remain with Ise Shrine, and he was confident the answer would be the family. Manzei, on the other hand, did not want to confiscate land from a major shrine, no matter how good the pretext. Drawing lots for a binary choice was a no-win situation; Manzei preferred a one-time compromise that would solve the problem of Tottori unrest without creating the dangerous precedent that shoguns could seize land from shrines to give to local warriors.

Manzei's compromise was to return control of the land and revenue collection therefrom to the Tottori family while leaving official title to the revenue in the hands of the Ise Shrine. It would restore the family livelihood without revoking shrine lands. Manzei's plan became the default option because he was the first negotiator whom the shogun asked for help, but Manzei's word alone could not decide the matter. The shogun sent him out to discuss the matter with "the *kanrei* and others," according to Manzei's record of the conversation.[176] Before any of the warrior

176 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:500 (Shōchō 1 [1428].05.13).

lords, however, Manzei consulted the official messenger between the shogunate and the imperial court, Madenokōji Tokifusa, and also the late Ashikaga Yoshimochi's tutor and conciliator, Jōsō.

As was usual when using a conciliator, the consultation was both formal and informal. Manzei went to the official messenger (*buke tensō*) and asked him to serve as intermediary to Jōsō; he also summoned the *kanrei*'s messenger-retainer to say that he was consulting Jōsō.[177] The *kanrei* may then have sent his retainer to speak with Jōsō, because the retainer returned to Manzei and agreed in terms that seemed quite similar, though he did not attribute them to Jōsō. Despite Manzei's formal, semi-public demonstration of contacting Jōsō, and Manzei's explanation that the shogun had instructed him to confer with a wide range of people, including Jōsō, Manzei asked the official court messenger to talk to Jōsō "privately."[178] Private did not mean secret, nor even unofficial, given that Manzei had alerted two of the most important figures through whom the shogun's communications formally flowed: his chief warrior minister and his official court messenger.

Jōsō agreed with Manzei's plan: to return control of the land to the Tottori family but leave title to the revenue with Ise Shrine and to avoid deciding by divination. He couched it in different terms, framing Manzei's compromise as the Middle Way, both an important principle of moderation and constant self-cultivation and a chapter of the classical Chinese *Record of Rites* (*Liji*).[179] Then he explained that drawing lots would be the wrong way to decide the issue based on a quote from the *Classic of Documents*, interpreted to say that one should first make up one's

177 This *kanrei*, Hatakeyama Mitsuie, was also the Tottori family's former warrior lord, who had rejected the Tottori as retainers when the late shogun had condemned them, and thus had a dual interest in the outcome.

178 *Kennaiki*, 1:134 (Shōchō 1 [1428].05.14).

179 Ian Johnston and Wang Ping, *Daxue and Zhongyong: Bilingual Edition* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2012): 181-209. The more common English translation of the title is "The Doctrine of the Mean," based on the 1895 translation by James Legge.

mind and only then consult oracles.[180] Jōsō had made his academic career as a traditional court scholar of the pre-Tang Chinese classics who could also incorporate the new classical learning derived from Song dynasty China, and his recommendation to Manzei combined both. The Song philosopher Zhu Xi had popularized the *Middle Way* as a fundamental classical text, while Jōsō had edited a version of the *Classic of Documents* based on older scholarship passed down through his family.[181] Jōsō buttressed Manzei's pragmatic plan with classical Chinese allusions. He also gave a critique of the late Ashikaga Yoshimochi that only one of the shogun's intimates could have made, arguing that the seizure and donation of the Tottori lands had been so ill-considered and unjust that the gods must have rejected it. He conceded, however, that revoking grants to a shrine would be difficult, and thus supported Manzei's solution.

The official messenger whom Manzei sent to confer with Jōsō, Madenokōji Tokifusa, was himself a chronicler and administrator who would later hold a high position in government. Tokifusa raised the prospect with Jōsō of precedents in the oldest *ritsuryō* law codes, which had been the dominant legal framework centuries earlier, before the rise of the warrior. Even wide-ranging amnesties, he argued, carved out exemptions for crimes against the greatest shrines.[182] Manzei claimed that honoring the gods was the first principle of government, which may have been a reference to the first clause of the classic *Goseibai shikimoku*, the warriors' code put out

180 *Kennaiki*, 1:135 (Shōchō 1 [1428].05.14); "The Counsels of Yu the Great," in Martin Palmer, trans., *The Most Venerable Book (Shang Shu)* (London: Penguin UK, 2014). Note that it is not certain that the *Classic* endorses this view: the words are in the mouth of the emperor and the eponymous Yu the Great refuses to agree to them.

181 Wajima, *Chūsei no Jugaku*, 169-70.

182 Several examples of this appear in Fujiwara Munetada, *Chūyūki*, 7 vols. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993). Offenders against Ise Shrine and Hachiman or Miyazaki Shrines are exempted from an otherwise general amnesty. See 2:261 (Kahō 2[1095].09.21); 3:81 (Eichō 1[1096].08.02); 4:199 (Kōwa 4[1102].07.21); 6:43 (Chōji 2[1105].03.24).

by the Kamakura shogunate, and thus argued that donations to shrines could not be revoked.[183] Despite these three sources of authority—the Chinese classics, the oldest laws of the imperial court, and possibly even the laws of the first shogunate—all three men were united in not wanting their Tottori plan to become the general law of the land: it was to be a one-time solution.

Unfortunately, no administrative records survive showing the practical execution of their plan, but they do seem to have succeeded in not creating a precedent of revoking grants to shrines. The precedent that they reinforced instead was the validity of tailored solutions: negotiated, individual answers to problems as they arose. For this, conciliators were both perfectly suited and absolutely vital. They could negotiate solutions that accounted for the interests of everyone with access to a conciliator, without confronting the hard edges of where an authority's nominal power ended in practice. Yoshinori never discovered whether he really could revoke a land grant to one of the oldest shrines in the archipelago. The authorities of Ise never pitted their influence against a decision sanctified by sacred lottery on the grounds of the powerful temple-shrine complex of Iwashimizu Hachiman. The defiant Tottori family proved only that they could outlast the anger of an aging, ailing shogun, evading retribution from local authorities until the shogun's death delivered them a new decision-maker who made a new decision. Such an outcome, however—negotiated, tailored compromise in accordance with the desire of the individual shogun—established one further precedent, buffered by only a few conciliators: the shogunate's decision belonged to the shogun, and to change the decision, one would have to change the shogun.

183 "9. The Formulary of Adjudication/Jōei Code (Goseibai shikimoku) (1232)," in Thomas Conlan, trans., *Samurai and the Warrior Culture of Japan, 471–1877: A Sourcebook* (New York: Hackett Publishing, 2022), 43. The translated quote is: "Shrines must be kept in repair; and their worship performed with the greatest attention."

Negotiating Culpability: Conciliators in Conflict

The last years of Yoshimochi's reign as shogun saw a number of flares of disorder, mostly tamped down before they could become more than local problems. Many—such as the reaction of the Tottori to the seizure of their land in the previous section—were partially self-inflicted. Yoshimochi saw a problem—Tottori disrespect—and solved it in a way that created a new problem—Tottori insurgency. The situation was exacerbated by an ambiguous succession: Yoshimochi's son and established heir, in whose favor he had resigned as shogun, died in Ōei 32 [1425]. Yoshimochi had resumed the authority of shogun, but he had not named another heir and had been sporadically ill for over a decade. He was only a little over forty years old, and his father had not died until fifty, so he potentially had many years remaining, but the situation was insecure. A decade earlier, Yoshimochi's younger brother Yoshitsugu had died under suspicion of conspiring to usurp his brother's position, and that had been when Yoshimochi still had a healthy son by his well-connected wife.

The case of the Akamatsu in Ōei 34 [1427] came as Yoshimochi attempted to take advantage of the death of the Akamatsu patriarch in early autumn to interfere in Akamatsu succession, fragment Akamatsu holdings, and thereby consolidate shogunal power. Rather than confirming the late shugo's son Akamatsu Mitsusuke as the shugo of Harima, Yoshimochi handed control of the province to his longtime friend and attendant Akamatsu Mochisada. Harima was perhaps *the* core province of the Akamatsu organization, though they held others. Worse, Mochisada was only distantly related to the late Akamatsu leader: their fathers had been cousins. The shogun did not grant Mochisada the post of shugo, which he probably did not have the stature to hold by birth, military accomplishments, or connections; instead, the shogun

claimed the province was important to the support of the shogunate, and that Mochisada would be administering it. The decision was a transparent attempt to divide the power of the Akamatsu family and military organization.[184]

A furious Mitsusuke set fire to his Kyoto mansion, took his retainers, and went out to Harima to begin stockpiling weaponry. A few warriors with grudges against the Akamatsu—such as members of the Yamana family that had lost shugo posts to the Akamatsu after their own succession dispute in Meitoku 2 [1391]—were willing to carry out the shogun's punishment upon Mitsusuke, but most of the shugo in the capital were sympathetic to a dispossessed son and reluctant to raise troops against him. The shogunal chancellor (*kanrei*) appealed to Manzei to intercede with the shogun, raising his concerns and passing along Mitsusuke's request for reconsideration.[185] Yoshimochi was unwilling or unable to back down, however. Manzei was at a loss, unhappy with both sides.

Into this escalating stalemate stepped Lady Takahashi, who sent a letter to the shogun accusing his friend (and the new overlord of Harima) Akamatsu Mochisada of heinous personal misdeeds. No record of the exact accusations survives, though public opinion suggested that they related to interactions with women.[186] The *kanrei* probably cooperated with Takahashi to put forward the allegations, because Takahashi's messenger found the shogun as he returned home

184 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:456 (Ōei 34 [1427].10.26). For two accounts of the entire incident, see Sakurai Eiji, *Muromachibito no seishin* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2001), 117-121 and Yoshida Kenji, *Ashikaga Yoshimochi* (Tokyo, Minerva Shobo, 2017): 263-268.

185 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:457-58 (Ōei 34 [1427].11.03, 34.11.06).

186 The traditional assumption is that Mochisada was having an affair with a woman in Yoshimochi's household or otherwise off-limits, but the actual characterization (女事) is far more general. It was some misdeed related to women.

from visiting the *kanrei*'s brother, and another member of the *kanrei*'s extended family presented the letter to him after taking it from Takahashi's messenger.[187]

Crucially, however, it was Lady Takahashi's word that made the accusation devastating. When Manzei, very influential in most other contexts, attempted to intervene with the shogun to slow down decision-making and give Mochisada a chance to defend himself against the accusations, the shogun countered that Takahashi had already done the necessary investigation. Notably, Manzei's world was an exceptionally masculine one. While many Buddhist monks had wives or mistresses, these women did not occupy a recognized public space that permitted them the kind of voice that court ladies married to aristocrats or shugo could wield in the capital.[188] Manzei seldom discussed women in his chronicle at all and virtually never in the context of his monastery or his own life. Takahashi's judgment on misdeeds related to women thus superseded Manzei's broader authority, and Manzei was unable to save Mochisada.

To make the finality of his decision clear, the shogun swore an oath that he would never speak to Mochisada again. He consequently forbade Mochisada—through Manzei—to swear an oath attesting his innocence, which might have allowed Mochisada to escape culpability. Ultimately, Mochisada was forced to commit suicide within days of Lady Takahashi's letter reaching the shogun: the shogun heard the allegations on the tenth day of the eleventh month, and Mochisada was dead by the thirteenth.[189] Takahashi's intervention was decisive.

The death of Akamatsu Mochisada reopened the door to compromise with Akamatsu Mitsusuke. The desultory siege on him halted the next day, and less than two weeks after

187 *Mansai jugō nikki,* 1:459 (Ōei 34 [1427].11.11-12).
188 Nishiguchi Junko, "Sō no 'Ie'," in *Onna no chikara* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1987): 184-218.
189 *Mansai jugō nikki,* 1:459-61 (Ōei 34 [1427].11.11-13). For longer discussion of the use of oaths, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Mochisada's fall, on the twenty-fifth, Mitsusuke sent a fresh appeal for reconsideration, framed as an oath to underscore his sincerity. This time, the shogun accepted it. The dispossessed heir was restored as the shugo of all three of his father's provinces, including Harima. A month later, he finally returned to the capital, where he, the *kanrei*, and the shogun met in a show of amity.[190]

The speed and convenience of Mochisada's death may raise questions about his guilt, but the process of resolving the Akamatsu problem shows how conciliators worked with Muromachi institutions to maintain a peace. The *kanrei*, as chancellor of the shogun's government and first shugo warrior lord among equals, fought to prevent an unpopular assault on a deceased shugo's heir. He sought out the shogun's most versatile political conciliator, Manzei, to appeal to the shogun on the grounds of avoiding conflict. When that failed, he turned to another conciliator with more limited authority but equal or greater influence, Lady Takahashi. She intervened to break the deadlock, and then the *kanrei* resumed control over the process of reconciling the shogun and the shugo. The process did not guarantee long-term stability—Mitsusuke would rebel against the next shogun just over a decade later—and it did not guarantee justice, but it did guarantee an acceptable consensus and a tailored solution to a difficult problem.

Conciliator as Forum

Manzei consistently worked most closely with two shugo: Hatakeyama and Yamana, and slightly less closely with the Hosokawa (first father, later son). Hatakeyama and Hosokawa were two of the three families with hereditary access to the post of shogunal chancellor; neither family had yet suffered the wrath of a shogun intent on weakening their power, so both ruled a number of wealthy provinces. Yamana was eligible to hold the administrative office of *samurai-dokoro*,

190 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:461 (Ōei 34 [1427].11.14), 464 (11.25), 467 (12.17-18).

the level below chancellor, but the family had recently suffered a setback after attempting rebellion against Ashikaga Yoshimitsu in Meitoku 2-3 [1391-92] in response to Ashikaga meddling in their family succession.

Yamana Tokihiro (1367-1435) was one of the few survivors of the Yamana family's attempted rebellion against Ashikaga Yoshimitsu in Meitoku 2-3 [1391-92], a victim of Ashikaga meddling in shugo family succession. Where his father had ruled four provinces as shugo, and other members of the family ruled seven more, the aftermath of the uprising saw Tokihiro reduced to solely the province of Tajima, while his foster brother and cousin each held a single small coastal province nearby, reducing the family as a whole to three. Tokihiro remained ambitious, however, and gained three more provinces for himself fighting on behalf of the Ashikaga against other rebels in the next few decades.[191]He also maintained a good relationship with Manzei, the most powerful conciliator in the country, until his death in Eikyō 7 [1435].

Hatakeyama Mitsuie (1372-1433) did not initially lead his family. Under Yoshimitsu's influence his younger brother Mitsunori inherited all of their father's shugo posts after their father's death in Ōei 13 [1406]. Yoshimitsu died shortly thereafter, and Yoshimochi dispossessed Mitsunori under suspicion of supporting his younger brother Yoshitsugu's attempt at seizing power, transferring all but one of the posts to Mitsuie. Unlike many other brothers in Japanese history, the two worked closely together, regardless of which held greater power at any given moment: Mitsunori was Mitsuie's alter-ego for sensitive conversations.[192] They died one right after the other, Mitsunori in Eikyō 4 [1432] and Mitsuie in Eikyō 5 [1433], but for the decades

191 For a narrative of the Yamana uprising (Meitoku no Ran, in Meitoku 2-3 [1391-92]) that is quite disparaging toward Tokihiro, see Royall Tyler, trans., "Meitokuki," in *Iwashimizu Hachiman in War and Cult* (Blue-Tongue Books, 2017).

192 See, for example, *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:159-160 (Eikyō 2 [1430].07.11-12), wherein Hatakeyama Mitsuie tells Manzei he will come to discuss a sensitive matter "in person" and sends Mitsunori.

before that they led the Hatakeyama family, holding a number of shugo posts, occasionally serving as shogunal chancellor, and finally taking vows as lay monks to “retire” from the imperial hierarchy and begin to transfer opportunities to Mitsuie’s heir while retaining authority over the family.

Hosokawa Mitsumoto (1378-1426) and Hosokawa Mochiyuki (1400-1402) were a father-and-son pair who led the Hosokawa family for the first half of the century. Mitsumoto dominated until his death in Ōei 33 (1426), and Mochiyuki took up the reins of power after that, eventually assuming not only his father’s authority over the Hosokawa but also his courtesy court title, Prefect of the Right City (*ukyō no daibu*). The Hosokawa family had originated the position of a powerful shogunal chancellor with their forefather Yoriyuki, and the head of the family returned to it every generation.

Hatakeyama Mitsuie and the two Hosokawa traded the position of shogunal chancellor among themselves for most of Manzei’s active and recorded political life: Hatakeyama Mitsuie in Ōei 17-19 [1410-12] and again in Ōei 28-Shōchō 2 [1421-29], Hosokawa Mitsumoto from Ōei 19-28 [1412-1421], and Hosokawa Mochiyuki during Eikyō 4-Kakitsu 2 [1432-1442]. Another man, Shiba Yoshiatsu (1397-1434), also held the office of shogunal chancellor for three unhappy years before he finally succeeded in handing it off on Eikyō 4 [1432].10.10.

Interestingly, who held the post of shogunal chancellor at any given moment had little impact upon how the Hatakeyama and Yamana consulted Manzei. They went dozens of times to Manzei’s residence in the capital to discuss problems, just as they did the issue of the Isshiki family above. Sometimes they went together, sometimes separately and relying upon Manzei to connect them, sometimes in company with others from shugo families. Often, Hatakeyama and

Yamana preferred to channel the collective will of the shugo families through Manzei when communicating with the shogun. This was especially the case with bad or ambivalent news, as in the sixth month of Eikyō 3, when tensions with the Kantō authorities in the east were reaching a boiling point. Shiba Yoshiatsu was then shogunal chancellor and officially responsible for communicating with the Kantō, and Hosokawa Mochiyuki was due to assume the role in a little over a year. It was Hatakeyama and Yamana, however, who had built a longstanding working relationship with Manzei, who organized letters from many of the shugo families for Manzei to present to the shogun. They may even have included an oath clause to underscore their sincerity, though the word used (*kōmon*) is ambiguous without further context.[193] Hatakeyama and Yamana relied upon Manzei as a safe channel through which to question the shogun, either as individuals or as part of the collective of shugo lords, regardless of what position each of them held within the shogunal bureaucracy at the time.

The office of shogunal chancellor did have an impact in the case of Shiba Yoshiatsu, who seldom met Manzei outside of a group with Hosokawa Mitsumoto and Hatakeyama Mitsuie before he held a post, but did so increasingly after his appointment. Almost from the moment of becoming shogunal chancellor, Shiba Yoshiatsu began trying to escape the job, and Ashikaga Yoshinori decreed that he would no longer speak to Yoshiatsu directly and that all communication should go through Manzei.[194] After years of this, Yoshiatsu resorted to ambushing Manzei on his route home from the capital to Daigoji to plead for escape.[195] The new head of the Hosokawa family, Mochiyuki, was young and energetic, and the rotating office of shogunal chancellor would land upon him if Shiba relinquished it. The older Manzei and

193 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:253-255 (Eikyō 3 [1431].06.09-12).
194 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:523-524 (Shōchō 1 [1428].08.06-07).
195 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:371-372 (Eikyō 4 [1432].04.08).

Hatakeyama were of an age with Mochiyuki's father, and Manzei at least had not had much contact with the younger man before his father's death. During the years of Shiba's chancellorship, Hosokawa Mochiyuki interacted frequently with Manzei, averaging several times a month, and by the time he took the office, they had a good working relationship that only occasionally included other shugo. It was a sign of future behavior: after Manzei's death, Hosokawa Mochiyuki would join Yoshinori's artificially-elevated conciliator Akamatsu Mitsumasa to attempt to constrict access to the shogun and thereby spark unrest in multiple quarters.[196] As long as Manzei was alive, however, consultative discussion continued.

The Value of Conciliators

Government during the Muromachi era faced a mismatch of claimed authority and pragmatic reality. The basic Ashikaga stance, particularly at and after the height of Yoshimitsu's power was that they had the authority to do anything but often chose out of good governance to do nothing. Moreover, personalized authority—associated with an individual or a family rather than holding a requisite office—was a longstanding part of Japanese governance, and the peacetime Ashikagas continued the trend toward greater personalization. Certain families had *de facto* hereditary right to certain shugo posts, offices within the shogunate, and posts in the imperial court; it conversely became less important who held which post at any given moment: the senior member of the Fujiwara regental houses (Ichijō, Nijō, Kujō, etc.) held authority regardless of whether he currently held the post of regent, while the senior members of the Hatakeyama and Hosokawa families (with hereditary right to the shogunal chancellorship) remained active in the capital regardless of who currently held the position of chancellor. This, of

196 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:488 (Eikyō 5 [1433].07.23), *Kanmon nikki*, 4:202-203 (Eikyō 5.07.24), and Kawaguchi Naruto, "Ashikaga Yoshinori seiken hōki ni okeru tohikan koshō no tenkan," *Komonjo kenkyū* 82 (Dec. 2016): 1-19.

course, meant that responsibility for adverse outcomes lay with the individual and not the office, as well. If the shogun revoked someone's income rights, he himself faced that person's anger, but he would also find it difficult to back down and change course if he misjudged the potential fury without admitting to limits on his power.

In this environment, conciliators were essential buffers: in agreement with each other, they enhanced decisions with their own prestige; in conflict, they offered the chance of different paths. Conciliators provided space to argue and earn cooperation with a ruler's decisions without exposing him to vulnerability. They provided space for important aristocrats, monks, shugo, and others to negotiate within the ambit of their ruler but without facing his direct sanction. The Ashikaga shoguns relied most heavily upon the mediation of conciliators, for their claims were most expansive, but it was a system that worked for others who were attempting to broaden their authority without pushing it to breaking, such as Prince Sadafusa.

Conciliators were the epitome of personalized influence. Ashikaga family power was based upon a cluster of relatively easily transmissible authorities: descent from Ashikaga Takauji or Yoshimitsu (which patriarch was more important was somewhat contested), court rank, the office of shogun, a wife from the Hino family, and—in practical terms—the assent of most of the shugo. No single factor was decisive, which left a useful opening for controlling succession by staggered transmission of different authorities. It also left a more dangerous opening for power struggles such as that between Yoshimochi and his younger brother Yoshitsugu when the authorities were split. Nonetheless, it was relatively easy to replace a shogun. Similarly, the role of official messenger between imperial court and shogunate went to a member of certain families (Hirohashi, Kajūji, or Madenokōji) who had attained significant court position (usually the post

of counselor and its associated rank), and served with an influential retired emperor, then was capped with the position of court-shogunate liaison (*buke tensō*). They were replaceable and somewhat predictable.

Conciliators, on the other hand, built their authority on more amorphous power: an independent personal reputation, literary skill, personal ties to an important authority, some rank, and a willingness *not* to compete for power with those for whom they interceded. The bundle of qualifications was similar, but the transmission thereof was nearly impossible. A ruler could not unilaterally create his own conciliators. This made them powerful but difficult to replace. An official court-shogunate liaison could be rendered helpless if a court authority simply refused to talk to him, as Retired Emperor Go-Komatsu once did.[197] An established conciliator's repute made it difficult to do the same to him, but that repute was impossible to manufacture. They were fundamentally persons, not offices.

The type of negotiation that conciliators did also accelerated the entrenchment of personalized power. Stakeholders could negotiate a perfectly tailored solution to their disputes through a conciliator without being bound by the past or binding themselves in the future unless they chose. Law, official titles, precedent, and anything else were only guidelines to conciliators seeking solutions. Conciliators papered over the contradictions within the assemblage of Muromachi governance, preventing conflicting authorities from crashing too destructively against each other, but with every tailored decision, they increased the need for individualized decision-making.

197 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:91 (Ōei 27 [1420].11.01). Hirohashi refused to leave his home while under the cloud of the retired emperor's displeasure.

After the conciliators Yoshinori had inherited from his brother passed away and his only prominent conciliator, Akamatsu Mitsumasa, came to be seen as a barrier rather than a channel to the shogun, the tensions began to boil. Mitsumasa had not built his reputation independently; he owed his rise directly and solely to Yoshinori. Nor had he refrained from exploiting his ties to win income and status in controversial disputes with powerful people. Every time he failed, Mitsumasa increased rather than dispelled anger at both himself and his ruler. With no other way to reach the shogun, the only alternative came to be to replace him, and the only way to do that was with death.

Chapter 3. Written Oaths as Evidence to Act

One winter day near the end of the year Eikyō 10 [1438], someone broke into a storehouse of the great temple of Tōji and stole a small fortune in goods, as well as a sword from the private possession of one of the temple's administrators. Within days, the temple's ruling council ordered lower-level monks and staff to gather before the bathhouse for a hot-water oath, in which an oath-taker signed an oath and reached into boiling water with the signatory hand to pull out a rock. Oath-takers who succeeded without injury had written truly; those whose hands blistered or festered had lied. The temple's denizens gathered together, and it was determined that three men seemed suspicious: two serving attendants and one gate guard. The council invited a shrine priestess to preside, and with ceremony the men took their oaths. All were innocent, without burns or other mark of deceit, and all three went free as the investigation continued.[198]

Handwritten oaths were important tools for establishing the facts upon which to base decisions in the fluid circumstances of fifteenth-century Japan. These oaths boasted a place within most of the myriad legal regimes that held sway during the Muromachi era (1336-1573). They appeared among estate documents certified by the imperial court and its bureaucracy, in the Kamakura warrior law code that the Muromachi shogunate inherited, and among the practices of shrines and temples. The testimony established through a successful oath was valid for ruling shoguns, temples' governing councils, and village leaders alike, which made oaths invaluable for agreeing upon what circumstances existed. Oaths could establish a person's guilt or innocence of a specific crime, who had visited a particular temple during a particular span of time, or how

198 Tomita Masahiro et al., ed, *Tōji nijūikku kusōkata hyōjō hikitsuke*, Vol. 3 (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2002), 238-239 (Eikyō 10 [1438].12.26). At least one unnamed person was tortured as part of the investigation, a reminder that a hot-water oath was not the most dangerous threat a suspect faced.

devastating a localized disaster had been to crops. They could not alone determine what disputants should do about these realities.

Oaths called upon both divine and community sanction, as well as the power of the written word, a potent combination that demanded respect. The deities who judged oaths included both grand, distant figures and the very specific gods and buddhas of individual communities. While the powerful—with access to knowledge, money, or weapons—were in a stronger position to buttress their oaths by writing in their own fine handwriting on paper consecrated in shrines or to force others to swear difficult oaths and risk the wrath of deities or the pain of physical injury, both powerful and weak were bound by the outcome of an oath successfully sworn. Occasionally, powerful people avoided letting their victims swear oaths that might establish unpalatable truths.

Though the exact ceremony surrounding a written oath could be too sacred or secret to record directly, as it was at Tōji in 1438 above, written oaths were not solely documents preserved in collections. They lived also in the public gatherings where people saw their neighbors write oaths and could watch for signs of deception; in the gossip when an important person wrote an oath, which spread further than the document; in the destruction or consumption of the paper upon which some oaths were written, to strengthen the connection between the words and the bodies that wrote them. Written oaths were experiences as much as they were documents, adaptable to the resources and exigencies of those who produced them.

While some oaths were preserved as original documents, many more are attested in diary-chronicles, which recorded ceremonies and negotiations, and other records of discussions, such as the minutes of a temple's ruling council. Few of these include the oaths' exact wording, but

they fill in the circumstances under which people reached for oaths, particularly in denying accusations.

Written Oaths and Community

While traces of oaths date back to the seventh century and the document format remained in use through the early modern period, written oaths (*kishōmon*) had their heyday during the medieval era. The earliest surviving proto-written oath dates to the twelfth century, and the format was codified in thirteenth-century Kamakura law and used ever more widely through the sixteenth century.[199] Written oaths in their mature form were composed of a content clause and an invocation clause: the first laid out what the writer was affirming and the second called down the wrath of the gods if the writer lied.[200] Some or all of the oath was often written on a talisman or sacred paper from a shrine, to strengthen the presence of deities as witnesses.[201]

Studies of written oaths in medieval Japan have examined the invocation to understand belief in deities. The medieval era was the height of the administrative and conceptual combination of Buddhism and worship of local gods (*kami*). Most of the major shrines and temples in Japan were in fact shrine-temple complexes, vast administrative systems that encompassed both Buddhist temples and shrines to *kami*. The Kasuga-Kōfukuji complex in the former capital of Nara was one example of this; another was the often-interchangeable use of Mt. Hiei (mountain), Sannō (shrine), and Enryakuji (temple) to indicate the fractious institution, led

199 Chijiwa Itaru, "Chūsei no seiyaku monjo=kishōmon: Futatsu no keiretsu," *Kokugakuin zasshi* 106, no. 2 (2005), 1-3.

200 Satō Hiroo, *Kishōmon no seishinshi: Chūsei sekai no kami to hotoke*, Kōdansha sensho mechie (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2006), 17–20.

201 For a vivid explanation of the most common talisman used, see D. Max Moerman, "Shugendō as Social Practice: Kumano Talismans and Inscribed Oaths in Premodern Japan," in *Defining Shugendō: Critical Studies on Japanese Mountain Religion*, ed. Andrea Castiglioni, Fabio Rambelli, and Carina Roth (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020), 219–30. He also traces oaths written on talismans into the early modern period.

by a Buddhist head monk, that controlled the mountain area and its sprawling network of dozens of shrines and temples.[202] Smaller temples and shrines also blurred the institutional edges: Buddhist monks often served in or led pilgrimages through mountain shrines, and most temples contained shrines to *kami*. The invocation clause at the end of one oath from Gen'ō 2 [1320] shows this multiplicity of deities in action:

> Bonten, Taishaku, the four Deva Kings and the various Great Deities who protect the capital, and especially of Tenshō Daijin (Amaterasu) in Ise, the three Gongen of Kumano, the Princes [along the route to Kumano] and their retainers, the two shrines of Mishima that protect the East (i.e. the Kantō), and particularly the Great Deity of the storehouse of this shrine estate, the Yakushi Nyorai of this temple.[203]

Bonten, Taishaku, and the Deva Kings were all Buddhist transformations of Hindu deities, imported into Japan by way of Chinese texts and rituals. Amaterasu was the sun goddess of Ise, whose priests were among the few who deliberately enforced a separation between their worship and Buddhist practices. Gongen were manifestations of buddhas as local *kami*, a practice common in East Asian Buddhism.[204] The Princes and their retainers were the plethora of tutelary deities along the route of the Kumano pilgrimage, whose small shrines were generally staffed by hereditary shrine priests, priestesses, and Buddhist monks who specialized in serving *kami*.[205] Finally, Yakushi Nyorai was the Medicine Buddha (Sanskrit Bhaiṣajyaguru), popular throughout

---

202 Allan G. Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992) pioneered the use of "shrine-temple complex."

203 Satō Hiroo, "Wrathful Deities and Saving Deities," trans. Mark Teeuwen, in *Buddhas and Kami in Japan: Honji Suijaku as a Combinatory Paradigm*, ed. Fabio Rambelli and Mark Teeuwen (New York: Routledge, 2003), 95-114. Parentheses in cited translation. For the original oath, see Takeuchi Rizō, ed., *Kamakura ibun: Komonjo hen* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1971), 35:328 (Document 27394).

204 See Royall Tyler, *The Miracles of the Kasuga Deity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), for an assessment of how one Gongen cult (that of Kasuga Gongen) functioned, along with a translation of a fourteenth-century account of the activities of the deity.

205 D. Max Moerman, *Localizing Paradise: Kumano Pilgrimage and the Religious Landscape of Premodern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), 16.

East Asia, here conceptualized as both the central buddha image in the temple (which had multiple statues and painted images of buddhas and bodhisattvas) and the primary divinity of the estate on which this oath was being sworn. The oath incorporated deities from many backgrounds.

Satō Hiroo argues, based on the arrangement of deities in invocation clauses from across the archipelago, that only localized deities—gods connected to the land of Japan and specific buddhas housed in individual temples—could enforce oaths.[206] Christopher Mayo uses the idea to show that sixteenth-century oath writers modified their invocation clauses to include gods and buddhas connected to their native lands and families. They thereby transformed oaths into statements of the oath-takers' relationships to local deities and institutions as well as promises.[207] Thomas Keirstead emphasizes that, in fourteenth-century peasant protests, the same language was used and the same gods invoked in the oaths that proprietors used to control peasants and those that peasants used in their collective protests when planning to abscond or rebel.[208] In all of these analyses, written oaths and the deities called to witness them were fundamentally connected to community, the creation thereof, and the position of the speaker therein.

Community was often coercive. Philip Garrett shows that the powerful temple of Mount Kōya routinely required lay administrators of its estates to write oaths that they would not intrude upon monks' residences or harass villagers, which reduced the power of administrators vis-à-vis the temple. These oaths were retained as leverage, to make the temple the highest court

206 Satō, "Wrathful Deities and Saving Deities," 96–105 *and* Satō Hiroo, *Kishōmon no seishinshi: Chūsei sekai no kami to hotoke*, Kōdansha sensho mechie (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2006).

207 Christopher Mayo, "Mobilizing Deities: Deus, Gods, Buddhas, and the Warrior Band in Sixteenth-Century Japan" (Ph.D., Princeton University, 2013), 204–6.

208 Thomas Keirstead, "The Theater of Protest: Petitions, Oaths, and Rebellion in the Shoen," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 16, no. 2 (1990), 370–79.

to which locals had access and protect its monks from intrusion for tax collection, investigation of theft, or anything else.[209] Elizabeth Oyler, in her book on fourteenth- and fifteenth-century tales about the late twelfth, notes that being compelled to sign an oath was apparently common enough that rationalizations had developed: “This is not an oath that I write from my heart,” a character in the *Genpei jōsuiki* justified himself. He hoped that the deities invoked would forgive him but still took precautions to insulate his liege against potential divine retribution.[210] Like Garrett's estate administrators, Oyler's character had the choice to write the oath or lose everything. The compulsion affected the perceived binding power of the oath but did not invalidate it entirely.

Much of this scholarship focuses on promises of future behavior: Mayo’s warriors vowed obedience, Garrett’s administrators not to interfere with the temple’s monks, and Oyler’s character to betray his lord. This emphasis upon the oath as a constraint upon *future* behavior distorts its form and function: most oaths operated in the present, based upon the oath-taker’s current knowledge, which made them more effective in establishing facts on the ground than binding action far into the future. Garret’s administrators were, from a different perspective, affirming their knowledge and acceptance of the rules of the temple’s estates, rather than binding themselves forever. Most of their oaths did not invoke the gods’ punishment if the oath-taker violated these rules; punishment descended “if I speak falsely” at the moment of swearing.[211]

---

209 Philip Garrett, “Crime on the Estates: Justice and Politics in the Kōyasan Domain,” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 41, no. 1 (2015), 79–112.

210 Elizabeth Oyler, *Swords, Oaths, And Prophetic Visions: Authoring Warrior Rule in Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006), 69–70.

211 Garrett cites many oaths swearing to what he calls a “code of conduct,” including Documents 1546 (Shōkei 1 [1332].07.12), 1590 (Shōō 4 [1291].09.18), 1593 & 1594 (Shōō 4 [1291].09.19), 1599 (Kengen 1 [1302].12.15), 1600 (Kengen 1 [1302].12.14), and 1614 (Shōō 4 [1291].09.18) in *Kōyasan monjo*, v. 7, Dai Nihon komonjo, iewake, ed. Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Tokyo University, 1907), 131-136, 192-197, 200-210, 216-223, 241-246. Each ends, before its invocation

While some of Keirstead's peasants swore to abscond in the future if their demands were not met, most laid the groundwork for the future by attesting instead to their prior experiences and current situation. They reinforced the weight of their petitions to their monastic overlords by invoking the wrath of the temple's buddha and other local deities if they had lied about their grievances.[212] In other words, the deities judging the oath did not need to be prescient or to watch for eternity: they judged based upon the oath-taker's honesty in the moment of writing and for the short span thereafter as all interested parties watched for signs of deceit. The most dramatic oaths promising unambiguous future action appear in tale literature, such as the *Taiheiki* account of one general reneging on his vow to support another "for seven generations," whereupon the betrayed general used the broken oath as a battle flag and the oath-breaker suffered defeat.[213] Medieval people could conceive of oaths binding future behavior, certainly, but it was not the default, and most were prudent enough to avoid constraining themselves so dangerously.

Most written oaths in diary-chronicles were retrospective, sworn to establish facts about actions that had already taken place, in contrast to the drama of the tales. Moreover, a gap appears between oaths preserved as originals, which commonly documented multiple parties mutually swearing, and oaths in diary-chronicles, which were more often one-sided, such as when a suspect swore innocence of a crime.[214] Some were part of an official inquiry, while others

clause, with a slight variant on the same phrase: "此條構申虛言者," essentially "If I falsely speak a lie..."

212 Keirstead, "The Theater of Protest," 359, 375. For one petition from Yano Estate in Harima Province to Tōji, see "96. Harima Yano-shō bandō-ra rensho kishōmon" in *Tōji monjo*, v. 11, Dai Nihon komonjo, iewake, ed. Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, vol. 10 (Tokyo: Tokyo University, 1953), 217-218 (Meitoku 4 [1393].09.xx).

213 "Kikuchi ikusa no koto," *in* Hyōdō Hiromi, ed. *Taiheiki*, Vol. 5 (Iwanami bunko, 2016), 248-50, cited in Thomas Conlan, "The Gods Are Watching: Talismans, Oaths, and Political Allegiance in Medieval Japan," 17-18.

214 Shimizu, *Nihon shinpanshi*, 236–47. Shimizu compiled here a list of one type of oath (the *yugishō*) during mid-Muromachi (1400-1570), distinguishing between inquiries wherein an investigator had suspects and/or witnesses write the oath and two-party dispute resolutions, wherein both sides wrote

were made to avoid a formal accusation. Those demanding and volunteering written oaths were trying to determine the truth, or at least *a* truth acceptable to all stakeholders. Rather than mandating future behavior, retrospective oaths helped patch over breaches created by violations or confrontations.

The Public Experience of the Oath

Many oaths were as public and visible affairs as oath before the bathhouse of Tōji that opened this paper. Most nevertheless lacked the immediate temporal violence of injury by boiling water. Instead, the worldly cost might be confinement, waiting for the gods' verdict within a shrine or building. It might be the literal expense of obtaining sanctified paper on which to write. It might, at the most advantageous end of the scale, simply be the reputational price of having put a statement in writing. The sacred price in all these cases was the same, however: a special vulnerability to the divine for some span of time.

A ruler reassuring an underling of his sincerity could simply add an invocation to a letter: the significance of his position ensured that word spread. When Ashikaga Yoshimitsu wrote to Shiba Yoshiyuki in Ōei 9 [1402] to assure him that Yoshimitsu did not intend to attack the Shiba, despite rumors to the contrary, a ritual expert visited Shiba to congratulate him on this indication of safety. The expert noted that not only had Yoshimitsu sworn he had no lethal plans against

---

oaths. Of his eighty-seven incidents, fifty-four were criminal inquiries and thirty-three two-party dispute resolutions. Of the criminal investigations, well over half of the recorded incidents were attested only in private chronicles; almost all of the rest were from copies of oaths that unusually rigorous record keepers at Tōji copied and archived. By contrast, two-thirds of the two-party oaths survived as original or officially-copied documents, only a few from Tōji. While this is only one unusual type of written oath, the disproportionate appearance of two-party dispute resolution in documents versus criminal inquiries in chronicles suggests the two types of sources capture different types of oaths. I have found a similar preponderance of investigative goals among the incidents of all types of written oaths mentioned in fifteenth-century private chronicles, though I have not exhaustively collected documentary oaths for contrast.

Shiba, but he had more importantly written it in his own hand.[215] Yoshimitsu followed up this oath with a showy visit to Shiba—for which he provided the money for refreshments—to further highlight his generosity and goodwill.[216]

Yoshimitsu had transferred the office of shogun to his son nine years earlier, but he retained both control of the government and the ability to give orders to the warrior governors (*shugo*) and their armies. Shiba Yoshiyuki, too, had retired from his post as shogunal chancellor (*kanrei*) and taken vows as a Buddhist lay monk but retained authority over his family. His son in turn held the office of *shugo* in three provinces. A few years earlier, Shiba armies had been crucial to Yoshimitsu's victory against another powerful *shugo* family, a mere one year after Yoshimitsu had visited the head of that family in a display of amity to quell rumors that he planned to dispose of him. Thus, while Yoshimitsu unquestionably had greater status and power than Shiba, Yoshimitsu needed to convince Shiba not to (justifiably) panic and attempt rebellion.[217]

The combination of divine invocation, writing, and public gesture was persuasive, with elements of both reassurance and coercion in each component.[218] The visit highlighted

---

215 *Yoshida-ke hinami-ki*: Ōei 9 [1402].12.02 (更不被知食之旨及御誓言、剰被染御筆、仍無為之珍重也), suggested and transcribed by Horikawa Yasufumi. Ashikaga Yoshimitsu did not swear never to move against Shiba; he swore that he had no intent or was making no moves to do so. It should also be noted that the ritual specialist and author of this private chronicle, Yoshida Kaneatsu, enjoyed significant patronage from Yoshimitsu.

216 *Yoshida-ke hinami-ki*: Ōei 9 [1402].12.20 (今日御所入御右衛門督入道、是去七日被送遣一献料足、万疋、彼身上事有荒説等之間、可有渡御之由被仰了), transcribed by Horikawa.

217 For the Ōuchi uprising (Ōei no Ran, in Ōei 6 [1399]), see Royall Tyler, trans., "Ōeiki," in *Iwashimizu Hachiman in War and Cult* (Blue-Tongue Books, 2017), Kindle location 2104-2534. For Ashikaga Yoshimitsu's gestures toward Ōuchi Yoshihiro, see *Yoshida-ke hinami-ki* Ōei 5.07.23 & 07.26. (Transcribed by Horikawa Yasufumi, who generously shared some of his analysis.)

218 Examples—like this one—of people of high social status and significant power writing oaths to those with less are rare and generally carried a similar blend of concession and coercion. For an example by Ashikaga Takauji, Yoshimitsu's grandfather, in which he required a warrior to remain part of his army, see "#572: Ashikaga Takauji kishomon-an," in Shimazu-ke monjo, vol. 1, Dai Nihon komonjo,

Yoshimitsu's gift-giving and inexorable physical access to Shiba where they both lived in the capital. The writing bound Yoshimitsu to his word and reinforced the value of his hand. Finally, the invocation opened Yoshimitsu to the gods' wrath and increased the pressure—helpfully spelled out by the ritual expert in his visit—upon Shiba to believe him. The social, material, procedural, and sacral elements were entangled and mutually reinforcing.

Just as a ruler could use a written oath to persuade his underling, so too could villagers use a written oath to persuade their overlords. When the people of Yano Estate faced bad harvests, they appealed to their landlord, Tōji, for a reduction in taxes. Representatives from the estate journeyed to the capital, bearing a written oath attesting to their circumstances. There they appealed to the governing council of Tōji for a reduction twice what the monks were initially inclined to give them. They argued that, having gone so far as to submit a written oath, they would find it difficult to accept a smaller reduction.[219] The temple's records do not specify exactly why the petitioners and the council considered the written oath such exceptional effort. It might have been the time and expense of sending representatives to the capital, and the fact that the villagers were in the capital, standing before the Tōji council and refusing to leave empty-handed, surely had an impact. Tōji records make no reference to travel, however, or to the number of representatives who had come, only to the presentation of the written oath. Most likely, the act of the oath itself was a risky one: every person who signed on and potentially all of their dependents had put themselves squarely within the sight of divine powers, vulnerable to

---

iewake, ed. Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, vol. 16 (Tokyo: Tokyo University, 1968), 598-99 (Jōwa 2 [1346].Intercalary 9.14), cited in Conlan, "The Gods Are Watching," 20. For an even earlier, translated example of an imperial lady receiving a letter from her probably-highborn former lover, vowing his love for her, see Nakanoin Masatada no Musume and Karen Brazell, The Confessions of Lady Nijō (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1973), 89-91, raised by Brian Steininger.

219 *Tōji nijūikku kusōkata hyōjō hikitsuke*, vol. 3, 117, 120-21 (Eikyō 7 [1435].09.28, 11.21, 11.24).

divine punishment, and by swearing successfully, they had enlisted the very deities that the monks of Tōji honored on their side. The council delegated one of their number to negotiate with the representatives, accepting the Yano representatives' basic assertions but arguing about the significance of having only part of the estate directly impacted by flooding and bad harvests. They eventually split the difference in taxes.

Villagers who affirmatively chose to swear a collective oath about their own circumstances were in perhaps their strongest position. When a theft wracked an estate, the local notable could demand that everyone concerned gather at the local shrine to write out oaths, and absence might carry a heavy whiff of guilt.[220] In many cases, there was some fact-finding beforehand, perhaps in the form of interviews or gossip or anonymous written accusations, to narrow down the pool of suspects and witnesses. In other cases, the net was wider, encompassing everyone in the area of a certain rank or age. Even the priests of the shrine where the oaths would be sworn were not immune to this pressure, though they might be in a stronger position to refuse and survive the consequent presumption of guilt. With everyone on shrine grounds and under the eye of investigators and deities, people wrote their oaths. Usually a hereditary shrine priest or priestess supervised, though they did not have to be directly tied to the location where the oaths were held,. The oaths were marked by ceremony and often observed by interested members of the local community. If there were few enough oath-takers, they could be confined on the grounds of the shrine for three or seven days, or a maximum of two weeks. Larger groups might

220 The following description is a composite, drawing primarily from incidents in *Kanmon nikki* and *Tōji nijūikku kusōkata hyōjō hikitsuke*, as well as the codification in Kamakura and Muromachi laws. For examples, see *Kanmon nikki*, 3:291 (Eikyō 3 [1431].06.04-05) and 5:268-269 (Eikyō 8 [1436].05.19); *Tōji nijūikku kusōkata hyōjō hikitsuke*, 3:100-101 (Eikyō 7 [1435].02.07) and 3:238-239 (Eikyō 10 [1438].12.26); "73. Kishōmon shitsu jōjō" in Satō Shin'ichi, ed., *Chūsei hōsei shiryoshū: Kamakura bakufu hō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1955), 94-95, and "319: Sakai sōron yugishō no koto" in Satō Shin'ichi, ed., *Chūsei hōsei shiryoshū: Muromachi bakufu hō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1957), 276.

return home, but they would remain vulnerable and visible to each other for up to two weeks as everyone awaited the outcome of the oaths. Observers awaited signs of deceit (*shitsu*), which were primarily negative bodily changes after swearing an oath and could include falling ill, bleeding, or choking.[221] These serve as a reminder that swearing an oath was a dangerous thing even without direct involvement of physical pain in the process. The gods could kill, and if they did not, developing a fever at an inopportune moment could condemn a suspect.

The greater the power of those making accusations, the higher the statuses of those they could force to swear an oath. Prince Sadafusa, impoverished and disinherited, ultimately failed to force an antagonistic local warrior family on his estate to swear the oaths he demanded, because they were backed by a powerful *shugo* in the capital. By contrast, Ashikaga Yoshinori, in his fourth year as shogun and grown into his power, forced aristocrats of the third and fifth ranks to swear oaths and remain confined under monitoring for first three, then another seven days.

Hot water oaths (*yugishō*) like the one that began this chapter were not significantly different in circumstances from other oaths. Like other investigatory oaths, they often happened in reaction to thefts or another crime that angered an authority. Investigation or community consensus determined who would have to swear the hot water oath, though authorities seem to have been more particular about narrowing down the pool. All surviving records of hot water oaths document small numbers of oath-takers: usually one or two, and no more than six, in contrast to the population-wide sweep of some less painful investigatory oaths.[222] When two villages feuded, an irritated arbiter could suggest that they each select a representative to swear a

221 "73. Kishōmon shitsu jōjō" in Satō Shin'ichi, ed., *Chūsei hōsei shiryoshū: Kamakura bakufu hō* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1955), 94-95. See also Shimizu Katsuyuki, *Nihon shinpanshi: Kuka tachi, yugishō, tekka gishō* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2010), 17-20.

222 Shimizu, *Nihon shinpanshi*, 236-46.

hot water oath to guarantee the villages' testimony, a threat that often drove the villages to greater compromise. Both circumstances—the limited use in criminal investigation and its role as a goad to compromise in negotiations—suggest that hot water oaths were uniquely frightening, above and beyond the fear of making oneself vulnerable to the gods. The tangible threat of scalding water had its impact, even when the form and purpose were otherwise the same as other oaths.

Like other oaths, hot water oaths were marked by ceremony and supervised by priests or priestesses. The signs of deceit for a hot water oath were rapid and straightforward: burns or scalds, especially burns or scalds that became infected. These could take a few days to appear, but seldom took more than three, and the verdict was often clear the same day. Calculating from surviving references, about half of those subject to hot water oaths went free, even when authorities emphatically suspected them and wanted someone to blame. In a world in which torture was a valid tool of investigation, hot water oaths were a mixed blessing: a painful and terrifying experience on both a sacred and worldly level, but also a shield against the anger of the powerful.

Written Oaths and Status Distinctions

Private chroniclers were exquisitely aware of status distinctions, and their descriptions of the circumstances surrounding different types of written oaths highlight the flexibility that oaths had to accommodate disparate statuses. A ruler addressing a subordinate could append an invocation to an otherwise normal letter, while a noble could obtain a sacred paper from a powerful shrine and write the oath upon that for added force. Commoners faced with the wrath

of a shogun or landlord could ingest their oaths or perform a more painful hot water oath, putting not only their handwriting but their bodies visibly in jeopardy to prove veracity.

The fifteenth century saw a sharp spike in hot water oaths.[223] Most of those permitted or compelled to make such oaths were of lower status: no courtier highly ranked enough to meet the emperor, for example, made a hot water oath. These oath-takers were not without status, however: very low-ranked courtiers, monks who headed small temples, village representatives, capital merchants, and retainers of powerful shugo were all subject to such oaths if the case was serious enough.[224] One might assume that only literate people could swear written oaths, but a number of oaths swearing to join or remain part of a coalition survive as original documents with signatures in different hands from the bulk of the oath, so oath-takers might only have needed to sign for the oath to be valid and the power of writing to take hold.[225] Some villager coalition oaths were signed with simple x's and circles, suggesting that several participants might not even have been literate enough to write their own names.[226] Courtly writers referenced villagers

223 Shimizu, *Nihon shinpanshi*, 2–6, 48–49.

224 Shimizu, *Nihon shinpanshi*, 236-247 for a list of *yugishō* between 1400-1600. See also Chijiwa Itaru, "Daishi Kanjō Kishōmon: Nanbokuchō/Muromachi jidai no tokushuna kishōmon," in Haga Norihiko, ed., *Chūsei no shakai to shiryō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2005), 170-174 for an example of sharp status distinction between members of the Yotsutsuji family (third and fifth rank courtiers) and their retainers and intimates (*aosamurai* and *nakama*): the former swore *daishi kanjō kishōmon* (without immediate physical pain) and the latter swore *yugishō*. This incident is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

225 See Princeton University's Eiroku 6 [1563] Kishōmon (signatures on the left) for an example: "Kishōmon. 1556-1615," Princeton University Library Catalog, Princeton University, accessed Oct. 31, 2020, https://catalog.princeton.edu/catalog/10166399.

226 Several examples are available on the Kyoto Prefectural Library's online Tōji Hyakugo Archives: http://hyakugo.pref.kyoto.lg.jp/eng/. See "*ke* 45: Hōshōgon'in terabe satanin hyakushō-ra rensho kishōmon," The Hyakugo Archives WEB, Kyoto Institute, Library and Archives, accessed Oct. 31, 2020, http://hyakugo.pref.kyoto.lg.jp/contents/detail.php?id=10908 (Bunna 4 [1355].10.19); "*shi* 90: Wakasa-kuni Tara-shō daikan kenka-ra rensho kishōmon," http://hyakugo.pref.kyoto.lg.jp/contents/detail.php?id=27208 (Ōei 22 [1415].11.21); and "*wo* 163: Yamashiro-kuni Kamkikuze-shō Inoue Ujiyoshi-ra rensho kishōmon," http://hyakugo.pref.kyoto.lg.jp/contents/detail.php?id=20612 (Kakitsu 2 [1442].07.08). The monogram signatures in the latter range from simple bisected circles to sophisticated characters.

(*hyakushō*) or those below courtiers (*jigenin*) writing hot water oaths, but even the most observant among them seldom noted status distinctions within villages, so it is difficult to be certain whether "writing" a hot water oath required more than just inking one's assent. Unfortunately, unlike coalition oaths, which could be preserved for generations as evidence of group membership, hot water oaths were often destroyed in the process of using them.[227] Very few original hot water oaths survive: most are attested only in reference or copy, making it impossible to evaluate the original handwriting. Most likely, hot water oaths applied to those below the level of high court nobility (aristocrats of the fifth rank or above, shugo warrior lords, or comparable religious officials) but with some status within their community. They could be a terrifying prospect, but if successful they also offered a defense against the wrath of an individual of much higher status, which a villager accused of theft by an aristocrat might otherwise lack.[228]

At the other end of the scale of pain and effort, when a powerful person transformed an otherwise ordinary letter into an oath by adding an invocation clause, the value of their writing in itself was great enough to give force to the oath. Yet both an imperial prince and a villager accused of theft "wrote" their oaths, in the words of contemporary observers, which emphasizes the continuity that lay between them. Written oaths in medieval Japan thus existed on a spectrum of severity that relied simultaneously on social and divine sanction. The increasing value placed upon writing in one's own hand as an act of truth gave well-educated—usually higher-status—individuals preferential access to proof without pain.[229] Less extreme rituals such as the burning

227 *Kanmon nikki*, 5:268-269 (Eikyō 8 [1436].05.19, includes significant detail about the process), 3:292 (Eikyō 8 [1435].06.07).

228 Shimizu, "Kyōfu seiji no naka no yugishō," in *Nihon shinpanshi*, 110-141.

229 Shimizu, *Nihon shinpanshi*, 101-103; John Douglas Creamer, "The Truth is in the Hand: Writing and Medieval Japanese Law and Order," *in* "The Imperial Scribal Network: A Study of Writing and

and consumption of an oath or the use of consecrated paper to increase the presence of deities, however, gave others options midway between the ease of a letter and the pain of hot water. The expectation that a false oath would result in damage to the body, such as illness or nosebleeds, also extended physical risk to those of the highest status in the case of falsehood.

Relative status was not static and sometimes depended on the seriousness of the charge. In Ōei 25 [1418], rumors began to circulate that a palace lady (*naishi*) had become pregnant at a drinking party in Fushimi, the home estate of Prince Sadafusa and a popular spot for short trips away from the capital. The matter escalated over the course of weeks: while at first only the emperor was upset, eventually the shogun became involved in trying to discover the truth. Not only Sadafusa himself, but also several of his closest retainers—including a former high minister and the head of the Fushimi temple where the lady was supposed to have gone for retreat—all sent blunt oaths to the shogun attesting that not only had they not attended a party with the lady, they had not even interacted with her.[230]

Prince Sadafusa wrote his initial denial as a letter with an invocation clause, enclosed with the sworn statements of his retainers. The shogun—not the emperor—was handling the investigation, and Sadafusa was communicating directly with Jōsō, the shogun's conciliator, who had retired from his court rank and his office as the shogun's tutor, though he held greater influence than when he had been tutor. Sadafusa's letter might reach the shogun, but it was not addressed directly to him. Later, in response to Jōsō's advice and on the understanding that the shogun wished it, Sadafusa obtained an ox-king talisman (*goō hōin*) from Kitano Shrine in

Textual Commerce in '*Kanmon Nikki*'" (Ph.D., Yale University, 2007), 153-174.

230 For the events, see *Kanmon nikki*, 1: 214-22 (Ōei 25 [1418].07.02, 25.07.11, 25.07.14-22). For a summary in English, see Creamer, "The Imperial Scribal Network," 158–62. Please note that Creamer used the *Gunsho ruijū* version of the *Kanmon nikki*, while I use the more recent Kunaichō version cited above. There are occasional differences.

Kyoto to write a new, more formal oath denying the accusation. The new oath was not addressed directly to anyone, though Sadafusa expected the shogun to see it. This oath satisfied the shogun.[231] The exact choice of oath level thus becomes a complex negotiation of factors: the status of writer and recipient, the severity of the accusation, and ultimately the likelihood of recipient disbelieving oath-writer and the dangers that could follow such disbelief.

Subject of Investigation: Adultery

Adultery—or unspecified misbehavior with women—was not an unusual reason to demand oaths. Policy regarding rape and adultery changed over the course of the Muromachi era, until in the end a man was permitted to kill anyone for sleeping with or raping his wife as long as he did it inside his house.[232] While this had deadly implications for women, it also allowed men to weaponize sex against other men. In Prince Sadafusa's 1418 incident above, the accusation of adultery roused the emperor's fury and gained force in rumor because the emperor had no heir and was periodically ill. Sadafusa, by contrast, was hale and married to a lady who had already given him a daughter and would bear a son the next year. He was also descended from a deposed emperor. Sadafusa was quiet but persistent in his stance that the throne should revert to Sadafusa's line if his cousin Emperor Shōkō (r. 1412-1428) died without issue.[233] He finally succeeded in having his son placed on the imperial throne a decade later. The topic of Sadafusa's relationship with one of the palace ladies, who could bear heirs to the emperor, thus became a flash-point, and adroit use of written oaths proved necessary to quiet suspicions.

---

231 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:219-222 (Ōei 25 [1418].07.14-17, 22).

232 Hitomi Tonomura, "Sexual Violence Against Women: Legal and Extralegal Treatment in Premodern Warrior Societies," in *Women and Class in Japanese History*, ed. Hitomi Tonomura, Anne Walthall, and Wakita Haruko (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 1999), 135–52.

233 Creamer, "The Imperial Scribal Network," 22–24.

In Prince Sadafusa's case, the shogun wanted to minimize the disruption of the adultery accusation, but in other cases disruption proved a potent weapon for the shogun to wield against men whom he could not otherwise target. In 1432, Ashikaga Yoshinori learned of rumors suggesting that a high-ranked aristocrat, Yotsutsuji Sueyasu, was committing adultery (*mittsū*) with one of the retired emperor's ladies and demanded that the offense be handled.[234] Perhaps Yoshinori felt strongly about the lady's honor: she was likely the blood sister of one of his official messengers, and Yoshinori learned of the matter through one of his own ladies. More likely, however, Yoshinori saw a chance to punish Retired Emperor Go-Komatsu[235] for having used accusations of adultery against one of Yoshinori's men two years earlier.[236]

Yoshinori's path to the shogun's seat less than five years earlier had been difficult. His elder brother had not named an heir, leaving the decision among his four surviving brothers instead to a sacred lottery drawn at a powerful shrine-temple in the capital. Yoshinori took pride in ascending due to divine choice, but he had spent most of his life as the head of a Buddhist temple, and ambitious figures—including warrior governors (*shugo*), imperial aristocrats, major religious institutions, and even wealthy merchants—jockeyed for power during the rocky transition.

---

234 *Kanmon nikki*, 4:81-2 (Eikyō 4 [1432].08.06).

235 Go-Komatsu (1377-1433) reigned as emperor around the turn of the fifteenth century (1382-1412), but he dominated the imperial court until his death. After resigning the throne in favor of his son, who became Emperor Shōkō, Go-Komatsu exerted authority as an *in*, or retired emperor. Though vulnerable to the monetary and martial power of the Ashikaga shoguns, Go-Komatsu's moral and social power waned only at the end of his life, after his son died without an heir and Go-Komatsu had no choice but to adopt a member from another line of the imperial family as his successor. For the classic English-language treatment of retired emperors, before the advent of shoguns, see G. Cameron Hurst, *Insei: Abdicated Sovereigns in the Politics of Late Heian Japan, 1086-1185* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976). For further discussion of the functioning of the imperial court and its interactions with the Ashikaga, see chapter 1 of this dissertation.

236 Chijiwa, "Daishi Kanjō Kishōmon," 170-174.

The year that Yoshinori became shogun, Retired Emperor Go-Komatsu had adopted Prince Sadafusa's son as his heir after the death of his own son. Go-Komatsu probably did so under pressure from Yoshinori, with whom Sadafusa had a cordial, if distant, relationship. Yoshinori had, for example, visited Sadafusa's Fushimi estate several times to enjoy theatrical performances together long before anyone realized he might become shogun.[237] Go-Komatsu's relationships with both were distinctly frosty. When one of Yoshinori's close friends and aristocratic allies, Sanjō Sanemasa, allegedly impregnated one of Go-Komatsu's ladies—specifically a lady of the Hino family, which had supplied wives as well as ladies-in-waiting for for both emperors and shoguns—Go-Komatsu seized the opportunity. He sent Yotsutsuji Sueyasu as his messenger to the new shogun to demand severe consequences.[238]

The shogun refused to do anything beyond removing Sanjō from guard duty at the palace, citing the recent pardon of another courtier for the same offense.[239] Go-Komatsu therefore drafted an oath that he wanted everyone—from imperial princes through any courtier of rank down to the doctors and prognosticators—to write. The oath specified that any incidents of crimes with women (*nyoban*) in the palace or retired emperor's residence should be strictly punished with banishment and/or seizure of property and privileges, regardless of the social status of the accused. Sadafusa was uneasy about the demand, particularly since some of his own retainers who had been caught up in the 1418 incident still had occasional guard duty at the palace and might get entangled in future incidents.[240] The entire project seems to have been an

237 See *Kanmon nikki*, 2:25-16 (Ōei 27 [1420].03.09) for one example.

238 *Kanmon nikki*, 3:197-198 (Eikyō 2 [1430].05.11).

239 *Kennaiki*, 2:27 (Eikyō 1 [1429].03.29), Sakkaiki, 4:256 (Eikyō 2 [1430].04.23). The pardoned courtier was Tōin Sanehiro, who had been censured and dismissed from office in Eikyō 1 [1429] for an affair with one of the retired emperor's ladies (of the Wake family). He was restored to court rank and guard service within the imperial palace sometime before Eikyō 2 [1430].04.22, when he appeared on a duty roster. How this happened is unclear.

240 Yokoi Kiyoshi, *Kanmon gyoki: "Ōja" to "shūsho" no hazama nite* (Tokyo: Soshiete, 1979), 254-256.

ostentatious exercise of Go-Komatsu's power as retired emperor and senior living member of the imperial family, while Sanjō suffered no significant penalty and eventually reached high ministerial rank.

Ashikaga Yoshinori held a grudge, however, and when rumors arose that Go-Komatsu's trusted messenger Yotsutsuji Sueyasu had misbehaved with one of the retired emperor's ladies, he struck. Yoshinori, as was his custom, exploited a crack in the Yotsutsuji family and used Sueyasu's nephew Suetoshi to make the accusation that several of Sueyasu's attendants and intimates had told him Sueyasu had committed the crime. When the retired emperor tried to brush the matter aside, Yoshinori pointedly noted that such acts were "great crimes," in Go-Komatsu's words, and insisted on elaborate written oaths. He sent two of his official messengers to supervise and would have sent a third, but the man objected that he was too senior for criminal fact-finding; Yoshinori substituted another high-ranked courtier with strong shogunal ties.[241]

Initially, Yotsutsuji Sueyasu, a third-rank aristocrat, and Suetoshi, a fifth-rank one, wrote ordinary oaths, while Sueyasu's attendants wrote hot water oaths: a direct demonstration of the importance of status. The results were inconclusive; no one suffered any signs of deceit, but the shogun refused to leave the matter. Two months later, he demanded that the Yotsutsuji men swear "Daishi Kanjō" oaths, a form particularly associated with Mt. Hiei, where Ashikaga Yoshinori had served as head monk before returning to lay life and taking the shogun's office.[242] They were confined for three days to a single temple building, monitored for signs of deceit, and guarded by an official court-shogunate messenger, who was far too highly ranked for such menial duty. The Yotsutsuji uncle and nephew again came out clean, but Sueyasu's attendants had fled, so the

241 *Kanmon nikki*, 4:84-85 (Eikyō 4 [1432].08.15).
242 Chijiwa, "Daishi Kanjō Kishōmon," 175-177.

shogun ordered the Yotsutsuji to confine themselves for a further seven days in the messenger's home.[243] Three days was normally the maximum time to confine a courtier for monitoring, so adding seven more was more punitive than investigative. The attendants might have feared another hot water oath or seen no good outcome for themselves in this battle of he-said, he-said. Finally, in the last days of Sueyasu's confinement, Go-Komatsu sought and received permission from the shogun to pardon both Sueyasu and Suetoshi. The manuscript is smudged, so it is difficult to be certain, but Go-Komatsu seems to have acknowledged that some inauspicious sign for Sueyasu had appeared, giving Yoshinori the appearance of rectitude.

The incident shows the tensions involved in trying to wield the power of written oaths, especially as it interacted with the more blunt power of physical force. A successful oath meant that even the shogun could not demand someone be punished for a crime. It did not, however, necessarily save oath writers from the demand that they do it again, if an authority was willing to expend enough effort, and this shogun was. The demand for oaths became a genteel imprisonment, as the capital waited for one of the Yotsutsuji men to slip. Such a demand was deeply irregular, however. Sadafusa described Ashikaga Yoshinori's abrupt demand for a second, harsher oath, guarded for days by the official court-shogunate messenger, as "unheard of," though exactly which element he objected to is ambiguous.[244] Perhaps the weight of the shogun's defiance of custom in pursuing Yotsutsuji Sueyasu helped to protect him when the retired emperor sought a compromise: the misuse of written oaths had not given the shogun leverage to banish or kill.

243 *Kanmon nikki*, 4:102-104 (Eikyō 4 [1432].10.11, 10.14).
244 *Kanmon nikki*, 4:102-103 (Eikyō 4 [1432].10.11).

Yoshinori was not the only shogun to use accusations of misconduct with women as a political weapon, though he was the first to do it so obviously and unilaterally. Ashikaga Yoshimochi was a more circumspect shogun than his younger brother, so when he faced a politically-motivated accusation in Ōei 34 [1427] that his friend and close retainer had committed some heinous misdeed with a woman, Yoshimochi did not defend him. He refused even to allow his friend to write an oath declaring his innocence. The friend had become a political liability, and his death would solve a number of problems; the alleged act itself, though never recorded, also seems to have been infuriating. Had the accused successfully sworn a denial, Yoshimochi would have had to accept it. Instead, he *himself* swore an oath that he would never speak to his friend again, to forestall reconsideration. He claimed that the accuser, the respected Lady Takahashi, dowager concubine of his father Yoshimitsu, had already done all necessary investigation and that his onetime friend would only incur the deities' wrath if he tried to write a false oath of denial. Yoshimochi demanded the accused commit immediate suicide.[245] The sacred power of oaths was respected, and the inconvenient friend who was not permitted to use that power died.

The Finality of Oaths

Oaths, when no powerful and mercurial figure was doing something outrageous, had a sense of finality. Yoshimochi used it to bolster his resolve in 1427, but it also provided final answers in more mundane, less politically-charged cases within Kyoto and on estates. Theft was a problem that private chroniclers faced regularly, as some of the wealthier members of their society, and Sadafusa in particular watched the handling of such cases with interest.

245 Manzei, *Mansai jugō nikki* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928-30), 1:459-61 (Ōei 34 [1427].11.11-13). See Chapter 2 of this dissertation for a more detailed examination of the political context.

One drawn-out incident in the sixth month of Eikyō 3 [1431] involved multiple hot water oaths written two days in a row. Both the main suspect, Uchimoto Hyōgo, and his three brothers were required to give testimony, since there were some oddities. The first day resulted in no signs of deceit. On the second day, however, all four were forced to make another hot water oath, and this time one came away with burns on his hand and was arrested. Another fled, and the final two, including Hyōgo, made successful oaths without any sign of deceit and were returned to their village.[246] Ironically, Hyōgo was killed a month later in another village for stealing a sword, an outcome Sadafusa regarded with vindication: he had not believed in Hyōgo's innocence, though he accepted the outcome of the oaths.[247]

Sadafusa himself was an observer, not an investigator, for all his strong opinions, and his observations suggest a few notes about the judicial use of oaths. First, being forced to repeat an oath immediately, as Hyōgo and his brothers were, was not unprecedented, though it was rare. Part of the shock of Yoshinori's behavior toward Sueyasu may have been the long gap in time between the initial, successful oath and Yoshinori's subsequent, more extreme demand. Nonetheless, repetitions were not unlimited: Hyōgo went free after his second successful oath, though Sadafusa was not the only skeptic of his innocence. This was partly because Hyōgo's brother had failed his oath and thereby provided a culprit, but there were implicit limits on how many times suspicious investigators could demand a hot water oath from the same man. Second, a successful written oath spared Hyōgo direct punishment, but it did not clear his name entirely: he left his village and died some distance away. He might have been more vulnerable there to the charge of theft either because he was a stranger or because word had reached them of the earlier

246 *Kanmon nikki*, 3:291 (Eikyō 3 [1431].06.04-05).
247 Yokoi, *Kanmon gyoki*, 286–87 fills in background using information in *Kanmon nikki*.

accusation. Finally, Sadafusa noted the suspects' names and professions in his record: Hyōgo's brothers Zen'yū and Sukeroku both served within his Fushimi mansion, and the final brother was a monk of Kōdaiji, named Toshii.[248] All three were more deeply embedded in the Fushimi Estate than their brother but were still subject to the same hot water oath, which could either condemn or exonerate.

Hot water oaths were not the only ones used in theft investigations. At the end of Ōei 25 [1418], for example, thieves invaded a storehouse at the mortuary temple for Sadafusa's father. Luckily or perhaps prudently, they did not penetrate the treasure house. An irritated Sadafusa grumbled that not a single thief was caught and the temple's residents did not even seem to notice. Two days after the attack, the people of the estate gathered at the central shrine of Fushimi to write out sworn statements (*kōmon*) regarding the theft. None of their oaths resulted in signs of deceit. Though Sadafusa was frustrated, he accepted the verdict of the oaths.[249]

Oaths justified action as well as inaction. At the end of the fifth month of Ōei 24 [1417], Prince Sadafusa learned that a group of thieves had broken into one of his favorite small temples, Sokujōin, and made off with his clothing. The theft seemed to involve insider help, so members of the community were brought to the main Fushimi shrine and required to write out oaths attesting to their (lack of) knowledge about the affair. Investigators moved quickly: many unnamed, lower-ranked figures, including aristocratic attendants, monks, and local residents wrote their oaths mere days after the theft. Eleven days later they determined that the culprit was

248 *Kanmon nikki*, 3:291 (Eikyō 3 [1431].06.04). For other examples of seeking thieves via hot water oaths on Fushimi Estate, see also *Kanmon nikki*, 5:327-328, 333 (Eikyō 8 [1436].11.02, 11.23), when they attempted unsuccessfully to find a statue of Fudō stolen from a local temple, and *Kanmon nikki*, 51-52, 62 (Eikyō 9 [1437].06.05, 07.22), when witnesses swore hot water oaths, after which a man accused of theft and his servant fled, leaving behind his wife and a home that authorities seized.

249 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:246-247 (Ōei 25 [1418].12.04-06). See *Kanmon nikki* 4:231-232 (Eikyō 5 [1433].10.13) for another set of regular oaths at the shrine regarding an administrative dispute.

one Sōgi Saburō, a younger son of a minor family living on Fushimi Estate, in service to the Hatakeyama warrior clan. Sadafusa demanded that Saburō's elder brother have Saburō detained, to which the brother responded that Saburō's location was unknown. The search for Saburō's accomplices continued, and Sadafusa hammered the shogunate with repeated requests to help him settle the matter, but nothing came of it. Finally, Sadafusa sent his people to burn down the Sōgi family home.[250]

The story does not end with Sadafusa's arson. He faced demands from the Hatakeyama and their allies that his retainers be punished for destroying the Sōgi home. The head of the Hatakeyama family was not then the shogunal chancellor, second-ranking official of the shogunate, but he had been five years earlier and would resume the post less than five years later. The Hatakeyama were both powerful and influential, but their demands to punish Sadafusa ultimately came to nothing. The crime was resolved with the burning of the Sōgi house, which the shogunate accepted in lieu of imposing its own punishment upon the criminal. Though the Sōgi family were hereditary heads of the very shrine where witnesses wrote oaths accusing Sōgi Saburō, they did not or could not derail the process or write their own oaths claiming innocence. The oaths became part of the evidentiary record with which Sadafusa first appealed and then justified his actions to the shogunate, as well as the larger community. While Sadafusa's relations with the Sōgi and Hatakeyama thereafter remained cool, they never spiraled destructively. When the Sōgi attempted to demand over a year later that Sadafusa rebuild their house for them, they found no traction, though neither did Sadafusa succeed in demanding the personal subordination of the Sōgi family head to his authority.[251] The Sōgi continued to participate in important

250 For the entire story, see *Kanmon nikki*, 1:129–34 (Ōei 24 [1417].05.27, 06.02, 06.13-18); for a summary in English, see Creamer, "The Imperial Scribal Network," 162–63.

251 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:233-236 (Ōei 25 [1418].09.08-15).

ceremonies on the estate in later years, and the Hatakeyama never used their greater access to fighting men to attack Sadafusa directly. The oaths had ended any question of Sōgi culpability in the theft, and the only arguments that remained concerned how the Sōgi and Sadafusa would interact in the future.

Conclusion

Written oaths provided a concrete way to carry, in writing, evidence of someone's sincerity or to put a decisive stamp upon a decision. They worked in high-profile cases—a courtier defending himself against a shogun's accusations—because a common villager could use them to defend in turn against a courtier's accusation: they were widely acknowledged as useful to anyone trying to resolve a dispute. Regardless of whether or not everyone involved genuinely believed the truth of a sworn statement, there was significant social and religious pressure to act upon it. Moreover, written oaths were precious enough that even someone who privately doubted oaths in a few contexts would easily rely upon their fact-finding power in others: isolated failures could not overcome all the other reasons to believe in them.

Oaths reached out across status distinctions, simultaneously reinforcing separation by providing different forms distinguished by the status of the oath-taker and smoothing the disjuncture by providing an overarching act in which those of many statuses could participate. Satō Shin'ichi, discussing written oaths as a documentary form, argues that swearing out a statement enhanced the credibility and persuasive power of the words, and every speaker-writer willing to put themselves at the mercy of gods and buddhas had access to that power.[252] Like other tools of persuasion, oaths did not redound unambiguously to the benefit of anyone. They

252 Satō Shin'ichi, *Komonjogaku nyūmon*, 2nd ed. (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1997), 230–32.

could be a goad to collective action; they could also permit individuals to challenge a collective decision. They could protect the weak against wild accusations; they could also allow the strong to torment their victims in the guise of a fact-finding process. Everyone might have potential access to the power of a written oath; those with education and money could exercise that power far more easily. Written oaths, supervised and interpreted by those who served deities, gave gods and buddhas space to act in the world; they also gave laypeople access to deities that could be used against those who served them. In their use of both writing and divine invocation, the sacred and pragmatic were intimately entwined in Muromachi written oaths. Oaths guaranteed truth not only because deities were present at their writing, but also because they strengthened the connection between words and physical reality: a statement inked onto paper, drunk into the body, or scalded onto the skin. Written oaths seldom promised a specific outcome, but they established a basis upon which everyone could move forward.

Chapter 4. Rituals as Moments of Decision

The ritual calendar of the imperial court exerted an outsize influence upon celebrations across the archipelago. Everyone with access to documents used the time-keeping calendar that imperial court scholars drew up, with deviation by at most a day even in distant regions or on opposite sides of a war.[253] The court's annual cycle of rites was accordingly called the "Annual Ceremonies [*Nenjū gyōji*]," encompassing everything from the great rites with hundreds of participants and observers, to more individual celebrations at household altars. These ceremonies were vividly illustrated in picture scrolls from at latest the twelfth century onward and codified anew as part of a project of imperial revitalization early in the fourteenth century: the ritual calendar to define all ritual calendars.[254] Scholars of classical Japan have traced the origins of various parts of the "Annual Ceremonies" to different sources, from early Chinese dynasties to regional power bases across the Japan.[255]

The court's calendarists folded in major ceremonies celebrated by important temple and shrine complexes, which retained responsibility and funding for them. For example, the great Hōjō-e (Release of Living Beings) celebrated just outside Kyoto at Iwashimizu Hachiman probably began during the eighth century in the south at Usa Hachiman in Kyushu, as an adaptation of a continental Buddhist rite by a shrine allied with but independent of the imperial family, commemorating a battle fought to strengthen imperial control of the Japanese archipelago. In the ninth century, the imperial family ordered the construction of the Iwashimizu

253 Kristina Buhrman, “The Stars and the State: Astronomy, Astrology, and the Politics of Natural Knowledge in Early Medieval Japan” (PhD Dissertation, Los Angeles, University of Southern California, 2012), https://www.proquest.com/docview/1151464521?accountid=13314.

254 Komatsu Shigemi, ed., *Nenjū gyōji emaki*, Nihon emaki taisei 8 (Tokyo: Chūo Kōronsha, 1977); Go-Daigo, *Kenmu nenjū gyōji: Kyōto Gosho Higashiyama Gobunkobon*, ed. Tokoro Isao (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1990).

255 Endō Motoo and Yamanaka Yutaka, *Nenjū gyōji no rekishigaku* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1981).

Hachiman temple-shrine complex to bring the Hachiman deity to the capital as a protector and defender. Shortly thereafter, Iwashimizu held a Hōjō-e ceremony. Less than a century after that, the imperial court ordered Iwashimizu to perform a Hōjō-e, and it continued to rely on Iwashimizu to perform the rite regularly thereafter. As others came to power, they too claimed the backing of the Hachiman deity and supported the performance of the rite, both reinforcing the court's support and offering their own direct patronage. In short, the place of the Hōjō-e within the court's "Annual Ceremonies" stemmed from an amalgam of imported beliefs, regional consolidation, long-lived religious organization, and the shifting balance of power among all who sought to govern in Japan.[256] It was also one of many ceremonies with a similarly complex history and place within the imperial court's calendar.

The court was not the only organization to compile its "annual ceremonies." Many shrines and temples recorded the rites to be performed at their own institution and claimed for these rites much broader influence over the region or entire realm.[257] Others had lists of ceremonies that went so far as to codify a daily schedule.[258] Powerful institutions set forth rites and festivals to be performed outside their bounds at subsidiary shrines or other areas where they

256 Allan G. Grapard, *Mountain Mandalas: Shugendo in Kyushu* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016); Suzanne Gay, "The Lamp-Oil Merchants of Iwashimizu Shrine: Transregional Commerce in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 64, no. 1 (2009): 1–51; Jane Marie Law, "Violence, Ritual Reenactment, and Ideology: The 'Hōjō-e' (Rite for Release of Sentient Beings) of the Usa Hachiman Shrine in Japan," *History of Religions* 33, no. 4 (May 1994): 325–57.

257 Chief among these was Ise Shrine, which strove to maintain its schedule of rites amid ups and downs in its relationship to the central court. During the Muromachi era, imperial and shogunal courtiers often valued the rites Ise-connected priests performed in the capital over the schedule at the shrine itself; Ise's head priests prioritized the latter and meticulously recorded rites performed, postponed, abbreviated, or, at worst, skipped. Mark Teeuwen and John Breen, "Ise in the Muromachi Period: War and Pilgrims," in *A Social History of the Ise Shrines: Divine Capital*, Bloomsbury Shinto Studies (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 101-120.

258 See Lori Meeks, *Hokkeji and the Reemergence of Female Monastic Orders in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010), 215-244 for discussion of daily and major event schedules.

held sway.[259] These rites permeated the countryside. Even when a village's tutelary shrine or local temple did not keep a written calendar of rites, the annual cycle was still predictable and visible. Festivals were held in the same central location as village assemblies or paraded through multiple connected villages, and they required major organizational effort from prominent members of the local community.[260]

These calendars interpenetrated geographically and socially. The enormous Mt. Hiei temple-shrine complex outside Kyoto performed rituals included in the court's "Annual Ceremonies." It also had its own yearly rites outside the court's calendar and habitually established subsidiary shrines in the villages of its estates, extending its festivals into the local life of villages.[261] Kōfukuji-Kasuga, a temple-shrine complex in the ancient capital of Nara, did the same throughout Yamato Province, which it controlled through a combination of estate rights and delegated gubernatorial powers. Kōfukuji-Kasuga also prescribed rituals for the entire Fujiwara lineage (*uji*), which was a sprawling clan that stretched from the highest ranks of the imperial court to local authorities in far-flung provinces.[262] Any individual in Japan lived within multiple ritual calendars: they permitted the performance of different unities among overlapping groups.

---

259 See Mikael Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers, and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 89 for conflict over a required Hie festival in a more distant area.

260 Kōji Hirota, "Hine Estate in Izumi Province: Archaeology, Landscape Reconstruction, and Village Structures," in *Land, Power, and the Sacred: The Estate System in Medieval Japan*, ed. Janet R. Goodwin and Joan R. Piggott (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018), 129-133. See also discussion of the Fushimi estate's Chrysanthemum Festival celebrations below, in subsection "Rituals on Fushimi Estate: Yearly Festivals."

261 Hitomi Tonomura, *Community and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan: Corporate Villages of Tokuchin-Ho* (Stanford University Press, 1992).

262 Allan Grapard, *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

Large annual festivals are perhaps the clearest, most visible examples of rituals providing a fixed point in time to (re)enact unity, but the annual calendar included smaller observances at the level of individuals or households, such as gift-giving on designated days or ceremonies before household altars. The Gion Festival was—and is—one of the largest in Kyoto, but many in the region around the capital held smaller ceremonies within the household even if they did not attend the city's parades.[263] Such people interacted with the Gion moment in two ways: they judged the state of the realm or governance in the capital through rumor about how splendid the city's parade was, and they participated in the event through their own observances. Other moments had no single public observance. *Hassaku*, on the first day of the eighth month, was officially a date for gift-giving that rendered tangible social ties, and the gifts moved between households rather than any centralized site..[264] Who gave gifts to whom spread quickly through rumor, however, turning individual celebration into a broader social map.[265]

Beyond annual events, exceptional events provided occasion to create new ritual moments. The most prominent examples are probably the death of one ruler or elevation of another, as well as the anniversaries of those moments, which could become important markers in time if those involved made them so. When Ashikaga Yoshimochi (1386-1428) commemorated his father's death by sending messengers out to confiscate fishing and hunting equipment from villages to enforce a prohibition on killing, he reinforced both his own lineage and his authority over any villages his messengers could reach. The truly necessary rituals for a father's death anniversary were smaller in scope, but the memorial provided an occasion to

263 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:131-132 (Ōei 24 [1417].06.14), 2:49-50 (27 [1420].06.07); Akiko Mieda, *Hieizan to Muromachi Bakufu: jisha to buke no Kyōto shihai*, (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2011).

264 Martha Chaiklin, ed., *Mediated by Gifts: Politics and Society in Japan, 1350-1850* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 7, 52, 88, 102.

265 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:67-68 (Ōei 27 [1420].08.01-03).

exploit for a demonstration of Yoshimochi's connection to his father that would be experienced down to the village level.[266] Yoshimochi's younger brother Yoshinori similarly commemorated their father's elevation to shogun by mimicking his father's procession to thank the emperor for the appointment after he himself became shogun, thereby reinforcing his lineage and his influence over the court by parading dozens of armed men through the city to the emperor's residence. Rulers died, took new offices, or abdicated often enough to provide a number of options for commemorative events, but once they chose an event, it too became a fixed point in time. Yoshinori could not reschedule his procession even when insoluble disputes arose concerning the riding order within it.

This wide range of rituals was effective in part because the roles of observer and participant were extraordinarily fluid. At a basic level, the attendance of rulers as observers to ceremonies made them *de facto* participants by their very presence. The staging often included them prominently. Hence, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu's choice—maintained by his sons—to regularly attend the Iwashimizu Hachiman Hōjō-e alongside the imperial court attendees was a statement both that Iwashimizu's activities were important to the state and that the Ashikaga would be involved in every aspect of rule, ritual as well as martial and administrative.[267] Similarly, when Prince Sadafusa and his household watched the dancing and processions put on by the several villages of Fushimi Estate for the Chrysanthemum Festival, organized in rotation by three prominent local families, the prince and his retainers were participants confirming their dedication to the local estate, while the performing villagers were also observers enjoying the

266 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:31-32 (Ōei 27 [1420].04.03-06).
267 Gay, "The Lamp-Oil Merchants of Iwashimizu Shrine," 6, 32-33.

sight of their overlord and his household, and the skill of other villages' performers.[268] Conversely, when the ladies of the Ashikaga family began a pilgrimage journey with a day of making offerings at every major shrine or temple in the capital, city residents who lived and worked around those institutions could watch the lavish pilgrimage parade while also catering to the needs of the ladies' retinues.[269]

In short, the importance of the ritual calendar to not only the imperial court but also many other important institutions created a schedule that continued to organize collective actions even when the institutions themselves grew weaker. The weight of annual observances created fixed moments in time at which even disputing parties needed to cooperate and rendered their success —or failure—visible to the broader community. The formula—specific moment plus ritual observance—was also flexible enough to allow the creation of other moments with significant weight to compel either reconciliation or a public snapshot of power and interrelationships, when authorities found a significant event in the past upon which to base an event in the present. These events channeled and organized social relationships during a time when the meaning of ranks and offices were ambiguous and the operation of institutions intermittent.

Conflict Concentrated Before the Release of Living Beings (*Hōjō-e*)

Iwashimizu Hachiman, located southeast of the capital, was a prominent shrine-temple supported by the imperial court and administered by Buddhist monks. Its principal deity was Hachiman, whose complex history stretched back to the sixth century.[270] By the fifteenth century,

268 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:79-80 (Ōei 27 [1420].09.09); Yokoi Kiyoshi, *Kanmon gyoki: "ōja" to "shūsho" no hazama nite* (Tokyo: Soshiete, 1979), 208-212.

269 Matsuoka Shinpei, "Muromachi shōgun to keijō Takahashi-dono," in Matsuoka, ed., *Kanmon nikki to chūsei bunka* (Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2009): 337-359.

270 For a recent explanation in English, see Helen Hardacre, *Shinto: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 94-95, 121-122. To be more precise, by the fifteenth century, the Hachiman deity of Usa, Iwashimizu, and Tsurugaoka was simultaneously Emperor Ōjin alone *and* Ōjin with his

he was honored as a bodhisattva—a great being capable of becoming a buddha who refuses to do so until all others are enlightened as well—and also the deified fifteenth emperor Ōjin. Hachiman was a tutelary deity of the imperial family and its offshoot Minamoto clan, and a patron of warriors. Iwashimizu's parent shrine in Kyushu, Usa Hachiman, still held lands awarded to it for prayers that had helped to repel the Mongol Invasion a century and a half earlier, and Iwashimizu monks performed extensive prayers for support in battle themselves.[271] Hachiman was also a popular protector-deity at temples devoted to other bodhisattvas or buddhas, and he played a vital role in shifting from violence to peace, taking responsibility for the bloodshed upon himself. The complex at Iwashimizu was founded by a Buddhist monk, based on an oracular dream in which Hachiman wished for a vantage near the capital of Kyoto to better watch over it, according to Iwashimizu's founding legend and corroborated by other records.[272] Iwashimizu Hachiman was, in both its deity and its organization, profoundly combinatory and associated with the winning and aftermath of war.

The greatest of Iwashimizu Hachiman's yearly rituals, the Hōjō-e (Release of Living Beings), was equally multifaceted. Its purpose was protection, of both capital and realm, reinforced by reading aloud the legend of Iwashimizu's establishment. The imperial family made a procession from the palace to the shrine for the festival, and the shrine itself welcomed a large

---

deified mother, Jingu, and wife, Hime Ōkami. He was often considered the *kami* manifestation of the Amida Buddha or, less often, the Sakyamuni Buddha. Local legends sometimes combined Hachiman with various local *kami* at smaller shrines. For a translation of a fourteenth century treatise on the history and role of Hachiman and the shrine-temple at Iwashimizu, see Royall Tyler, trans., "Hachiman Gudōkun: A Hachiman Primer for Untutored Youth," *Iwashimizu Hachiman in War and Cult* (Columbia, SC: Blue-Tongue Books, 2017).

271 Christine Guth, *Shinzō: Hachiman Imagery and Its Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ Asia Center, 1985), 33-35, 41-45.

272 Grapard, *Mountain Mandalas*, 38-48.

audience.[273] The first shogunate in Kamakura, which the Ashikaga overthrew, had patronized its own Hachiman shrine-temple in Tsurugaoka lavishly. When the Ashikaga established their government in the capital, alongside and entwined with the imperial court, they began grand and visible patronage of Iwashimizu Hachiman. Control of the shrine-temple shifted back and forth between the Northern and Southern Courts during the fourteenth century, and both sides prayed at it privately and publicly. The war was not yet over when the Ashikaga government began to extend influence over all major shrines and temples in the area of the capital, though they only consolidated control after most of the active fighting. Yoshimitsu, third of the Ashikaga rulers, controlled appointments to office at Iwashimizu Hachiman a decade before the official end of hostilities.[274] Yet he did not preside over the Hōjō-e until 1393, a year after he officially achieved peace with the Southern Court.[275] There was thus ample scope for honoring a deity associated with successful conquest and subsequent peace.

Iwashimizu Hachiman in particular was ideal for the characteristic Ashikaga strategy of blurring the lines between imperial court and shogunate and thereby exerting authority over both. Minamoto Yoritomo (1147-1199), founder of the Kamakura shogunate, had emphatically honored *Tsurugaoka* Hachiman, in the east, as his tutelary deity as heir of the Minamoto branch descended from Emperor Seiwa (850-881). The Ashikaga expanded on the significance of the Minamoto lineage as a rationale for authority over a wide swath of warriors, emphasizing their place as head of the clan, and crediting Hachiman for their ultimate victory in the fourteenth-

273 Meeks, *Hokkeji and the Reemergence of Female Monastic Orders in Premodern Japan*, 210-11; Hardacre, *Shinto*, 121-22.

274 John Whitney Hall and Toyoda Takeshi, eds., *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, 2nd ed. (University of California Press, 2001), 99.

275 Suzanne Gay, "The Lamp-Oil Merchants of Iwashimizu Shrine: Transregional Commerce in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 64, no. 1 (2009), 6.

century civil war.[276] Such a special connection with Hachiman gave them a path into Iwashimizu Hachiman, with its longer history of imperial power and protection.

The most important rituals on the imperial calendar all had a senior noble assigned to preside over them (*shōkei*): the role was both ceremonial and organizational, something between the lead actor among the courtiers and the master of ceremony.[277] By the time he ascended to power, each Ashikaga ruler held the appropriate court rank to be eligible for the position, opening the way for them to preside over the Hōjō-e, as Ashikaga Yoshimitsu did in Meitoku 4 [1393].[278] Yoshimitsu only presided at the Hōjō-e the once, and he was the first of his family to do so, making his Meitoku 4 trip a precedent for the future.[279]

Neither Yoshimitsu nor his successors behaved as mere senior nobles in their approaches to the shrine-temple. He went first to the home of his mother's family, the Zenpōji Kino, who were one of the two or three most powerful lineages within Iwashimizu Hachiman, providing head priests and other administrators. His mother's sister was also the mother of Retired Emperor Go En'yū, who had been the senior retired emperor within the imperial court before his death mere months earlier.[280] Emphasizing Yoshimitsu's ties to the Kino thus emphasized both seniority over the shrine-temple and its leaders and a parallel with the imperial line. He traveled amid a splendid retinue, escorted by a number of nobles who were themselves senior enough to preside

276 Okano Tomohiko, *Genji chōja: Buke seiken no keifu* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2018).

277 Joan R. Piggott, "What Did A Regent Do?: Fujiwara No Tadahira in the 930s," in Teishinkōki: The Year 939 in the Journal of Regent Fujiwara No Tadahira, ed. Sanae Yoshida and Joan R. Piggott (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2008), 33.

278 The seniority required for a household office (*mandokoro*) and the right to issue government documents, which was necessary to officially authorize the continued functioning of the shogunate, was the same required to be eligible to serve as noble-in-charge: third rank within the imperial court. See Chapter 1 for the role of the *mandokoro* in the shogunate.

279 Futaki Ken'ichi, "Iwashimizu Hōjō-e to Muromachi bakufu: Shōgun shōkei sankō o megutte," *Kokugakuin Daigaku Nihon bunka kenkyūjo kiyō*, no. 30 (September 1972): 98–133.

280 Imatani Akira, *Muromachi no ōken: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu no ōken sandatsu keikaku*, (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1990), 37-43.

over a ceremony, as well as imperial secretaries and his own retainers on horseback and afoot.[281] Yoshimitsu greeted the portable shrine that brought the god back up the mountain arrayed with all the courtiers of his retinue, magnifying the effect of such a grand escort and bringing it directly into the ceremony. While none of his descendants made quite so ostentatious an approach, they did continue to visit the Kino at Zenpōji and attend with significant retinues.[282]

There were many participants beyond the courtiers. Specialist dancers and musicians performed, consistently including dances called Bodhisattva and Butterflies-and-Birds. Priest-monks of Iwashimizu walked in procession, chanted, accepted offerings, and did the actual release of fish into the river.[283] For most of the ceremony, the noble in charge sat centrally before the ceremonial hall of the main temple within Iwashimizu Hachiman (Gokurakuji), emphasizing his precedence over all others. Partway into the ceremony, after the first performances and before the offerings, however, the head priest of the shrine opened the blinds of the portable shrine to transfer the god back to his normal shrine. Everyone, from the presiding noble down, bowed

281 Tanaka Hirokiyo, ed., *Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi*, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 9 vols. (Tōkyō: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1994), 465-91. The basic required complement from the imperial court included the noble in charge (*shōkei*), a consultant on the Council of State (*sangi*), a controller (ben), and a messenger. An imperial secretary (*geki*), Council consultant secretary (*shi*), or supervisor for the Council of State secretariat (*kanshō*) often joined the team, too. When Yoshimitsu presided as noble in charge at the Hōjō-e, he brought as his personal escort five nobles of rank to have been in charge, riding in a lavishly decorated ox cart. He also filled out the full complement of consultant, controller, multiple messengers, and multiple imperial secretaries, then added several consultants' secretaries, two supervisors of the secretaries, a junior counselor, and six officers of the palace and gate guards. This, of course, leaves aside most of his retinue of riders and attendants who held lower offices or did not hold imperial office at all, not to mention the attendants to the other nobles and lesser courtiers, who together amounted to dozens more.

282 Tanaka, *Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi*, 520-21, 592.

283 Futaki Ken'ichi, "Iwashimizu Hōjō-e to Muromachi bakufu: Shōgun shōkei sankō o megutte," 103-07.

deeply. This moment was far more central to courtiers' accounts of the Hōjō-e than the physical release of living beings.[284]

The Ashikaga rulers then followed up the ceremonies with banquets at the Zenpōji Kino home. Even during years when no Ashikaga presided, they supported the ritual financially, celebrated it within the capital, and sent allied senior nobles to preside, though not with the same grandeur. Those who experienced the Hōjō-e, as well as those who helped to make it happen, were thus both participants and audience: when the Ashikaga and their retinues witnessed the rite, they also bolstered its grandeur by their ostentatious attendance, even for those in the city who would not attend the rite but would see a procession from the capital. While the temple-shrine's associated merchants provided supplies, the workers set up, and the musicians performed within it, each was seeing the resources poured into the ceremony, the people mobilized for it, and the illustrious audience who would eventually attend it.

The importance of the Hōjō-e, both within Iwashimizu Hachiman and outside the temple-shrine to rulers and less exalted observers alike, made it a fixed point for negotiating conflicts within the Iwashimizu Hachiman organization writ large. Those negotiating included not only monks and priests living inside the complex but also suppliers and performers affiliated with the organization living outside the complex. The ceremony was expensive, highly visible, and conceptualized as part of protecting the realm. There was, however, precedent for postponing the Hōjō-e for a month or more without disaster; pre-planned month-long delays for the mourning of high-profile figures were not uncommon.[285] It was thus possible to take the risk of initiating

284 Tanaka, *Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi*, 466-69, *Kennaiki* 1:6-12, 14-18 (Ōei 24 [1417].08.15, 26.08.15).

285 For a three-month postponement, see *Kanmon nikki*, 1:226, 241-242 (Ōei 25 [1418].08.15, 11.13, 11.15) and Sakkaiki 6:6 (Ōei 25.11.15). For a month-long delay, see Sakkaiki 6:171 (Shōchō 1.09.15). The ceremony was also postponed in Ōei 20 [1413] after the death of Ashikaga Yoshimochi's

conflict shortly before the ceremony: the pressure to come to an agreement was heavy, but failure to perform was not a disaster, merely a humiliating danger. The Hōjō-e needed to happen on the fifteenth day of the eighth month. This made the seventh and eighth months the perfect moment to bring disputes to a head.

Shrine-temple complexes were intricate societies. Each encompassed sub-communities with disparate interests that were yet bound together as one organization with a collective interest distinct from other organizations, lay or religious. Major studies have established the importance of violent protest using divine symbols and rituals for religious subgroups defending their prerogatives, as well as shrine-temple complexes asserting their interests in opposition to other organizations.[286] The conflicts before Iwashimizu Hachiman's Hōjō-e show both violent and non-violent protest following the same timeline: escalate the concern in the seventh month, when the deadline of the eighth month ceremony added pressure for resolution. This pressure fell upon Iwashimizu Hachiman administrators, imperial officials, and shogunal personnel alike: all wished to see the ceremony go forward and all had the power to influence the outcome of negotiations.

Though the timing added weight to the protesters' complaints, authorities still had most of the same options for coercion that they always had. The head of the shrine-temple often locked up ringleaders when he caught them.[287] The Ashikaga rulers were also happy to provide muscle. Literally killing shrine affiliates on shrine grounds would pollute the area and disrupt the

grandmother, who was a daughter of one of the lineages of head priests of Iwashimizu Hachiman. See Tanaka, *Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi*, 522-24.

286 Adolphson, *The Gates of Power*; Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sōhei in Japanese History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007); Suzanne Gay, "The Lamp-Oil Merchants of Iwashimizu Shrine: Transregional Commerce in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 64, no. 1 (2009): 1–51; Suzanne Gay, *The Moneylenders of Late Medieval Kyoto* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001).

287 Shinjō Toshio, "Chūsei Iwashimizu Hachimangū no Oshi," *Hōsei Shigaku* 30 (March 23, 1978), 53.

ceremony: hurting them would not, and thus Ashikaga rulers several times brought their (armed) attendants to the shrine before the ceremony to ensure that all went smoothly. Accounts of pre-Hōjō-e conflict rarely mention outright violence.[288] Instead, the same description—retainers or attendants—indicates both the underlings of a high-ranking administrator and the underlings of the shogun, sent to Iwashimizu to address any problems before a Hōjō-e. It is notable, however, that the administrator's retainers went a month before the ceremony and several times thereafter to continue negotiating, while the shogun's retainers went three days before.[289] In a similar case a few years earlier, gossip asserted that the shogun's retainers had stopped a protest on the *day of* the ceremony.[290] The disparate timelines suggest the use or threat of immediate force from the shogun's retainers.

Perhaps a more pointed example of avoiding direct mention of violence are the four accounts of the Hōjō-e of Eikyō 6 [1434]: two of them mention that blades were drawn; two do not even mention that there was disruption, since in the end the ceremony was performed that day. One of the accounts that elides the violence, however, does mention that both the shogunal chancellor and the official responsible for peacekeeping within the capital (the *samurai-dokoro*) went out to Iwashimizu that day.[291] The community needed to come together to perform the Hōjō-e, but it came together as it always did, with promises of reward and threats of violence to spur cooperation.

---

288 Tanaka, *Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi*, 527-624.

289 *Kennaiki,* 1:13 (Ōei 26 [1419].08.12).

290 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:145 (Ōei 24 [1417].08.15).

291 Tanaka, *Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi*, 573-78. The omission was by Manzei, who carefully attributed his knowledge of the ritual conducted "as usual, without problems" to a third party. The *samurai-dokoro* was an administrative post below the shogunal chancellor with ambiguous responsibilities, amounting to managing Ashikaga retainers within the capital, interpreted broadly and thus *de facto* holding peacekeeping responsibility.

The day of the ceremony was important not simply because it was a recognized, visible time during which human eyes were on Iwashimizu Hachiman. Divine presence was also tangible and critical to allowing less powerful people to protest without needing to mobilize significant military force. While protesters may well have included shrine guards, most were far less well equipped than retainers of the shogun or a shugo. When they drew blades in Eikyō 6 [1434], it was to threaten ritual suicide: blood and death directly beside the portable shrine housing Hachiman for the Hōjō-e. The protesters could threaten the government and realm with their own deaths in this particular context in a way that would be far less influential at another place or time.[292]

Most of these protesters were most commonly known as *jinin*. The term is a complex one made more so by inconsistent usage. At its broadest in the fifteenth century, it encompassed anyone who officially served the shrine—or, in Iwashimizu Hachiman's case, shrine-temple—below highest administrative level. This included occasional service, such as performance in the Hōjō-e once per year. Two chronicles recorded the same protest during Bun'an 2 [1445]: the abbreviated record kept by Iwashimizu Hachiman described it as a protest by *jinin*, while an imperial court chamberlain, who recorded courtier participants in various rituals, specified that the protest was by both *jinin* and musicians.[293] At its narrowest, *jinin* meant those who did the manual labor of keeping a shrine running and making its ceremonies possible. Most commonly, it meant a lay commoner appointed (or employed) to perform services for a shrine throughout the year, as documented by the shrine. Such service included from provincial land management, materiel supply, guarding the shrine, and carrying its palanquins, among others. It thus

292 Tanaka, *Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi*, 573-78.
293 *Morosato-ki,* 4:36 (Bun'an 2.08.15); Tanaka, *Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi*, 617.

encompassed an enormous variety of people, from the wealthiest merchants of Kyoto to thugs with cudgels.[294]

Their protests were similarly varied. Every record-keeper in the early fifteenth century records a few times a protest before the Hōjō-e caused a delay or cancellation, though none record every time, suggesting it was embarrassing news but not a city-wide disaster. Those who carried the portable shrine that housed the deity through the ritual were perhaps the most difficult to guard against. They could simply take the portable shrine elsewhere, especially since it was already down the mountain, waiting to be carried back up. Taking the shrine out of Iwashimizu would disrupt not only the Hōjō-e, but also any traffic wherever they set it down.[295] Most often, though, the latter threat remained implicit and they disrupted the ceremony by simply refusing to carry the portable shrine and blockading themselves in with it to prevent anyone else carrying it. It proved impossible to be *certain* they would not do so until the ceremony began and they carried it out. When Ashikaga Yoshimochi presided over the Ōei 24 [1417] Hōjō-e, he arrived early and brought his retainers with him, and they still had to quash an abortive protest by those carrying the portable shrine.[296]

Other protests were more elaborate, with long lists of grievances and advanced organization. Prince Sadafusa, writing based on word of mouth from outside the capital noted one list of forty-two demands in Ōei 23 [1416] and a list of thirty in Ōei 25 [1418], suggesting that word did spread of their demands. Manzei, head monk of a leading temple and trusted

294 Gay, *The Moneylenders of Late Medieval Kyoto,* 68-69.
295 For this use of a portable shrine as a broader phenomenon, see Adolphson, *The Gates of Power*, 240-88.
296 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:145 (Ōei 24 [1417].08.15); *Kennaiki,* 1:6-12 (Ōei 24 [1417].08.14-15).

advisor to the Ashikaga, recorded negotiations that continued for days in Ōei 23 [1416], though without the specifics he reserved for negotiations among shugo lords.[297]

Musicians, too, acted within the shrine-temple's schedule. In 1443, musicians from the Toyohara family were fighting to get seized property back after it had been re-bestowed upon a member of the Ogimachi Sanjō family. The Toyohara were far less well-connected than the Sanjō, and although they bombarded the shogunal chancellor (the temporary head of government) with requests via every channel they could, including through the emperor himself, they had not yet received a response beyond equivocation.[298] The government was in some disarray, since the previous shogun had been assassinated two years earlier, the previous shogunal chancellor had resigned after failing to either help him or control the violence in the aftermath, and the assassinated shogun's elder son had just died shortly after being appointed shogun himself, leaving his seven-year-old brother the only heir. The Hōjō-e had already been postponed for a month due to the child-shogun's death, however, so the Toyohara took advantage of the gathered audience to push for the rights to be reverted. The decision was made quickly enough that the Hōjō-e merely lasted until dawn, rather than having to be postponed.[299]

While the Ogimachi Sanjō were high-ranked and better-connected, and Sanjō Sanemasa had been a consultant on the Council of State for years, the Toyohara were well-known as musical specialists. Open confrontation only sparked immediately before that year's ceremony, though the Toyohara had fought their suit via petitions and personal requests for months, since the day of the ceremony was the grandest stage the musicians would have that year and a

297 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:55 (Ōei 23 [1416].08.15-16), 1:226 (25 [1418].08.15); Manzei, *Mansai jugō nikki* (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928-30), 1:92-93 (Ōei 23.08.15-18), 1:133 (25.08.15).
298 *Kennaiki,* 6:74-75 (Kakitsu 3 [1443].06.13), *Kanmon nikki,* 7:40 (Kakitsu 3.08.11), *Morosato-ki,* 3:165 (Kakitsu 3.09.15).
299 *Kanmon nikki,* 7:54 (Kakitsu 3 [1443].09.15), *Morosato-ki,* 3:165 (Kakitsu 3.09.15).

moment when their performance was critical. During the Hōjō-e, low-ranked performing courtiers were demonstrably part of the same community as a noble, and the Toyohara made good use of it.

Ceremonies Publicizing Status

By the fifteenth century, court or other government office was merely one strand of power. Often, having held an office was more significant than currently holding it. This had long been true of emperors: one needed to *have served* as emperor to attain headship of the imperial family, but few exercised real power until they "retired": took Buddhist vows, removed themselves from the constraints of the throne, and attained the ritual and financial power of leading their own temple-household. Consensus determined who among the potential multitude of former emperors would lead the imperial court. A matching principle began to hold for others. The senior member of the Fujiwara regent family must *have held* the office of regent, but need not continue to hold it. Similarly, while the office of shogunal chancellor (*kanrei*) was responsible for some functions—issuing the shogunate's documents was the most important—former chancellors continued to hold the authority to advise the Ashikaga ruler and mobilize their fellow shugo lords in council. Some even returned to hold the office again.[300]

With office transformed in many situations from the locus of power to merely one qualification, holding office guaranteed neither status nor the ability to solve a problem. Highly public rituals made manifest people's actual positions, rendering them visible and solid until the next similar rite provided another opportunity to publicize reconfigured relationships.

300 Ogawa Makoto, *Ashikaga ichimon shugo hattenshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980), 1-25.

Yoshinori's procession to celebrate his accession to shogun in Eikyō 2 [1430] was one such moment of recognition. He framed it as emulating his father, Yoshimitsu, who had held a procession in Kōryaku 1 [1379].[301] The parallel was of power, more than position. Yoshimitsu's procession had been mere months after he had ousted his former regent and chancellor, officially to thank the emperor for his appointment as General of the Right Palace Guards (*ukon'e-taishō*). Yoshimitsu had been shogun for a decade then, but the dominance of his shogunal chancellor had constrained him.[302] The appointment as General coincided with his move to direct personal rule, and thus his procession marked a transition of power. Yoshinori's contemporaries considered his 1430 Eikyō procession a recognition of his position as shogun, though it was officially—like Yoshimitsu's 1379 Kōryaku procession—marking his promotion to General of the Right Palace Guards.[303] Yoshinori was trying to assert his own power, after one year of racing through all the ceremonies of adulthood and promotion that he had skipped as a Buddhist monk and a second year as a new and relatively weak shogun. *His* appointment to General did not mark a significant increase in influence over courtiers or government from what he had held five months earlier as a Captain of the Left Palace Guards (*sakon'e-chūjō*), when he had received the decree making him shogun, but he wanted to redefine it as having done so.

The timing for Yoshinori's Eikyō procession was therefore slightly strained. It was nearly a year after Yoshinori became General, and he had received another promotion and appointment in the intervening months,[304] but to follow the precedent of Yoshimitsu he was commemorating

301 Gogumaiki Kōryaku 1.06.27; Go-Shinjin Kanpaku-ki Kōryaku 1.07.04, 07.13, 07.22, 07.27.
302 Ebara Masaharu, *Muromachi bakufu to chihō no shakai*, Nihon chūsei sh 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016), 41-43.
303 *Mansai jugō nikki*, (Eikyō 2 [1430].07.20)
304 Promoted to the second rank and appointed as *Umaryō-gogen* (Head of the Right Palace Stables), often held concurrently with a generalship or by imperial princes.

his appointment to General. More important than the position was the influence Yoshinori had begun to build, enough to induce the participation of the highest-ranking official of the imperial court (imperial regent, or *sesshō*) in his ceremony. He was still, however, unable to reliably dominate the retired emperor, who was in practice the leader of the imperial court.[305] Yoshinori's procession was thus both manifestation of and aspiration to greater power.

Participants in the procession faced the same tension between past, current, and desired sociopolitical position. Thus the Isshiki family fought their position in Yoshinori's procession desperately.[306] In the 1379 Kōryaku event that Yoshinori emulated, the Isshiki had ridden at the front of the line of powerful shugo. Since then, however, severe internal conflict had weakened the family. In Yoshinori's procession, decades later, the Isshiki were to have neither the foremost position, nor the final one, being reduced instead to the second in the cavalcade.

The less prominent position was in many ways recognition of the status quo. The Isshiki *were* less influential than they had been, because the current head of the family had inherited as a child, after an internecine struggle among the broader Isshiki organization over which he had had little control. Yet the early years of a new ruler were always unsettled, and the Isshiki's reduced prominence need not be permanent. The head of the family was now in the prime of his life. Less than a decade earlier, he had served as *samurai-dokoro*, an administrative post below the shogunal chancellor broadly responsible for managing shogunal retainers within and around the capital. He maintained good relations with several prominent heads of other shugo families, and

305 In the fifth month of Eikyō 2 [1430], two months before this event, Yoshinori failed to fully protect a high-ranked aristocratic ally and friend against the retired emperor's irritation. See Chapter 3, Section "Subject of Investigation: Adultery," for details. Yoshinori revenged himself on the retired emperor's messenger in that instance almost exactly two years after this procession. (Eikyō 2.07.25 vs. Eikyō 4.08.15) See Chapter 1 for the retired emperor's role within the court and government.

306 See Chapter 2, Section "Manzei: The Shogun and the Warrior Lords," for the aftermath of this dispute.

had not yet established his position in relation to the new shogun. He could still hope to attain the prestige the Isshiki had held when his grandfather rode in Yoshimitsu's Kōryaku procession.[307] That prestige, in turn, could help paper over the cracks within the Isshiki organization: family and retainers.

Thus, the head of the Isshiki fought to take a prestigious position within the procession. At first, a compromise seemed within reach: the shogunal chancellor (*kanrei*) would ride first, and the Isshiki would then be the first of the rest of the shugo lords. Another powerful family, the Hatakeyama, whose head had once been a shogunal chancellor, would take up the rear. Unfortunately for the Isshiki, the organizers decided that the shogunal chancellor required too many escort riders and would have to be placed in the back. To balance the power, the Hatakeyama would be moved to the front.[308]

This presented a problem. Pragmatically, the Hatakeyama were one of the two most powerful shugo families at the time. They regularly supplied shogunal chancellors and their current head was the eldest and most respected of the living men who had once held that highest office within the shogunate. He was also an important ally to the Isshiki family. The only argument for the Isshiki to ride before the Hatakeyama was perfect preservation of the order from Yoshimitsu's procession, which was already disrupted elsewhere among less powerful participants. Yet the Hatakeyama heir, who would be riding in the procession in place of his tonsured father, held no official position within the shogunate. For him to ride before the head of the Isshiki would unquestionably demonstrate for the entire court, shogunate, and city to see that the Hatakeyama had risen in power and the Isshiki had fallen.

---

307 Kawamura Syoichi, *Nanbokuchō/Muromachi-ki Isshiki-shi no kenryoku kōzō*, 46-52, 531-542.
308 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:154, 159-162 (Eikyō 2 [1430].06.17, 07.10-12, 07.19).

As a last-ditch effort, the Isshiki sought to have Yoshinori put into writing that they were riding second due to his orders and not in accordance with precedent.[309] Yoshinori refused; he was, after all, trying to claim his father's precedent himself. With all efforts exhausted, two days before the event, the Isshiki lord informed Yoshinori that he was too ill to participate in the procession.[310] The other most powerful shugo family of Yoshinori's day, the Hosokawa, had been the family of Yoshimitsu's ousted chancellor and had not participated in Yoshimitsu's procession. They did not ride in Yoshinori's either, avoiding the difficult question of weighing Hatakeyama and Hosokawa prestige against each other. Non-presence, therefore, did not indicate insignificance.

The consequences of this nonparticipation are still debated. In the most immediate aftermath, days after the procession, Yoshinori was furious. He wanted the Isshiki severely punished and was willing to mobilize troops to do so, concerned that *not* punishing them would make him appear weak. The head of the Isshiki family contemplated offering ritual suicide. Low-level violence erupted.[311] Contemporaries saw potential for the violence to escalate.

In the medium term, the Isshiki seemed to have won their point. The Hatakeyama mobilized the rest of the important shugo in the capital to recommend against punishing the Isshiki too severely. He then argued, through the medium of Yoshinori's adoptive brother and conciliator Manzei, that this mercy would show benevolence rather than weakness. With Manzei's mediation, the punishment was reduced to a nominal one, loss of at most authority over a single county. Within one year, Yoshinori had resumed making formal visits to the Isshiki capital residence, and the year after that, the head of the Isshiki family took up the post of

309 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:162-163 (Eikyō 2 [1430].07.20).
310 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:163 (Eikyō 2 [1430].07.23).
311 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:165-167 (Eikyō 2 [1430].08.6-7, 08.10).

samurai-dokoro for the second time, an unusual repetition.[312] Since this was the highest post an Isshiki could hold and presided over high-profile conflicts within the capital—including those that might involve other shugo or their people—this suggests that the Isshiki refusal to take second place helped maintain their position.

In the longer term, Yoshinori had this Isshiki lord killed a decade later and worked to muddle family succession and weaken the Isshiki organization.[313] While Yoshinori made a policy of such interference—it caused the Akamatsu to assassinate him a year after he had the Isshiki lord killed—it is difficult to believe that this conflict so early in Yoshinori's reign had no impact upon his choice to have the head of the Isshiki family killed. With multiple parties fighting to define themselves in ceremonies, the answers were seldom clear-cut, but they were worth the fight.

Controlling Yearly Observances

Even scheduled rituals with less public celebrations could manifest such sociopolitical relationships, though ambitious rulers had less control than they might have wished. Hassaku, on the first day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar (roughly equivalent to modern September), was a harvest holiday centered around giving gifts. When Ashikaga Yoshimochi attempted to restrict gift exchange on Hassaku in Ōei 27, amid famine and unrest, he was placing himself within the tradition of bureaucratized "good government" that his great-granduncle Ashikaga Tadayoshi had championed. The lavish exchanges for Hassaku were a burden on everyone, from this angle. Capital nobles already bowed out of ceremonies because they lacked the resources to turn themselves out properly. Restive commoners resented paying taxes, often in luxuries, while

312 Kawamura, *Nanbokuchō/Muromachi-ki Isshiki-shi no kenryoku kōzō*, 33-34.
313 Kawamura, *Nanbokuchō/Muromachi-ki Isshiki-shi no kenryoku kōzō*, 538-542.

they starved. Unhappy provincial populations made it difficult for capital-bound *shugo* to identify incompetence or excessive peculation in their deputies. The natural solution was to eliminate a wasteful holiday for the duration of the crisis. Only the emperor, retired emperor, and imperial regent—the highest members of courtly society—would be permitted the exchange. Everyone else, including the Ashikaga, would not. Yoshimochi would both prove that he had the power to influence annual rituals and the judgment to rule benevolently.

The prohibition did not accomplish its purpose cleanly. Instead of preventing gift-giving, Yoshimochi's decision restricted it to the closest, most trusted relationships. In Fushimi, imperial prince Sadafusa sent gifts as permitted to his distant cousins, the emperor and retired emperor. He also, however, exchanged gifts with his relatives by marriage in the Niwata family, several trusted retainers' families, and his foster family, the Imadegawa. He did not exchange with the Ashikaga ruling family and was chagrined to discover that Ashikaga relatives and retainers had, in fact, sent gifts to them. Sadafusa interpreted this as creating a distance between his line and the Ashikaga line, and he meticulously noted which populations did (among them heads of important monasteries and Ashikaga aristocratic retainers) and did not (Ashikaga ladies and outsider monks or warriors) send gifts to Yoshimochi's household.[314] While Yoshimochi's decision reduced the circulation of gifts within the capital, it had the corollary effect of heightening the separation between different factions within the capital, made visible by gifts moving through the streets of the capital and swiftly carried further by rumor.

Moreover, Yoshimochi's public inability or unwillingness to truly stop gifts within his own family organization undercut both his rule and his benevolence. Some continued to send gifts in the few days after the holiday, and gift exchanges were back to their usual levels within

314 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:64-68 (Ōei 27 [1420].07.21-23, 27.08.01).

two years. Part of that was due to better harvests and reduced famine. Part was because Yoshimochi's policy, upheld so inconsistently, could not outweigh the annual ritual calendar.

Rituals on Fushimi Estate

The estate of Fushimi was in Yamashiro Province, mere hours from the capital. The distance meant that Fushimi was within easy range of communication with the imperial court and Muromachi shogunate but was also apart from them. Members of capital society could visit to tour the spring flowers of temples in the area or enjoy the cool breezes off the rivers and lake in the summer.[315] People living in Fushimi could participate in capital circles via the written word: hearing and sharing gossip, lending books and scrolls, and contributing linked verses to a collective sequence offered to the deity of Kitano Tenman Shrine.[316] They even served occasional duty within the imperial court, such as a monthly guard rotation.[317] On a day-to-day level, however, those on the estate—from noble to villager—built up and sustained a social and cultural world outside of that of the court and capital.

The proprietors of Fushimi Estate were a branch of the imperial family that had lost the throne in the fourteenth century, when then-Emperor Sukō was first forced to abdicate and then kidnapped from the capital. His younger brother was elevated to the throne and the succession transferred to said brother's children. Sukō, by contrast, was required to swear that he would not seek the throne and retired to Fushimi. His line lost many of its lands after his death in 1398, including briefly Fushimi Estate itself. They lobbied the shogunate and in 1408 with the then-shogunal chancellor's help reacquired the estate partly on the grounds that it was their "name

315 For spring flowers, see Ōei 23 [1416].02.08 in Go-Sukōin, *Kanmon nikki*, ed. Kunaichō Shoryōbu, 7 vols., Zushoryō sōkan (Tokyo: Kunaichō Shoryūbu, 2002), 1:9. For a waterside summer gathering, 1:36-37 (Ōei 23.06.16).

316 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:54 (Ōei 27 [1420].06.25).

317 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:54 (Ōei 23 [1416].08.03): Tamuke Nagasuke served guard duty.

land," the location with which their branch of the family identified itself: the Fushimi princes (*Fushimi-no-miya*).[318] Their ambitions might lie within the imperial court—Sukō's great-grandson eventually became emperor—but Sukō's descendants were associated strongly with Fushimi.

The estate was also home to several leading families. Some, such as the Ayanokōji family and its branches, Niwata and Tamuke, took their status from imperial court service and close association with the Fushimi princes. The Ayanokōji were musical specialists who maintained secret instrumental transmissions, some of which they taught to Fushimi princes. The Niwata branch provided consorts: one to Sukō and another to his grandson Sadafusa. The Tamuke were courtiers and administrators, serving in court and estate.[319] The highest-ranking administrator of the estate, its commissioner (*bugyō*), was nearly always of the Ayanokōji-Niwata-Tamuke lineage.

Other families had more diverse connections: the head of the Ogawa family served in Fushimi as *mandokoro*, the highest administrator under its commissioner. Other Ogawa family members held other Fushimi administrative posts or served the Niwata more directly as attendants. Many Ogawa were also retainers to the Yamana shugo family. The Sōgi were hereditary head priests of the estate's central shrine, Gokō-no-miya, and served the Hatakeyama shugo family. The Uchimoto and Shiba families were wealthy farmers who also sent sons into temples as monks, or into direct service within the princes' Fushimi mansion. The Shimono were associated with the Ogawa, including adopting an Ogawa son as heir and contributed to literary activities such as poetry. Often called *jigezamurai* by modern scholars, these were landed service

318 Yokoi, *Kanmon gyoki*, 63-65.

319 See Chapter 2, Section: "Tamuke Tsuneyoshi: Prince Sadafusa and the Estate" for full details of the Ayanokōji, Niwata, and Tamuke family.

families, who balanced their grounding in the villages of Fushimi with their ties to the Fushimi princes and retainers and their connections to major shugo warrior lords.

While the social gap between prince and landed service family was fairly sharp, the relative power levels were more fluid and contextual. The Sōgi family head used a combination of his hereditary priesthood at Fushimi's main shrine and his ties to the Hatakeyama shugo to force Sadafusa to allow him to return to the estate and his positions of authority after the prince (and estate proprietor) tried to throw him out. The Sōgi ultimately failed in their effort to demand compensation for their yearlong banishment, but Sadafusa, prince and proprietor of Fushimi Estate, failed to permanently exclude them.

Finally, villages in Fushimi formed a group beyond simply the unit of the estate. Though in early modern and modern times, they are often known as "the Nine Villages of Fushimi" (*Fushimi kyūgō*), only seven are attested in the fifteenth century: six in the diary-chronicle of Prince Sadafusa, proprietor of the estate, and one in that of Nakahara Yasutomi, a chamberlain and scholar of the imperial court.[320] The connections among the villages were cooperative and competitive: they carried out projects together yet also vied for prestige. The villages of Yamamura and Ishii, for example, traded parades with each other: Yamamura sent one to Ishii, which responded. Both parades were thematically appropriate for the village: Yamamura ("mountain village") mimicked a procession of monks from Mount Kōya, while Ishii's ("rock wellspring" or "rock settlement") centered on a rolling boulder.[321] Yet performers from these same villages six months later had a fistfight over who would go first in the New Year's dances

320 Based on a 02 Dec. 2017 presentation by Seta Katsuya (Musashino University professor emeritus) in Fushimi. The applicable entries are Eikyō 6 [1434].10.04 in *Kanmon nikki* 5:33; and Kōshō 1.11.12 in *Yasutomi ki*, 4 vols., Zōho shiryō taisei (Kyoto: Kyōto Rinsen Shoten, 1965), 4:213.

321 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:277-278 (Ōei 30 [1423].07.15). The boulder was a constructed prop, not real stone.

at the home of Prince Sadafusa.[322] It mirrors, with more bare fists and fewer courtly intermediaries and circumlocutions, the Isshiki family's struggle not to lose their first place position among their fellow shugo in Yoshinori's Eikyō 2 [1430] procession.

Yearly Festivals

With status always in contention, large yearly festivals provided opportunities to reinscribe it in a way that encompassed everyone from proprietor-prince to village performer. The Little New Year (01/15) and the Chrysanthemum Festival (09/09) were particularly important moments. Every year on Little New Year, weather permitting, three villages performed particular dances at Prince Sadafusa's residence for the first full moon of the new year. All three villages, Yamamura, Ishii, and Funatsu, took first position in the New Year's dancing at some point. Yamamura was first in Ōei 23 [1416], Ishii in Ōei 25-28 [1418-21], and Funatsu in Ōei 29-30 [1422-23]. Each village's performance was organized by its own local landed families (*jigezamurai*), and Sadafusa's own closest retainers gathered with him to drink tea and watch the dancing. At the end of all the performances, the entire group burned a bundle of bamboo, pine, and rope shaped for a bonfire. Both the bundle and the ceremony of burning it were called *sagichō*, and Sadafusa's retainers generally presented the bundle before the dancing began. Finally burning the bundle thus involved the villages and their landed families, Sadafusa's aristocratic retainers, and the prince-proprietor himself.[323]

The landed families who arranged the Little New Year performances were closely associated with their own villages, without an overall master of ceremonies, which left room for the occasional fistfight over precedence. For the Chrysanthemum Festival, however, three of the

322 *Kanmon nikki*, 3:6 (Ōei 31 [1424].01.15).
323 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:184 (Ōei 25 [1418].01.15).

most powerful families—Ogawa, Sōgi, and Uchimoto—took turns presiding over a procession for the whole estate. The procession began with music and dancing, but centered around a portable shrine carrying the deity of Gokō-no-miya, the main shrine of Fushimi Estate, escorted by shrine priests on horseback. Immediately behind the portable shrine rode that year's presiding organizer, escorted by his own attendants, a visible acknowledgment of his work and his family's stature. Behind him rode further escorts, followed by more dancers afoot. Most of the Fushimi princely household, male and female, prince to servant, turned out to spectate, as did many others on the estate.[324] It was both collective project and collective entertainment and served as the centerpiece for a day that both began and ended with feasting and other entertainment.

Pressure to carry out the rituals of the Chrysanthemum Day festival as expected was significant. In Ōei 24 [1417], a vicious dispute over an alleged theft arose between Prince Sadafusa and the ruling generation of the Sōgi family, Zenri and his brother Saburō. Sadafusa accused Saburō of stealing his fine clothes, nad Saburō did not deny the accusation, but Zenri refused to hand his younger brother over. An angry Sadafusa burned down the Sōgi family home as punishment, seized some of their land, and banished Zenri, Saburō, and several close relatives from the estate.[325] He was unable to take the post of head priest of Gokō-no-miya away from the family, however. The theft was in the fifth month and the arson in the sixth, and though the shogun had not yet made a final statement on the matter, Sōgi Zenri was expelled from the estate. By the ninth month and the Chrysanthemum Festival, Zenri's barely of-age son took up his

324 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:149, 229, 297, 2:79-80 (Ōei 24-27 [1417-1420].09.09), 3:59, 155-156 (Ōei 31-32 [1424-1425].09.09), 4:94 (Eikyō 4 [1432].09.09), 5:24 (Eikyō 6 [1434].09.09).

325 For the theft and punishment, see *Kanmon nikki*, 1:129–34 (Entries: Ōei 24 [1417]: 05.27, 06.02, 06.13-18). See also Chapter 3, section "The Finality of Oaths" above.

hereditary office as priest of Gokō-no-miya and installed and escorted the shrine's deity in the portable shrine for the festival procession.[326]

Only when Zenri, the rest of the Sōgi family, and their shugo allies in the capital were literally in the middle of trying to force Sadafusa to return seized land, compensate them for the burning of their home, and punish the retainers who had carried it out, did Zenri's son refuse to preside over the appropriate sections of the Chrysanthemum Festival in Ōei 25 [1418]. The messenger from the Sōgi's allies in the capital arrived at the estate on the eighth day of the ninth month. The Sōgi priest refused to preside at the Chrysanthemum Festival on the ninth day in protest of his family's treatment, and Sadafusa's conciliator went to the capital to negotiate on the eleventh day. Negotiations continued for several days, the shogun gave his final decision on the fourteenth day, and the banished members of the Sōgi returned to the estate on the fifteenth.[327] Clearly, the final decision was made in the capital, by order of the ruling Ashikaga Yoshimochi, and the disruption of the Chrysanthemum Festival was by no means decisive. It was, however, part of the overall Sōgi campaign to regain their place on the estate, and a very public statement before the participating villagers and everyone with whom they would gossip back home. Finally, for the two years after the Sōgi return, a member of that family took leadership of the Chrysanthemum Festival procession, reintegrating them into the life of and responsibility for running the estate.[328]

326 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:147-149 (Ōei 24 [1417].09.01, 09.09).
327 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:233-236 (Ōei 25 [1418].09.08-15).
328 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:297 (Ōei 26 [1419].09.09), 2:79-80 (Ōei 27 [1420].09.09). For identification of these Sōgi members, see Sonobe Toshiki, "Chūsei sonraku ni okeru shōryōshu to miyaza: Kinai/Minami Kyūshū oyobi Tōgoku no jirei kara," *Yonezawa shigaku* 36 (October 20, 2020), 85-86.

Tanabata

Yearly Tanabata celebrations in Fushimi bound together individuals and institutions in the guise of individuals. The Fushimi princes hosted the most prominent Tanabata celebration on the estate, and Prince Sadafusa kept detailed records of dozens of people and institutions who contributed. His closest retainers nearly always attended, including Tamuke Tsuneyoshi, Niwata Shigeari, and their sons and spouses, but the heads of the estate's landed families often attended as well, particularly Ogawa Zenkei, with whom Sadafusa worked most closely. The heads of a number of temples significant to the estate and the princes' social circle attended. Sokujōin, for example, was a temple with beautiful plum blossoms that stored many of Sadafusa's belongings and had a village named after it, Sokujōin-mura. The temple sent flowers to the Tanabata celebrations most years, and successive head monks attended.[329] Hōanji, which also had its own village and hosted sarugaku performances, popular lectures on the Lotus Sutra, and other large religious entertainments, sent flowers and its head monk as well.[330] Finally, a few others of significant wealth and/or talent regularly attended. Hōsen, a merchant from whom Prince Sadafusa often borrowed money, brought precious art for the other attendees to enjoy.[331] Most years include detailed records of the same core group of contributors and participants, as well as other repeat attendees that spanned Fushimi Estate and important outside connections.

---

329 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:43-44 (Ōei 23 [1416].07.07), 1:215-217, 283-284 (Ōei 25-26 [1418-1419].07.07), 2:208-209 (Ōei 29 [1422].07.07), 3:297-299 (Eikyō 3 [1431].07.07), 4:69-70 (Eikyō 4 [1432].07.07), 5:134-135, 293-294 (Eikyō 7-8 [1435-1436].07.07). In Ōei 26, the contribution is credited specifically to the head priest of the temple.

330 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:215 (Ōei 25 [1418].07.07), 2:137, 208-209 (Ōei 28-29 [1421-1422].07.07), 3:45-50 (Ōei 31 [1424].07.07), 3:297-299, 4:69-70 (Eikyō 3-4 [1431-1432].07.07), 5:134-135, 293-294 (Eikyō 7-8 [1435-1436].07.07).

331 See, for example, the dishes and painting in *Kanmon nikki* on Ōei 29 [1422] and 31 [1424].07.07, 2:208-209, 3:45-50. See also Gay, *The Moneylenders of Late Medieval Kyoto,* 190-92, for Hōsen's background.

A Tanabata celebration went well beyond flower appreciation. In Ōei 29 [1422], a relatively representative Tanabata gathering included visits to multiple temples; feasting and drinking; singing of *rŌei* songs, chanting of Heike, and various other performances; and prayers offered, as well as the flowers.[332] It was, for all its breadth, a social occasion. Members of the Sōgi family, for example, with whom Sadafusa had a rocky relationship, only began attending his celebrations after Sadafusa's son became emperor, Sadafusa's position consequently rose, and the guest list expanded among both Fushimi families and imperial courtier ones.[333] Even after Sadafusa's power within the capital expanded, however, Tanabata was still a substantially Fushimi Estate affair: Fushimi associates continued to make up most of the attendees. Tanabata, however social, was a major event: Sadafusa kept track via gossip of what the retired emperor did for Tanabata, and one can assume others were paying attention to what Sadafusa was doing.[334]

Linked Verse Gatherings

Linked verse—in both classical Japanese (*renga*) and combined classical Chinese and Japanese (*wakan renku*)—found its way into celebrations of Tanabata and the Chrysanthemum Festival, and it paired well with other activities, religious, intellectual, and enjoyable, such as watching danced *nenbutsu* and Sanskrit calligraphy.[335] It also served as the main focus of regular or semi-regular gatherings. Kitano Shrine saw extravagant linked verse gatherings that brought together aristocratic, clerical, and shogunal elites, while smaller temples on the outskirts of the

332 *Kanmon nikki*, 2:208-209 (Ōei 29 [1422].07.07).
333 *Kanmon nikki*, 3:297-299 (Eikyō 3 [1431].07.07), 5:134-135 (Eikyō 7 [1435].07.07), and 5:293-294 (Eikyō 8 [1436].07.07); all larger than earlier events.
334 *Kanmon nikki*, 1:138, 215-217, 283-284, 2:137, 208-209 (Ōei 24-30.07.07), 3:138 (Ōei 32.07.07), 3:297-299, 4:69-70, 187-188 (Eikyō 3-5 [1431-33].07.07).
335 *Kanmon nikki*, 3:301 (Eikyō 3 [1431].07.15), 4:189 (Eikyō 5 [1433].07.15), 5:122 (Eikyō 7 [1435].05.25).

capital hosted simpler poetic gatherings.[336] Entertainment, performance, and ritual all at once, linked verse was a flexible method of reinforcing relationships. Like larger ceremonies, a linked verse gathering had a host who was seldom either the highest ranked or most expert participant, but whose task it was to ensure the gathering ran smoothly. *Renga* handbooks eventually decreed that participants in a room together must acknowledge the "most elevated" person present, a status acquired partly by social rank and partly by literary skill.[337] While most linked verse gatherings did not adhere to all the rules of formal, high-art *renga*,[338] the principle of status acknowledgment was embedded in the running of linked verse gatherings and records of their participants.

Acknowledging status as part of the performance of linked verse permitted inclusion of people of different statuses in Prince Sadafusa's Fushimi gatherings. In an Ōei 29 [1422] session, Sadafusa combined linked verse (*wakan renku*, or Chinese-Japanese verse, in this case) with a scenic tour of several temples. The group initially included Shōgai Kōin, Sadafusa's half brother and the future head of Daikōmyōji, the most powerful Fushimi temple; a former imperial minister, probably Ayanokōji Nobutoshi[339]; Niwata Shigeari and Tamuke Nagasuke, two close retainers; and Chūju, head of the small temple Kōzōan. The group visited Shigetsu—a small memorial temple at Daikōmyōji[340]—and Daikōmyōji itself. They then picked up various attendants of the then-head of Daikōmyōji before finally reaching Sokujōin, where they settled down to compose verse and share sake. Upon finishing the session that night, they embarked

336 Steven D. Carter, *Regent Redux: A Life of the Statesman-Scholar Ichijō Kaneyoshi* (Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 1996), 39–48.
337 H. Mack Horton, "Renga Unbound: Performative Aspects of Japanese Linked Verse," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 53, no. 2 (1993), 506-512.
338 Horton, "Renga Unbound," 443-447.
339 Eta Harich-Schneider, "Roei: The Medieval Court Songs of Japan [Continued]," *Monumenta Nipponica* 14, no. 1/2 (1958): 100.
340 Yokoi, *Kanmon gyoki*, 207.

upon more drinking and eventually went home drunk. Sadafusa does not record the names of the lower-ranking attendants who joined the group, but allowing them to enjoy the poetry and participate in the drinking reinforced the educational credentials of Shōgai Kōin and Chūju—both linked verse aficionados—and brought lower-ranked priests into pleasant, collaborative contact with the prince while still underlining their differences.[341]

Wakan renku, the Chinese-Japanese form of linked verse, was particularly useful for community-building among different cultural elites. Temples had for generations trained students in literary Chinese, and Zen monks were increasingly prominent specialists in the language, responsible for commercial and diplomatic communications with Ming China, Joseon Korea, and others who used literary Chinese as *lingua franca*.[342] Prince Sadafusa and his close retainers, on the other hand, had a long legacy and rich library of classical Japanese literature and poetry, including the imperial poetry anthologies and famous *tales* that inspired poetic allusions in Japanese linked verse.[343] Moreover, prominent poets and politicians of the Northern Imperial Court, allied with the Ashikaga, had spent much of the fourteenth century establishing linked verse as an activity that highly-educated poetic specialists could and should do together with those outside the court.

The Ashikaga and their relatives and military allies refined linked verse with the stated goals of stabilizing the realm through poetic collaboration instead of competition and fostering

341 *Kanmon nikki*, V2 Ōei 29 [1422].05.07 and Nakamura Kenji, et al, *Kanmon nikki shihai Wakan renku yakuchū: "Ōei nijūgonen jūichigatsu nijūgonichi wakan renku" o yomu* (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 2011), 13–18.

342 Martin Collcutt, *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan* (Harvard Univ Asia Center, 1981); Charlotte von Verschuer, "Ashikaga Yoshimitsu's Foreign Policy 1398 to 1408 A.D.: A Translation from 'Zenrin Kokuhōki,' the Cambridge Manuscript," *Monumenta Nipponica* 62, no. 3 (2007), 270.

343 Go-Sukōin, *Kanmon nikki shihai monjo*, ed. Kunaichō Shoryōbu, Zushoryō sōkan: *Kanmon nikki* bekki (Tenri, Nara: Yōtokusha, 1965), 210-221. [Assorted lists of texts owned or lent out.]

poetic education for and performance by rising powers.[344] The combination of literary Chinese and Japanese verses fostered a non-rigid division, in which the monks offered Chinese verses and the laymen Japanese ones, with room for some crossing over and stumbles.[345] Vital members of Fushimi Estate with a less lofty family history of poetry—including the head of the Ogawa family, *mandokoro* of Fushimi, and other landed retainers—occasionally participated, as did lower-ranked monks from Daikōmyōji or other prominent Fushimi temples.

The audiences for linked verse gatherings were twofold. Non-participants saw them happening: as different participants hosted in Fushimi, courtiers' households and temple communities saw the preparations made and the guests arriving. More important, however, were the participants. With the proprietor of the estate, its highest administrator, and the head priest of one of its temples consistently participating, the regular gatherings became stages for less regular participants. The heir to an important family could co-host one gathering for visible experience organizing a ceremonial occasion; the Ogawa administrator of Fushimi could co-host with the head of a smaller temple in a display of their literary skill and taste; and all participants could demonstrate their own poetic and social understanding before those with tasks and patronage to bestow.[346] Reciprocally, the highly-ranked and consistent participants in linked verse gatherings reenacted their own organizational and poetic expertise before a changing cast of educated

344 Nijō Yoshimoto, "Tsukuba mondō," in *Renga ronshū, Nōgaku ronshū, Haikai ronshū* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2001), 24-27; Steven D. Carter, *The Road to Komatsubara: A Classical Reading of the Renga Hyakuin* (Harvard Council on East Asian Studies, 1987), 3-34, David Pollack, "Gidō Shūshin and Nijō Yoshimoto: Wakan and Renga Theory in Late Fourteenth Century Japan," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studi*es 45, no. 1 (June 1, 1985); Esperanza U. Ramirez-Christensen, *Emptiness and Temporality: Buddhism and Medieval Japanese Poeti*cs (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 37-46.

345 Nakamura et. al., *Kanmon nikki shihai Wakan renku yakuchū*, 219-45.

346 For the heir, Keijumaru (Tamuke Shigekata), *Kanmon nikki*, 3:62 (Ōei 31 [1424].09.27), 3:163 (Ōei 32 [1425].10.15); for Ogawa Zenkei (*mandokoro*) and Zenki (head of Sokujōin), *Kanmon nikki*, 2:121 (Ōei 28 [1421].03.29), 2:192 (Ōei 29 [1422].03.28).

members of their community. Similarly, Ashikaga Yoshinori's linked verse gatherings in the heart of the capital were matters of public gossip and private networks: a place to enact for the city and its surrounding communities the shogun's good relations with his chancellor, subordinate shugo, respected monks, and high-ranked courtiers, as well as a stage upon which his favorites could make names for themselves.[347]

Monthly regular linked verse combined predictability and flexibility. In Fushimi, responsibility for hosting rotated among participants, most of whom were also running important parts of the estate. The poems produced were in principle ephemera, products of the gathering that need not be perfect. Yet they were valued enough that Sadafusa deliberately reused the reverse sides of hundred-verse cycles as the paper on which he wrote a clean copy of his diary-chronicle, ensuring that some material was preserved for posterity. In principle, a gathering happened once per month, but far less weight hung on rescheduling by a few days. It was a means of performing cooperation among important lay and monastic members of the estate that could be given greater or lesser meaning by changing who was invited, where the gathering was held, whether the poem produced was preserved or circulated, and what activities preceded and followed.

Sacred Lotteries and Public Scrutiny

The sacred lottery (*mikuji*, 御籤/鬮). The start of Ashikaga Yoshinori's rule in Shōchō 1 and Eikyō 1 [1428-1429] demonstrates the importance and ambivalence of public visibility in the forcing function of ceremonies: a lottery made Yoshinori heir to the shogunate, but his advisors fought fiercely to prevent him from using lotteries to resolve other disputes.

347 Mori Shigeaki, *Muromachi Bakufu hōkai: Shōgun Yoshinori no yabō to zasetsu* (Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2011), 155-64.

The last few years under the rule of Yoshinori's elder brother Yoshimochi had been difficult. Yoshimochi had passed the office of shogun to his son as the start of a full transfer of power; the young man died shortly thereafter, and Yoshimochi resumed the office but refused to name another heir. He finally agreed—according to his adoptive brother, longtime conciliator, and protector monk, Manzei—to a plan to draw lots after his death at the shrine-temple of Iwashimizu Hachiman to decide among his four living blood brothers, all high-ranking monks.[348] Hachiman was a god of both prophecy and warriors, a bodhisattva who had long ago promised to protect the Buddhist Law in Japan, whose oracle had once famously swayed imperial succession. The shogunal chancellor set off that day to Iwashimizu Hachiman, many hours south of the capital, without telling anyone beyond the close circle of *shugo* warrior lords. By the time he returned the next day, lot drawn but unopened, Yoshimochi had died.[349]

The lot was opened with great—but private—ceremony, and the name read Gien. Gien, head of the great Mount Hiei, would take first the name Yoshinobu and shortly thereafter Yoshinori when he returned to lay life. Before he could take the office of shogun, not-yet-Yoshinori at thirty-five years old had to have the official ceremonies of adulthood that he had not had before entering the monastery. His advisors argued over the most auspicious characters to use in writing his name, as well as the right timeline for renouncing his monastic vows, mourning his brother, marrying, and advancing through official court ranks to qualify as shogun, all of which would have to happen with uncomfortable haste.[350] Despite these challenges, the

348 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:476-78 (Ōei 35.01.17).

349 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:478 (Ōei 35.01.17-18); *Kennaiki*, 1:41-43 (Ōei 35.01.18). The author of *Kennaiki* noted that rumor held the same lot had come up three times, but the shogunal chancellor went alone and did not record his experience, so no firsthand record remains. For an extensive analysis of all the doubts about and variantions between the *Mansai nikki* and *Kennaiki* versions and how to reconcile them, see Imatani Akira, *Kujibiki Shōgun Ashikaga Yoshinori* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2003), 41-70.

350 Ochiai Hiroshi, "Kiyohara Yoshikata denkō," *Nō: Kenkyū to hyōron* 16 (1988), 20-22.

shugo of the capital, who had participated in or known directly of the lottery, were united in accepting this new ruler.

As Yoshinori-to-be trod the required steps, the realm rioted. The emperor died a few months after Yoshimochi, and villagers in the provinces around the capital demanded debt relief. They had suffered repeated famine and plague, and the death of an old ruler and ascent of a new one was often the occasion for widespread clemency. The shogunate, under the direction of shogunal chancellor Hatakeyama Mitsuie and *samurai-dokoro* Akamatsu Mitsusuke, put down the protests by force instead, though the protesters succeeded in burning a number of irreplaceable loan contracts, thereby effectively canceling their debts without the government's intercession.[351] Yoshinori's cousin, lord of the eastern provinces and second only to the shogun himself, was restive and nearly marched his army into the capital while the courtiers were arranging Yoshinori's adulthood ceremony.[352] He had hoped to become shogun himself, perhaps because he was the senior remaining Ashikaga man not already sworn to a monastery, which had conventionally been a way to render extra heirs ineligible for advancement through the imperial court. Gien (Yoshinori) had initially refused to leave the monastery to become shogun: he allowed himself to be persuaded by the collective appeal of the most powerful warrior lords and the divine sanction of the sacred lottery.[353]

Amid the rest of this turmoil, Yoshinori learned of the plight of certain warriors in the southeast. Yoshimochi had in his later years grown impatient, seized land from several families who offended him, and donated it directly to the nearby Ise Shrine. At least one family had

---

351 Steven D. Carter, *Regent Redux: A Life of the Statesman-Scholar Ichijō Kaneyoshi* (Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 1996), 31-33.
352 *Kennaiki*, 1:157-58 (Shōchō 1.05.25).
353 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 1:478; *Kennaiki*, 1:44 (Ōei 35.01.19).

refused to leave the land and begun raiding Ise's other property as well. Yoshinori, along with much of the rest of the shogunate, thought Yoshimochi's seizures hasty and ill-considered, which left him with a dilemma. Shrine lands were sacrosanct: it would be difficult to retract Yoshimochi's donation and return them to their former owners, yet if the seizure was unjust, it must be remedied. Yoshinori therefore suggested directly questioning the deities to obtain their permission for its return: he would use a sacred lottery.[354]

Manzei, serving Yoshinori as advisor and conciliator as he had once served his brother, was anxious to derail this plan. He pointed out that sacred lotteries were very binary and made compromise difficult: once the gods had spoken, the choice was made. He further enlisted Yoshimochi's former tutor, the man who had helped select Yoshinori's name and an expert in classical Chinese studies, who pointed to a line from the *Classic of Documents*: "The Diviner makes his decision first, then he consults the Great Tortoise Shell in order to determine if this is the Will of Heaven."[355] Though the scholar agreed with Yoshinori that the lands should be returned, going so far as to say that the seizure had been so unjust the gods themselves must have rejected it, he too was eager to ensure that Yoshinori did not justify his decision with a sacred lottery. He, Manzei, and the official messenger conveying their discussions to each other all eventually agreed upon a legal compromise that allowed the shrine to keep title to the land but gave the original family *de facto* possession and the bulk of the income. They kept any sacred lotteries and their potentially dangerous precedents well out of the solution.

---

354 For further analysis of the political implications of this problem, see Chapter 2: Conciliators (Section: Large-Scale Negotiations).

355 *Kennaiki*, 1:135 (Shōchō 1.05.14); "The Counsels of Yu the Great," in Martin Palmer, trans., *The Most Venerable Book (Shang Shu)* (London: Penguin UK, 2014). Note that it is not certain that the *Classic* endorses this view: the words are in the mouth of the emperor and the eponymous Yu the Great refuses to agree to them.

The contrast between Yoshinori's selection as heir and his efforts to return confiscated land highlights the danger of sacred lotteries: unlike most forms of divination, its answer was inflexible. For most—Yoshinori became a notable exception as he built his power—lotteries were a counsel of desperation: a divine appeal that relinquished human agency. Yoshinori used sacred lotteries to guide decisions several times later in his reign, including in the choice of an editor when he sponsored an imperial anthology.[356] His frequent recourse to them was new, however. Outside his very public displays, the use of lotteries was often so secretive as to unify only small groups. In Eikyō 3 [1431], for example, temple administrators struggling to deal with a downed tree that had fallen inauspiciously before an altar considered drawing lots to decide their course. Even the person who proposed it acknowledged the method was unprecedented and repeatedly suggested that it should be done privately and secretively.[357] Sacred lotteries, with their potentially inconvenient finality, proved more useful for mobilizing a small group—a governing council of warriors or monks, a team of poets—to act in concert than for the broader statements that made scheduled, visible, public ceremonies so useful.

356 Donald Keene, *Yoshimasa and the Silver Pavilion: The Creation of the Soul of Japan* (Columbia University Press, 2006), 17.

357 *Mansai jugō nikki*, 2:256 (Eikyō 3 [1431].06.15).

Epilogue

On the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month of Kakitsu 1 [1441], Akamatsu Noriyasu, son of the head of the Akamatsu family, invited the shogun Ashikaga Yoshinori to his mansion for a banquet in celebration of military victory in the east. His father was notably absent, staying at the home of a retainer. The banquet featured many rounds of toasts, followed by a *sarugaku* performance. During the play, dozens of armed men poured out from the paper screen door behind Yoshinori's chair and killed him. Noriyasu then chopped off his head. One secondhand observer said Yoshinori died "like a dog."[358]

The aftermath was a fiasco: Yoshinori's chancellor, head of his government and the person who would be expected to rally his retainers, fled ignominiously. The head of the Kyōgoku family died in Yoshinori's defense, as did the foster brother of the head of the Yamana family; the head of the Ōuchi family died of the wounds he took that day. Yoshinori's brother-in-law was wounded but escaped. No one captured the assailants, and Noriyasu fled to his home province of Harima after setting fire to his mansion, with Yoshinori's corpse inside. His father left the city in style, in a palanquin, also headed home to Harima, and several other Akamatsu retainers set fire to their homes as well before leaving.

As the Akamatsu left, Hosokawa Mochiyuki, the chancellor who had fled so quickly, tried to take control of the situation by sending a messenger to the emperor and arranging the protection of Yoshinori's eldest son and heir in the middle of the night. No one tried particularly hard to intercept the Akamatsu family and retainers leaving the capital, however. The *samurai-*

358 *Kanmon nikki*, 6:289-291 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].06.24-25); *Kennaiki*, 3:244-246 (Kakitsu 1.06.24); *Morosato-ki*, 3:102 (Kakitsu 1.06.24). See also a translation of the *Kanmon nikki* entries in Thomas Conlan, *Samurai and the Warrior Culture of Japan, 471–1877: A Sourcebook* (New York: Hackett Publishing, 2022), 209-211.

dokoro at the time was an ambitious member of the Yamana family, who would benefit from an all-out war against the Akamatsu. It would inevitably result in seizing some or all of their provinces, which had themselves been seized from the Yamana half a century earlier, and if they fought against the Akamatsu as a whole, the Yamana might get one or more provinces back. No one seemed to particularly grieve Yoshinori's death, but with his absence, the ties holding the unwieldy governing apparatus in the capital together frayed.

Background

The Akamatsu Family

Relations between the Ashikaga shoguns and Akamatsu Mitsusuke, Noriyasu's father and head of the Akamatsu family, had been tense for over a decade. The Akamatsu had earned their position through military heroics closely associated with the iconic figures of the Ashikaga family: Akamatsu Enshin had fought alongside Ashikaga Takauji, founder of the Muromachi dynasty, and his son Norisuke had sheltered Ashikaga Yoshimitsu at a dangerous time during the civil war between Northern and Southern Courts. Norisuke's son[359] earned the position of shugo of Mimasaka Province from Yoshimitsu for service in battle against the Yamana family. The Akamatsu ruling family continued to consolidate their position, over other strong branches that traced their own lineages back to Akamatsu Enshin, with histories of military success, bringing and keeping the provinces of Harima, Bizen, and Mimasaka, as well as large parts of Settsu, under their control. They were one of five families eligible to serve as *samurai-dokoro*,

359 Akamatsu Yoshinori (赤松義則) uses a different "nori" from Ashikaga Yoshinori (足利義教), but the same "Yoshi," both of which came from the Ashikaga "Yoshi." Akamatsu Yoshinori was allowed to use the character upon his father's death and his accession to family head, a reward for his father's and his own service to Yoshiakira and Yoshimitsu. Ashikaga Yoshinori received the character to signify his own descent from them. The "Nori" in Akamatsu Noriyasu was from Ashikaga Yoshinori's name (赤松教康), not his grandfather's.

responsible for the management of shogunal retainers in the capital and consequently for peacekeeping in the area. Of those five, only the Akamatsu and the Kyōgoku had not suffered a major reversal at the turn of the fifteenth century, and the provinces that the Kyōgoku controlled were both widely separated and significantly further from the capital.[360]

By the time Norisuke's grandson Mitsusuke sought to inherit after his father's death in Ōei 34 [1427], the Akamatsu were a threatening powerhouse for shogun Ashikaga Yoshimochi. Yoshimochi had close friends and allies among Mitsusuke's relatives and sought to fracture the Akamatsu organization by having rule of Harima Province transferred to Mitsusuke's second cousin, denying Mitsusuke his father's position as shugo. The second cousin would not even be a shugo in his own right: he would be a representative of the shogunate. Yoshimochi found few allies among the shugo lords for taking Harima away. The Akamatsu considered it their home, the center of their organization, and their "name lands," whence their roots as a family lay. The other shugo mostly agreed with them, and Yoshimochi was eventually forced to back down and have his friend executed.

When Yoshimochi's successor, Yoshinori, established close friendships with several Akamatsu relatives, the writing was on the wall. Yoshinori gave Mitsusuke's cousin Mitsumasa the courtesy title "Governor of Harima" and tangible administrative authority over the great port of Hyōgo in neighboring Settsu Province. Mitsumasa attempted to act as Yoshinori's conciliator, functioning as a route to reach to him, but quickly developed a reputation for being grasping and obstructive. Most importantly, his conflict of interest in Harima meant that he could not be an

360 The Isshiki suffered a vicious succession crisis, and both the Toki and Yamana fought unsuccessfully against Yoshimitsu and had most of their holdings seized. The Kyōgoku held Hida (hundreds of kilometers northeast of Kyoto), Izumo (hundreds of kilometers west of Kyoto), and Oki (islands off the coast of Izumo).

effective intermediary between Yoshinori and Mitsusuke. Then, in Eikyō 12 [1440], Yoshinori first gave revenue from villages and estates in Harima, Bizen, and Mimasaka to the son of Akamatsu Sadamura, who was himself the nephew and heir of Yoshimochi's executed friend. Days later, Yoshinori seized property in Settsu from Mitsusuke's younger brother and gave it to Sadamura. Word spread that Yoshinori planned to topple the current Akamatsu ruling family, as his brother had failed to do.[361]

Ashikaga Yoshimochi had been able to back down from his gambit due to the intervention of the conciliator Lady Takahashi, acting as a channel between Yoshimochi and the ladies of the capital, and the then-shogunal chancellor. It cost Yoshimochi a friend and ally, and possibly lover, but it did not start a war. By Kakitsu 1 [1441], however, all of the conciliators who had smoothed Yoshimochi's reign and the early years of Yoshinori had died, and Yoshinori's attempts to promote Akamatsu Mitsumasa to a similar position were a resounding failure. There was nobody to quietly, informally find a way for both sides to keep face.

Attempted Consensus: The Kakitsu Era Name

In Eikyō 11 [1439], Ashikaga Yoshinori toppled another longstanding foe: Ashikaga Mochiuji (1409-1439), the governor-general of the eastern half of Japan (*Kantō kubō*). Mochiuji had been an ambiguous not-quite-enemy of Yoshimochi, who had supported Mochiuji against a rebellion in 1417 but subsequently skirmished with him by proxy over control of areas of the east. Mochiuji wanted to become shogun after Yoshimochi's death, and when Yoshinori was selected instead, he became more open about ignoring orders from the capital. Yoshinori's attempt to bring Mochiuji to heel in Eikyō 4 [1432], just when Yoshinori was solidifying his

361 Mori Shigeaki, *Muromachi Bakufu hōkai: Shōgun Yoshinori no yabō to zasetsu* (Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2011), 208-241.

power within the capital, petered out into failure in the Kantō. In Eikyō 10 [1438], probably in cooperation with Mochiuji's senior subordinate, Yoshinori insulted Mochiuji's son, provoked him into rebellion, and obtained an imperial edict condemning him. The next year, Yoshinori's troops and the Kantō coalition of Mochiuji's enemies defeated him, Yoshinori refused to accept Mochiuji's offer to surrender, and Mochiuji killed himself. When fighting resumed the next year, the army quickly pinned down the leaders in a siege. The shogun's forces finished defeating Mochiuji's children in the fourth month of Kakitsu 1 [1441], two months after the change of era name. Akamatsu Norisuke's banquet was officially to celebrate this triumph. Yoshinori seems to have anticipated retaking greater authority over the east than his elder brother had ever held.[362]

The reason for a change of era name in Eikyō 13/Kakitsu 1 [1441] was the rule that the fifty-eighth year in the sexagenary cycle (*kanoto-tori*) always warranted a change, a rule strong enough that both sides of the civil war had honored it in 1381.[363] The choice of an era name was one of the few decisions that truly did reach across the realm. The court issued calendars with the new era name with great ceremony, and use of the name disseminated rapidly in official documents. At the start of Kakitsu, for example, a loan document at a large temple over a hundred kilometers from the capital used the new era name less than two months after its promulgation.[364] The choice of the era name was conventionally the prerogative of the imperial

362 Mori Shigeaki, *Muromachi Bakufu hōkai*, 208-212; J. Elijah Bender, "Wind, Forest, Fire, and Mountain: The Evolution of Environmental Management and Local Society in Central Japan, 1450-1650," Santa Barbara, CA (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2017), 53-61.

363 Mori Shigeaki, *Muromachi Bakufu hōkai*, 208; Kristina Buhrman, "The Stars and the State: Astronomy, Astrology, and the Politics of Natural Knowledge in Early Medieval Japan," Los Angeles (PhD Dissertation, University of Southern California, 2012), 169-70. Note that Madenokoji Tokifusa uses 辛酉革命 in Kakitsu 1 [1441], then 甲子革令 in Bun'an 1 [1444] for a similar rule applying to *kinoe-ne* (first of the sexagenary cycle) years.

364 Document 939 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].04.05) in *Kōyasan monjo*, v. 5, Dai Nihon komonjo, iewake, ed. Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Tokyo University, 1907), 451.

court, with its courtiers and scholars who had generations of calendrical knowledge, preserved in family treatises and educational traditions.[365] There was also a long history of both Kamakura and Muromachi shogunates requesting (and funding the ceremonies for) a change of era name, and of the court selecting a name that honored the reigning shogun more than the emperor, suggesting a discreet pressure.[366] Nevertheless, the ritual of the choice, decided in council before the emperor, normally brought together imperial ministers and specialist scholars of astronomy, divination, classical philosophy, and court precedent in a group not otherwise convened.

Yoshinori, however, took an unusually heavy hand in influencing the selection. The group that decided upon the new era's name included two court-shogunate liaisons, as well as other allies. Objections to year, name, and the treatise being used to support the change were disposed of in less than a month.[367] Direct Ashikaga participation in the era name council was unprecedented, yet two chroniclers also observed that Yoshinori "unofficially" attended it. There they not only chose the name but also made the final decision on the appropriateness of changing it.[368] Another chronicler noted that Yoshinori was pleased with the name "Kakitsu" ("Esteem Good Fortune").[369] Yoshinori's exceptional appearance in the council (however unofficial) and his public judgment of its decision thereafter were forceful statements of his interest in the new era name. After the change, the highest nobles of the imperial court visited Yoshinori to offer their congratulations.[370]

365 Thomas Conlan, "The Failed Attempt to Move the Emperor to Yamaguchi and the Fall of the Ōuchi," *Japanese Studies* 35, no. 2 (May 4, 2015): 185–203.

366 Imatani Akira, *Muromachi no ōken: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu no ōken sandatsu keikaku* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1990), 16-18.

367 *Kennaiki*, 3:69-80 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].02.01, 02.05-07, 02.09, 02.12, 02.15); *Morosato-ki* 3:88-90 (Kakitsu 1.02.02, 02.09, 02.15)

368 *Kanmon nikki*, 6:250-251 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].02.17); *Kennaiki*, 3:82 (Kakitsu 1.02.17); *Morosato-ki*, 3:90-91 (Kakitsu 1.02.17).

369 *Kennaiki*, 3:87-88 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].02.29).

370 *Kennaiki*, 3:83 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].02.21).

Yoshinori had used his physical presence at an imperial court ritual that did not historically include his forebears to push through a conflict that had bubbled through behind-the-scenes discussions with intermediaries. Reconfiguring a ritual to accomplish their goal was typical of the Ashikaga, but Yoshinori's version was a particularly open rejection of the mediated communication and polite fictions that undergirded the relationship between imperial bureaucracy and Ashikaga rule. Changing the era name highlighted the revolutionary possibilities associated with a *kanoto-tori* year, considered one of the three years of the sixty-year cycle whose potential for upheaval demanded a new era name. Everyone was watching to see what the transformation of Kakitsu 1 [1441] would be.[371] He obtained the cooperation of the imperial courtiers, but the shugo were also living in the capital and watching the process. Given Yoshinori's actions over the previous two years—putting down Mochiuji, seizing Akamatsu lands— the Akamatsu and other shugo probably read Yoshinori's investment in the new era name as marking a new, more aggressive phase of his rule.

The Aftermath

Punishing the Akamatsu

The Akamatsu leaders were hunted down and either killed or forced to commit suicide, swiftly by the measure of battles but slowly by that of emergency government response. The shogunal chancellor obtained an imperial edict calling for the elimination of Akamatsu Mitsusuke—head of the family and probably mastermind of the plot—and his son Noriyasu—who oversaw the actual killing of the shogun—on the first day of the eighth month, a little over a

371 *Kennaiki*, 3:87 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].02.28). Madenokōji Tokifusa—government minister, court-shogunate liaison, and member of the council that selected the new era name—heard news of the siege in the east a few days after changing the era name and wondered, "Is this a sign of the *kanoto-tori* year?"

month after the assassination, though troops started moving sooner.[372] The deaths of both followed within two months: Mitsusuke on the tenth day of the ninth month, and Noriyasu on the twenty-eighth day of the same.

The extent to which the response to Yoshinori's assassination was driven by family interests and, reciprocally, prioritized family ties over negotiation and compromise within the capital, is revealed in the fates of Akamatsu Sadamura and Mitsumasa, Yoshinori's erstwhile allies within the family. Both, on the day of the assassination, declared that they opposed what the head of their family had done and stayed within the capital.[373] Both subsequently served with the shogunal forces that went into Harima. Yet rumors swirled that the entire mess was Sadamura's fault, for selfishly trying to become the next shugo of Harima, and he had run away when Yoshinori died. He fought unexceptionally under a member of the Hosokawa family, distant cousin to the chancellor, and faded away into obscurity.[374]

Mitsumasa, not tarred with having fled Yoshinori's assassination and a more experienced leader, had better fortune in battle against his cousins. He seems to have been at the battle that defeated Mitsusuke, though Yamana Sōzen, rising head of the Yamana, led the forces that actually cornered him. A rumor spread that Mitsumasa had snatched Mitsusuke's head out of the burning house where he committed suicide, but later word agreed that was instead a member of the Yamana family.[375] Mitsumasa led the forces that accepted the surrender of Mitsusuke's

372 *Kanmon nikki*, 6:291 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].06.27); *Kennaiki* 3:302-304 (Kakitsu 1.07.30), 4:2-3 (Kakitsu 1.08.01); *Morosato-ki* 3:103 (Kakitsu 1.08.01).
373 *Kennaiki*, 3:244-246 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].06.24).
374 *Kennaiki*, 3:247, 276, 4:91 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].06.25, 07.10, 09.24), 6:80 (Kakitsu 3.06.15). Note that Tokifusa reports an inaccurate rumor of Sadamura's death along with all the rumors of his culpability on 09.24.
375 *Kennaiki*, 4:72 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].09.12); *Morosato-ki* 3:106 (Kakitsu 1.09.10).

brother, the one whose holdings had been seized in 1440, and later oversaw his suicide.[376] A large number of Akamatsu retainers surrendered as well.

After Mitsusuke's death, Akamatsu Mitsumasa and Yamana Sōzen fought fiercely over the post of shugo in Harima. It was the most closely-held of the Akamatsu provinces, and the only one that was not to automatically be seized as a war prize but rather would (nominally) undergo some deliberative process. Mitsumasa had on his side his loyalty to the shogunate, proved in battle against his kinsfolk, and descent from Akamatsu Enshin and Norisuke, whose deeds had earned the post for the clan. He was also born in Harima and had a long history of being active there and in neighboring Settsu Province. Sōzen had on his side the direct defeat of Akamatsu Mitsusuke, who had betrayed and assassinated the shogun; a very large army, the bulk of the shogunal forces in the area; and a promise from the shogunal chancellor.[377]

Yamana Sōzen won most of Harima Province; Akamatsu Mitsumasa received authority over only three counties within it. Mitsumasa sought to press his claim by force in Harima, where many Akamatsu retainers lingered, and the Yamana family sought to spread their authority over Mitsumasa's counties, as well. Inevitably, violence flared, and Mitsumasa's counties were seized and transferred to Sōzen in Bun'an 1 [1444]. Just like his cousin Mitsusuke, Mitsumasa retreated to Harima with his son, was followed and defeated by Yamana Sōzen and his allies, and had his head taken back to the capital as a trophy.[378]

The fate of the entire Akamatsu family, until Mitsusuke's great-nephew managed to claw his way back to power in Harima during the next major war, nearly three decades later, was a further step toward warriors rising or falling with their families. For all that Mitsumasa failed to

376 *Kennaiki*, 4:72, 91 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].09.12, 09.24); *Morosato-ki* 3:106 (Kakitsu 1.09.10)
377 Mori, "Akamatsu Mitsumasa shōkō," 979–981.
378 Mori, "Akamatsu Mitsumasa shōkō," 982-984.

fully establish himself as a conciliator, largely by refusing to relinquish his chance at any advancement and thereby setting himself up as a competitor to everyone, he was one of the last to try. He had built a high profile, great wealth, and good connections among part of the Akamatsu family while working primarily for the shogun. Moreover, Yoshimochi's conciliators had transitioned effectively to working for Yoshinori, so the shogun's death need not eliminate all influence. Yet such stature, separate from his family, was not enough to secure Mitsumasa's position when the head of his family rebelled. The Yamana had quietly built a powerful organization and had turned it against the Akamatsu with precision. Had Sōzen, then *samurai-dokoro* and responsible for handling threats in the capital, caught Akamatsu Mitsusuke or Noriyasu outside Harima, it would have been a narrow retaliation for the assassination. Once they reached Harima, it became an attack on the Akamatsu provincial organization as a whole, and Mitsumasa's separate service within the shogunate could not outweigh that.

Tokusei Ikki

While armies were fighting in Harima, a large coalition of people living in the surrounding countryside, from poor villagers to prominent landed families, invaded the capital demanding debt cancellation. Two of the five families that alternated peacekeeping responsibilities as *samurai-dokoro* were battling in Harima. Of the other three, the Isshiki were recovering from another vicious succession battle that had barely ended the year before, and the Toki, whose power base lay between the capital and the Kantō, had invested significant resources in the recent warfare in the east. The Kyōgoku had just lost the head of the family in the same attack that killed Yoshinori, and his nephew took up the position of *samurai-dokoro* when Yamana Sōzen left to pursue Akamatsu Mitsusuke. Taking advantage of this gap in the shogunate's

defenses, thousands of frustrated people from outside the capital poured in to demand debt cancellation from the government and, if they did not get that, to achieve it themselves by direct attacks on moneylenders' warehouses and records. This upwelling of collective rage and enthusiasm was called an *ikki*: "of one mind."

Countless excellent scholars have written about *ikki* during the Muromachi era, many of them making it a centerpiece of their interpretations.[379] This short epilogue does not pretend to explain the phenomenon, but focuses only on the events of the Kakitsu uprising. These fit—to the detriment of the Ashikaga-centered government and the denizens of the capital—within many of the ritual adjustments the Ashikaga regime had made, and ended in one of the most expansive debt cancellations the government promulgated.

It was, of course, the *kanoto-tori* year, with the accompanying sense that this was a year for upheaval and change, reinforced by changes in era name every sixty years; debt contracts were among the official documents that used era names. Participants claimed the right to debt cancellation (*tokusei*) because it was the start of a new reign: Yoshinori was dead, and a successor would have to be appointed.[380] There was no precedent for a debt amnesty to accompany a change in *shogun*, but the Ashikaga had been acting as more than shoguns for

379 For an extremely abbreviated list, see Katsumata Shizuo's classic *Ikki* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1982), which positions *ikki* as exceptional events that nevertheless are deeply rooted in the underlying culture, whose ceremonies and symbolism can be interpreted ("read") to clarify the society. The next generation of scholars has carried through on the theme. See also: Ebara Masaharu, *Ikki no jidai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2003), an edited volume connecting the concept of *ikki* to all areas of Muromachi life, from domestic commerce and inter-Asian trade to poetry and culture; "Tokusei ikki," Chapter 4 of Sakurai Eiji's book on the fifteenth century for Kōdansha's History of Japan series, *Muromachibito no seishin*, 179-222; "Ikki: The Moneylenders under Attack," the start of Chapter 4 of Suzanne Gay's *The Moneylenders of Late Medieval Kyoto* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), 127-148; and Carol Richmond Tsang, *War and Faith: Ikkō Ikki in Late Muromachi Japan* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2007), on the post-Ōnin era.

380 *Kennaiki*, 4:77 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].09.14).

several generations, at the Hōjō-e, in processions through the city, and in ostentatious public commemoration of their predecessors.

A similar protest had wracked the capital and surrounds during Shōchō 1 [1428], at the death of Yoshimochi, though Akamatsu Mitsusuke—then *samurai-dokoro*—had put them down without visibly capitulating. The shogunate had, however, both shortly before and reiterated forcefully thereafter, claimed jurisdiction over loan enforcement in legal articles from Ōei 32 [1425] and Shōchō 1 [1428], leaving room to more subtly manipulate how exploitative loan contracts could become.[381] Yoshinori also reversed or modified several of his predecessor's recent unpopular decisions, including the case of the seized Tottori land from Chapter 2, a *de facto* selective amnesty that reached out into the provinces. The relentlessly economic demand of debt cancellation was comparatively new, and well-analyzed elsewhere, but the entire process, across multiple transfers of power, is a striking illustration of how a tradition—amnesties at the dawn of a new reign—are based in pragmatic factors with important ritual meaning. New rulers want to begin with generosity and good governance, and they do not want to deal with furious courtiers or mobs while finding the reins of power. Ashikaga efforts to position themselves, publicly and ritually, as *rulers* rendered them and the government they led subject to traditional demands upon rulers.

The ignominious circumstances of Ashikaga Yoshinori's death devastated the ability of his underlings to cope with the challenges facing them. The Hosokawa shogunal chancellor had run from his shogun's killers, and the humiliation had a perceptible effect upon his ability to

381 Kenneth A. Grossberg, trans., *The Laws of the Muromachi Bakufu: Kemmu Shikimoku (1336) & Muromachi Bakufu Tsuikahō*, Monumenta Nipponica Monographs (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1981), 89-90 (Articles 179, 181); Satō Shin'ichi and Ikeuchi Yoshisuke, eds., *Chūsei hōsei shiryōshū*, vol. 2, 7 vols. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1959), 66-67. Article 181 is undated, but based on content and proximity to other articles, it has to be Shōchō 1 [1428].

mobilize the resources of government. The Yamana attacked Akamatsu Mitsusuke and his people for their own reasons, and the shogunal chancellor was essentially forced to promise them everything the Akamatsu had as the spoils of war. When the moneylenders in the capital, facing the rage of thousands, pulled together a fortune to pay the shogunal chancellor for protection, he could not mobilize the troops of his fellow shugo. The Hatakeyama, the next most powerful shugo family after the Hosokawa, had many retainers living near the capital, and some were part of the uprising. The head of the family refused to mobilize his people. Major temples, which had their own forces, had played significant roles in the shogunate's regulation of commerce in the city, and *ikki* participants targeted them, too. Meanwhile, the rest of the capital saw the shogunal chancellor's acceptance of the moneylenders' cash as a bribe.[382] Nor could he persuade the frightened moneylenders to move their treasures somewhere more defensible, and he had no one with the independent stature of a conciliator to speak for him. He was eventually forced to return the money and accede to the villagers' demands: the shogunate issued a debt cancellation.[383] The personal reputation and (lack of) power of the acting head of government had a tangible, permanent effect on government policy.

Finally, the people who organized themselves into the forces that invaded the capital, defeated the shogunate's troops, and attacked the moneylenders were the same sorts of people as those who organized the large festivals of Fushimi Estate. The same flexible bonds of organization that bound together landed families and average villagers in putting on yearly festivals, even when prominent people were feuding, or in pulling together impromptu parades for the pleasure of it, permitted a broad swath of people outside the city to organize themselves

382 *Kennaiki*, 4:71 (Kakitsu 1 [1441].09.10). The term used is 賄賂 (*wairo*).
383 Sakurai Eiji, *Muromachibito no seishin* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2001), 193-197.

to make their demands in force. The Tanabata gatherings held on Fushimi countered such bonds with different ones: Tanabata brought together estate owner and administrators, landed families, monks, and a moneylender to contribute to a celebration that they could all enjoy together. Most estates did not have such figures as the Fushimi princes to center them, especially with the Ashikaga focus on building a community *within* the capital. Instead, the bonds between landed families and the other villagers among whom they lived were strong enough to mobilize them against the capital.

In Closing: The Long-Term

The specific dilemmas of the Kakitsu Incident(s) were solved relatively quickly—the Akamatsu assassins were successfully killed in the ninth month, the debt cancellation protesters successfully placated and removed from the capital in the next, intercalary ninth month. Yet the reasons they were crises in the first place came down to a fundamental rejection of collective interest: the Akamatsu wanted to protect their family power and unity against the shogun, and the Yamana wanted to increase their influence at Akamatsu expense, the way the Akamatsu had increased theirs at Yamana expense a generation before. The shogunal chancellor could not persuade anyone—not his fellow shugo, nor the moneylenders allied with the shogunate, nor the protesting commoners from outside the city—that his policies would address their interests. Urban moneylenders and rural borrowers were sorting themselves into antagonistic blocs.

After the turmoil of Kakitsu, in which the Ashikaga-centered government could not even protect its own capital city, and after the assassinated Yoshinori's first underage son died as shogun, leaving his even younger brother to reign under the control of regents for years, many powerful families left the capital to live in their provinces and build up their organizations there.

With the departure of so many from the capital, the ritual community of the Ashikaga-Imperial Court broke. Messengers continued to fly between the capital and centers of provincial power, but the shugo were splitting apart into regional communities, each with their own interests.

Both family succession disputes and debt-reduction uprisings worsened over the next decades. The Hatakeyama tore themselves apart in a succession crisis judiciously worsened by their Hosokawa rivals and the new Ashikaga shogun.[384] Small armies of rural villagers invaded the capital roughly every five years after their Kakitsu uprising, demanding repeated debt reduction.[385] In the end, the powerful shugo still in the capital applied to the Ashikaga family the same interference in family succession that the Ashikaga had so effectively used upon them. The pretext for the Ōnin War was a dispute over who would succeed Yoshinori's son as shogun, and it gutted Ashikaga power in subsequent generations.

It is perhaps fitting that the Kakitsu Disturbance began with an assassination—one person vs. one family—and ended in upheaval. Few participants liked Yoshinori or evinced great desire for his leadership, but the strategies of negotiation and shared ritual that had held together Muromachi governance had made the person of Yoshinori a lynchpin of the social fabric, and his assassination tore it. Some strategies remained: communities still came together around annual festivals and occasional ceremonies; intermediaries still bridged the gaps left by changing institutions. Yet the shared framework that had made certain accomplishments and talents valuable across multiple disputants—the way that Kiyohara Jōsō's scholastic accomplishments could demand respect from the most meticulous scholar of literary Chinese *and* from the most ambitious politicians in and around the capital—decayed. By the start of the sixteenth century,

384 Sakurai, *Muromachibito no seishin*, 268-270, 277-279.

385 Hayashiya Tatsusaburō, "Kyoto in the Muromachi Age," in *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, ed. John Whitney Hall and Toyoda Takeshi, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 29.

competing groups of warriors shared a modicum of respect for the position of shogun, just enough to make Ashikaga Yoshitane an effective mediator between them.[386] Rather than the Ashikaga, Hosokawa, and Ōuchi being part of the same community, built in Kyoto through shared rituals and interlocutors, they were now three separate communities. Ashikaga Yoshitane was detached enough to negotiate with both sides, but connected enough through the lingering prestige of Ashikaga rule to serve as a bridge, intermediary rather than center of gravity.

386 Yamada Yasuhiro, *Ashikaga Yoshitane: Sengoku ni ikita fukutsu no taishōgun* (Tokyo: Ebisu Kōshō Shuppan, 2016), 146-147. (Incident raised by Thomas Conlan.)

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Organized by author for diary-chronicles, and by title for other compilations.

Chūsei hōsei shiryōshū. Edited by Satō Shin'ichi, and Ikeuchi Yoshisuke. 7 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1959–2005.

Dai Nihon shiryō. Series 7: Meitoku 3 nen-Bunshō gannen (1392-1466). Edited by Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo. 34 vols. Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1901–2018.

Fujiwara Munetada. *Chūyūki*. 7 vols. Dai Nihon kokiroku 21. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1993.

Gidō Shūshin. *Kūge nichiyō kufū ryakushū*. Tokyo: Taiyōsha, 1942.

———. *Kunchū Kūge nichiyō kufū ryakushū : chūsei zensō no seikatsu to bungaku*. Edited by Kageki Hideo. Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1982.

Go-Daigo. *Kenmu nenjū gyōji : Kyōto Gosho Higashiyama Gobunkobon*. Edited by Tokoro Isao. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1990.

Go-Sukōin (Sadafusa). *Kanmon nikki*. 7 vols. Zushoryō sōkan. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 2002–2014.

———. *Kanmon nikki shihai monjo*. 1 vols. Zushoryō sōkan. Tenri, Nara: Yōtokusha, 1965.

———. *Shōchū Chin'yōki*. Edited by Murata Masashi. Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1984.

Gunsho ruijū. Edited by Hanawa Hokinoichi. 29 vols. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1939–1943.

Higashibōjō Hidenaga. *Kōyōki*. Edited by Ogawa Takeo. 2 vols. Shiryō sanshū. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 2011.

Hirohashi Kanenobu. *Kanenobu-kō ki*. Edited by Murata Masashi. 2 vols. Shiryō sanshū. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1973.

Hyōgo kenshi: shiryō-hen: chūsei. Edited by Imai Rintarō. 9 vols. Kobe: Hyōgo Kenshi Henshū Senmon Iinkai, 1983–1997.

Iwashimizu Hachimangū shi. Edited by Tanaka Hirokiyo. 2nd ed. Vol. 2. 9 vols. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1994.

Iwashimizu Monjo. Edited by Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku Bunka Daigaku Shiryō Hensangakari. 6 vols. Dai Nihon komonjo: iewake 4. Tokyo: Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku, 1909–1915.

Kamakura ibun: komonjo hen. Edited by Takeuchi Rizō. 42 vols. Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 1971–1991.

"Kishōmon (Eiroku 6 [1563])." Oath, 1563. Princeton University Library: East Asian Library Rare Books. https://catalog.princeton.edu/catalog/10166399.

Kōyasan Monjo. Edited by Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku Bunka Daigaku Shiryō Hensangakari. 8 vols. Dai Nihon komonjo: iewake 1. Tokyo: Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku, 1904–1907.

Kujō-ke rekisei kiroku. Edited by Kunaichō Shoryōbu. 4 vols. Zushoryō sōkan. Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1989.

Madenokōji Tokifusa. *Kennaiki*. 9 vols. Dai Nihon kokiroku 14. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1963–1986.

Manzei. *Mansai jugō nikki*. 3 vols. Kyōto Teikoku Daigaku Bunka Daigaku sōsho. Kyoto: Rokujō Kappan Seizōjo, 1918.

Manzei. *Mansai jugō nikki*. Edited by Hanawa Hokinoichi. 2 vols. Zoku Gunsho ruijū: hōi 1–2. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928.

Munakata Taisha monjo. Edited by Munakata Taisha Monjo Hensan Kankō Iinkai. 3 vols. Tokyo: Hatsubaijo Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1993.

Muromachi bakufu hikitsuke shiryō shūsei. Edited by Kuwayama Kōnen. 2 vols. Nihon shiryō sensho. Tokyo: Kondō Shuppansha, 1980–1986.

Nakahara Morosato. *Morosato ki*. Edited by Fujii Sadafumi and Kobayashi Hanako. 6 vols. Shiryō sanshū. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1985–2001.

Nakahara Yasutomi. *Yasutomi ki*. Edited by Zōho Shiryō Taisei Kankōkai. Vol. 37–40. 4 vols. Zōho shiryō taisei. Kyoto: Kyōto Rinsen Shoten, 1965.

Nakayama Sadachika. *Sakkaiki*. 4 vols. Dai Nihon kokiroku 26. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2000.

Nenjū gyōji emaki. Edited by Komatsu Shigemi. Nihon emaki taisei 8. Tokyo: Chūo Kōronsha, 1977.

Ōsawa Hisamori. *Yamashina-ke reiki*. 6 vols. Shiryō sanshū. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1967–2002.

Taiheiki. Edited by Hyōdō Hiromi. 6 vols. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2014–2017.

Tōin Kinsada. *Sompi bunmyaku*. Edited by Maruyama Jirō. Kokushi taikei 58–60. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1957.

"Tōji hyakugō monjo WEB." Maintained by Kyōto furitsu Kyōtogaku/Rekisaikan. Digitized archive. Accessed June 13, 2022. https://hyakugo.pref.kyoto.lg.jp/.

Tōji monjo. Edited by Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo. 17 vols. Dai Nihon komonjo: iewake 10. Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1925–2015.

Tōji nijūikku kusōkata hyōjō hikitsuke. Edited by Tomita Masahiro, Kondō Toshihiko, and Itō Toshikazu. 4 vols. Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2002–2019.

Yamashina Noritoki. *Noritoki-kyō ki*. Edited by Usui Nobuyoshi and Tsunenaga Yoshiteru. Vol. 3. Shiryō sanshū. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1970.

Zoku gunsho ruijū. Edited by Hanawa Hokinoichi. 33 vols. Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1923–1933.

Zoku zoku Gunsho ruijū. 16 vols. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1906–1909.

In Translation

Conlan, Thomas, trans. *Samurai and the Warrior Culture of Japan, 471–1877: A Sourcebook*. New York: Hackett Publishing, 2022.

Fujiwara Tadahira. *Teishinkōki: The Year 939 in the Journal of Regent Fujiwara No Tadahira*. Edited by Joan R. Piggott. Translated by Joan R. Piggott, Sanae Yoshida, and Edward Kamens. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2008.

Go-Sukōin (Sadafusa). "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (1)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yonezawa shigaku*, no. 30 (October 2014): 185–200.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (2)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku kiyō* 50 (December 2014): 41–68.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (3)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku fuzoku seikatsu bunka kenkyūjo hōkoku* 42 (March 2015): 21–50.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (4)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yonezawa shigaku*, no. 31 (October 2015): 135–60.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (5)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku kiyō* 51 (December 2015): 19–45.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (6)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku fuzoku seikatsu bunka kenkyūjo hōkoku* 43 (March 2016): 27–58.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (7)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yonezawa shigaku*, no. 32 (October 2016): 217–34.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (8)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku kiyō*, no. 52 (December 2016): 57–78.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (9)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku fuzoku seikatsu bunka kenkyūjo hōkoku*, no. 44 (March 2017): 43–66.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (10)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yonezawa shigaku*, no. 33 (October 2017): 91–108.

———. "*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (11)." Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku kiyō*, no. 53 (December 2017): 15–34.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (12).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku fuzoku seikatsu bunka kenkyūjo hōkoku*, no. 45 (March 2018): 41–59.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (13).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yonezawa shigaku*, no. 34 (October 2018): 125–53.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (14).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku kiyō*, no. 54 (December 2018): 35–64.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (15).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku fuzoku seikatsu bunka kenkyūjo hōkoku*, no. 46 (March 2019): 65–87.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (16).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yonezawa shigaku*, no. 35 (October 2019): 107–25.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (17).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku kiyō*, no. 55 (December 2019): 23–40.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (18).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku fuzoku seikatsu bunka kenkyūjo hōkoku*, no. 47 (March 2020): 25–41.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (19).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yonezawa shigaku*, no. 36 (October 2020): 155–74.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (20).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku kiyō*, no. 56 (December 2020): 13–29.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (21).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku fuzoku seikatsu bunka kenkyūjo hōkoku*, no. 48 (March 2021): 17–34.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (22).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yonezawa shigaku*, no. 37 (October 2021): 145–62.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (23).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku kiyō*, no. 57 (December 2021): 11–24.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* gendaigo yaku (24).” Translated by Sonobe Toshiki. *Yamagata kenritsu Yonezawa joshi tanki daigaku fuzoku seikatsu bunka kenkyūjo hōkoku*, no. 49 (March 2022): 67–80.

Grossberg, Kenneth A., trans. *The Laws of the Muromachi Bakufu: Kemmu Shikimoku (1336) & Muromachi Bakufu Tsuikahō*. Monumenta Nipponica Monographs. Tokyo: Sophia University, 1981.

Hino Nako. *From the Bamboo-View Pavilion: Takemuki-Ga-Ki*. Translated by Royall Tyler. Columbia, SC: Blue-Tongue Books, 2016.

Imagawa Ryōshun, and Nijō Yoshimoto, et al. *From Baishōron to Nantaiheiki*. Edited and translated by Royall Tyler. Columbia, SC: Blue-Tongue Books, 2016.

Johnston, Ian, and Ping Wang, trans. *Daxue and Zhongyong*. Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2012.

Kitabatake Chikafusa. *A Chronicle of Gods and Sovereigns: Jinnō Shōtōki of Kitabatake Chikafusa*. Translated by H. Paul Varley. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.

McCullough, Helen Craig, and William H. McCullough, trans. *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes: Annals of Japanese Aristocratic Life in the Heian Period*. 2 vols. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1980.

Murasaki Shikibu. *The Tale of Genji*. Translated by Royall Tyler. Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition. New York: Penguin, 2006.

Nakanoin Masatada no Musume. *The Confessions of Lady Nijō*. Translated by Karen Brazell. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1973.

Palmer, Martin, trans. *The Most Venerable Book (Shang Shu)*. London: Penguin Classics, 2014.

Tanabe, George J., ed. *Religions of Japan in Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020.

Tyler, Royall, trans. *Iwashimizu Hachiman in War and Cult*. Columbia, SC: Blue-Tongue Books, 2017.

Zeami Motokiyo. *On the Art of the No Drama: The Major Treatises of Zeami*. Translated by J. Thomas Rimer and Masakazu Yamazaki. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Zuikei Shūhō. "Ashikaga Yoshimitsu's Foreign Policy 1398 to 1408 A.D.: A Translation from 'Zenrin Kokuhōki,' the Cambridge Manuscript." Translated by Charlotte von Verschuer. *Monumenta Nipponica* 62, no. 3 (2007): 261–97.

Secondary Sources

Adolphson, Mikael S. *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers, and Warriors in Premodern Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000.

———. *The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sōhei in Japanese History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007.

———, and Anne Commons. *Lovable Losers: The Heike in Action and Memory*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2015.

———, Edward Kamens, and Stacie Matsumoto. *Heian Japan: Centers and Peripheries*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007.

———, and J. Mark Ramseyer. “The Competitive Enforcement of Property Rights in Medieval Japan: The Role of Temples and Monasteries.” *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 71, no. 3 (September 2009): 660–68.

Amino Yoshihiko. *Rethinking Japanese History*. Translated by Alan S. Christy. Michigan Monograph Series in Japanese Studies ; 74. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 2012.

Aoyama Yoshiki. “Muromachi bakufu ‘betsu bugyō’ ni tsuite no kisoteki kōsatsu.” In *Muromachi jidai no buke monjo*, edited by Uejima Tamotsu, Chūsei 4:168–89. Nihon komonjogaku ronshū 8. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1987.

Appadurai, Arjun, ed. *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Arnesen, Peter Judd. *The Medieval Japanese Daimyō: The Ōuchi Family’s Rule of Suo and Nagato*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.

Atkins, Paul S. “Nijō v. Reizei: Land Rights, Litigation, and Literary Authority in Medieval Japan.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 66, no. 2 (December 2006): 495–529.

Bartlett, Robert. *Trial by Fire and Water: The Medieval Judicial Ordeal*. Echo Point Books & Media, 2014.

Batten, Bruce L. “Provincial Administration in Early Japan: From Ritsuryō Kokka to Ōchō Kokka.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 53, no. 1 (June 1993): 103–34.

Bell, Catherine. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Bender, J. Elijah. “Wind, Forest, Fire, and Mountain: The Evolution of Environmental Management and Local Society in Central Japan, 1450-1650.” PhD Dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2017.

Bender, Ross. “The Hachiman Cult and the Dokyo Incident.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 34, no. 2 (July 1979): 125–53. https://doi.org/10.2307/2384320.

Berger, Gordon Mark. *Currents in Medieval Japanese History: Essays in Honor of Jeffrey P. Mass*. Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, 2009.

Blacker, Carmen. *The Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Blair, Heather. “Religion and Politics in Heian-Period Japan.” *Religion Compass* 7, no. 8 (August 1, 2013): 284–93. https://doi.org/10.1111/rec3.12054.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *The Logic of Practice*. Translated by Richard Nice. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990.

Brazell, Karen. *Traditional Japanese Theater: An Anthology of Plays*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

Brock, Karen L. “The Shogun’s `Painting Match’.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 50, no. 4 (1995): 433–84. https://doi.org/10.2307/2385589.

Buhrman, Kristina. “The Stars and the State: Astronomy, Astrology, and the Politics of Natural Knowledge in Early Medieval Japan.” PhD Dissertation, University of Southern California, 2012.

Butler, Lee. *Emperor and Aristocracy in Japan, 1467-1680: Resilience and Renewal*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2002.

Carter, Steven D. *Householders: The Reizei Family in Japanese History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007.

———. *Regent Redux: A Life of the Statesman-Scholar Ichijō Kaneyoshi*. Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 1996.

———. *The Road to Komatsubara: A Classical Reading of the Renga Hyakuin*. Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1987.

———. *Waiting for the Wind: Thirty-Six Poets of Japan’s Late Medieval Age*. Columbia University Press, 1989.

Castiglioni, Andrea, Fabio Rambelli, and Carina Roth, eds. *Defining Shugendo: Critical Studies on Japanese Mountain Religion*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020.

Chaiklin, Martha, ed. *Mediated by Gifts: Politics and Society in Japan, 1350-1850*. Leiden: Brill, 2016.

Chijiwa Itaru. “Chūsei no seiyakuteki monjo = kishōmon no futatsu no keiretsu.” *Kokugakuin zasshi* 106, no. 2 (February 2005): 1–11.

———. “Daishi Kanjō Kishōmon: Nanbokuchō/Muromachi jidai no tokushuna kishōmon.” In *Chūsei no shakai to shiryō*, edited by Haga Norihiko, 170–92. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2005.

———, ed. *Nihon no gofu bunka*. Tokyo: Kōbundō, 2010.

Collcutt, Martin. *Five Mountains: The Rinzai Zen Monastic Institution in Medieval Japan*. Harvard Univ Asia Center, 1981.

———. “Religion in the Formation of the Kamakura Bakufu: As Seen through the ‘Azuma Kagami.’” *Japan Review*, no. 5 (1994): 55–86.

Conlan, Thomas D. *From Sovereign to Symbol: An Age of Ritual Determinism in Fourteenth Century Japan*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

———. *In Little Need of Divine Intervention: Takezaki Suenaga’s Scrolls of the Mongol Invasions of Japan*. Ithaca, NY: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 2001.

———. *State of War: The Violent Order of Fourteenth-Century Japan*. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2003.

———. “The Failed Attempt to Move the Emperor to Yamaguchi and the Fall of the Ōuchi.” *Japanese Studies* 35, no. 2 (May 4, 2015): 185–203.

———. “The Gods Are Watching: Talismans, Oaths, and Political Allegiance in Medieval Japan.” Vienna, 2021.

———. “The Two Paths of Writing and Warring in Medieval Japan.” *Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies* 8, no. 1 (2011): 85–127.

———. “Thicker than Blood: The Social and Political Significance of Wet Nurses in Japan, 950-1330.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 65, no. 1 (June 2005): 159–205.

Creamer, John Douglas. “The Imperial Scribal Network: A Study of Writing and Textual Commerce in ‘*Kanmon Nikki*.’” PhD Dissertation, Yale University, 2007.

Dobbins, James C., ed. *The Legacy of Kuroda Toshio (Japanese Journal of Religious Studies v. 23, No. 3/4)*. Nagoya: Nanzan University, 1996.

Durkheim, Émile. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Translated by Joseph Ward Swain. 5th ed. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd, 1964.

Ebara Masaharu. *Ikki no jidai*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2003.

———. *Muromachi bakufu to chihō no shakai*. Nihon chūsei shi 3. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2016.

———. *Nihon chūsei chiiki shakai no kōzō*. Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2000.

———, and Shimizu Katsuyuki. *Muromachi bakufu shōgun retsuden*. Chiyoda, Tokyo: Ebisu Kōshō Shuppan, 2017.

Elias, Norbert. *The Court Society*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. New York: Pantheon Books, 1983.

Endō Motoo, and Yamanaka Yutaka. *Nenjū gyōji no rekishigaku*. Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1981.

Eubanks, Charlotte. *Miracles of Book and Body: Buddhist Textual Culture and Medieval Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

Ferejohn, John, and Frances Rosenbluth. *War and State Building in Medieval Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010.

Friday, Karl. *Japan Emerging: Premodern History to 1850*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2012.

Futaki Ken’ichi. “Iwashimizu Hōjō-e to Muromachi bakufu: Shōgun shōkei sankō o megutte.” *Kokugakuin Daigaku Nihon bunka kenkyūjo kiyō*, no. 30 (September 1972): 98–133.

Garrett, Philip. “Crime on the Estates: Justice and Politics in the Kōyasan Domain.” *The Journal of Japanese Studies* 41, no. 1 (2015): 79–112.

Gay, Suzanne. “The Kawashima: Warrior-Peasants of Medieval Japan.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 46, no. 1 (1986): 81–119. https://doi.org/10.2307/2719076.

———. “The Lamp-Oil Merchants of Iwashimizu Shrine: Transregional Commerce in Medieval Japan.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 64, no. 1 (2009): 1–51.

———. *The Moneylenders of Late Medieval Kyoto*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2001.

Geertz, Clifford. *The Interpretation of Cultures*. 3rd ed. New York: Basic Books, 2017.

Gerhart, Karen M. *The Material Culture of Death in Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2009.

———, ed. *Women, Rites, and Ritual Objects in Premodern Japan*. Leiden: Brill, 2018.

Goble, Andrew Edmund. *Kenmu: Go-Daigo’s Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ Asia Center, 1996.

———, Kenneth R. Robinson, and Haruko Nishioka Wakabayashi, eds. *Tools of Culture: Japan’s Cultural, Intellectual, Medical, and Technological Contacts in East Asia, 1000-1500s*. Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, 2009.

Goodwin, Janet R. *Alms and Vagabonds: Buddhist Temples and Popular Patronage in Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1994.

———. “The Buddhist Monarch: Go-Shirakawa and the Rebuilding of Tōdai-Ji.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 17, no. 2/3 (June 1990): 219–42.

Goodwin, Janet R., and Joan R. Piggott, eds. *Land, Power, and the Sacred : The Estate System in Medieval Japan*. Translated by Kristina Buhrman and David Eason. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2018.

Grapard, Allan G. “Institution, Ritual, and Ideology: The Twenty-Two Shrine-Temple Multiplexes of Heian Japan.” *History of Religions* 27, no. 3 (February 1988): 246–69.

———. *Mountain Mandalas: Shugendo in Kyushu*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016.

———. *The Protocol of the Gods: A Study of the Kasuga Cult in Japanese History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Grossberg, Kenneth A. “Bakufu Bugyonin: The Size of the Lower Bureaucracy in Muromachi Japan.” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 35, no. 4 (1976): 651–54. https://doi.org/10.2307/2053677.

———. *Japan’s Renaissance: The Politics of the Muromachi Bakufu*. 2nd ed. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2001.

Guth, Christine. *Shinzō: Hachiman Imagery and Its Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ Asia Center, 1985.

Hall, John Whitney. “Feudalism in Japan-A Reassessment.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5, no. 1 (1962): 15–51.

———. *Government and Local Power in Japan, 500-1700*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966.

———, and Jeffrey P. Mass, eds. *Medieval Japan: Essays in Institutional History*. Stanford University Press, 1988.

———, and Toyoda Takeshi, eds. *Japan in the Muromachi Age*. 2nd ed. University of California Press, 2001.

———, and Kozo Yamamura, eds. *Japan Before Tokugawa: Political Consolidation and Economic Growth, 1500-1650*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Hardacre, Helen. *Shinto: A History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Harich-Schneider, Eta. “Roei: The Medieval Court Songs of Japan [Continued].” *Monumenta Nipponica* 14, no. 1/2 (1958): 91–118. https://doi.org/10.2307/2382930.

Hashimoto Hatsuko. “Kuge soshō ni okeru monjo no kinōronteki kōsatsu.” *Komonjogaku kenkyu*, no. 14 (December 1979): 23–46.

Hayashima Daisuke. *Muromachi Bakufu ron*. Kōdansha sensho mechie ; 486. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2010.

Helmholz, R. H. “Crime, Compurgation and the Courts of the Medieval Church.” *Law and History Review* 1, no. 1 (1983): 1–26. https://doi.org/10.2307/744000.

———. *The Spirit of Classical Canon Law*. University of Georgia Press, 2010.

Himeji Shishi Henshū Senmon Iinkai, ed. *Himeji shishi: honpen*. Vol. 2. 15 vols. Himeji: Himeji-shi, 2018.

Horton, H. Mack. “Portrait of a Medieval Japanese Marriage: The Domestic Life of Sanjōnishi Sanetaka and His Wife.” *Japanese Language and Literature* 37, no. 2 (2003): 130–54. https://doi.org/10.2307/3594865.

———. “Renga Unbound: Performative Aspects of Japanese Linked Verse.” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 53, no. 2 (1993): 443–512. https://doi.org/10.2307/2719455.

Huey, Robert N. *Kyōgoku Tamekane: Poetry and Politics in Late Kamakura Japan*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989.

Hurst, G. Cameron. *Insei: Abdicated Sovereigns in the Politics of Late Heian Japan, 1086-1185*. 1st ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.

Ide Maiko. “Kiyohara Yoshikata no zōi o megutte: *Yasutomi-ki* no kakikae o tegakari ni.” *Kyushu bunka-shi kenkyūjo kiyō* 62 (March 30, 2019): 91–114. https://doi.org/10.15017/2545083.

Ikuta Yoshiho. “*Kanmon nikki* shihai renga futokorogami no teisei ni tsuite: honbun idō to shikimoku o meguru mondai.” *Bungaku / Gogaku*, no. 214 (December 2015): 33–45.

Imatani Akira. *Kujibiki Shōgun Ashikaga Yoshinori*. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2003.

———. “Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin hōsho no kisoteki kōsatsu.” *Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan Kenkyū Hōkoku*, no. 1 (June 1982): 175–237.

———. *Muromachi no ōken: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu no ōken sandatsu keikaku*. Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1990.

———. “Zōtei Muromachi bakufu samurai-dokoro tōnin narabini Yamashiro shugo tsukedokoro bunin enkaku kōshōkō.” In *Shugo ryōgoku shihai kikō no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1986.

Ishihara Hideo. “Ashikaga Yoshimochi to Go-Komatsu ‘Ōken.’” *Shigaku zasshi* 116, no. 6 (2007): 1033–63. https://doi.org/10.24471/shigaku.116.6_1033.

———. “Ashikaga Yoshinori no shosei.” *Nihon rekishi*, no. 724 (September 2008): 17–33.

———. “Ashikaga Yoshinori to Ashikaga Yoshimitsu/Yoshimochi--chōtei gyōji ni okeru kōdō no bunseki kara.” 歴史学研究, no. 852 (April 2009): 21–31.

———. “Muromachi jidai no shōgun to sekkanke: Ichijō Tsunetsugu o chushin ni.” *Hisutoria*, no. 209 (March 2008): 81–103.

———. “Muromachi-dono gyōkō ni miru Ashikaga Yoshinori no ichizuke.” *Aoyama shigaku* 29 (2011): 1–19.

Itō Kiyoo. *Chūsei Nihon no kokka to jisha*. Tokyo: Takashi Shoin, 2000.

———. “Iwashimizu Hachimangū ni okeru Ki-shi monbatsu shihai no keisei ni.” *Rekishi*, no. 49 (November 1976): p14-27.

Itō Kiyoshi. *Ashikaga Yoshimochi*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2008.

———. “Muromachi bakufu to buke shissō.” *Nihon-shi kenkyū*, no. 145 (September 1974): 23–51.

———. “Ōei shoki ni okeru ōchō seiryoku no dōkō: tensō o chūshin toshite.” In *Nanbokuchō jidai no buke monjo*, edited by Uejima Tamotsu, Chūsei 3:230–59. Nihon komonjogaku ronshū 7. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1986.

Itō Kunio. “Fushimi-no-miya Sadafusa tai Ashikaga Yoshinori: ‘*Kanmon nikki*’ he no bungakuteki apprōchi.” *Hiroshima Daigaku bungaku-bu kiyō*, no. 1 (January 1973): 86–103.

———. “*Kanmon nikki* no hitobito (1).” *Kokugo kyōiku kenkyū*, no. 26a (November 4, 1980): 115–23. https://doi.org/10.15027/24062.

Kai Hideyuki. “Chiiki kenryoku no zasshōsō to sono katsudō Ōuchi-shi no tai bakufu seisaku to kōbun shusō.” *Ōryō shigaku*, no. 25 (September 1999): 205–20.

Kamei-Dyche, Rieko. “Tools of Authority: The Saionji Family and Courtier Society in Early Medieval Japan.” PhD Dissertation, University of Southern California, 2013.

Kamikawa Michio. “Accession Rituals and Buddhism in Medieval Japan.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 17, no. 2/3 (1990): 243–80.

Kantorowicz, Ernst H. *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*. Princeton Classics Edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Kasamatsu Hiroshi. *Hō to kotoba no chūseishi*. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1984.

Kataoka Kōhei. *Nihon chūsei no kegare to chitsujo ishiki*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2014.

Katsumata Shizuo. *Ikki*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1982.

Kawamura Shōichi. *Nanbokuchō/Muromachi-ki Isshiki-shi no kenryoku kōzō*. Tokyo: Ebisu Kōshō Shuppan, 2016.

Kawauchi Masayoshi. “Muromachi-ki Gion-e ni kansuru ikkōsatsu.” *Historia*, no. 191 (September 2004): 1–27.

Keene, Donald. *Yoshimasa and the Silver Pavilion: The Creation of the Soul of Japan*. Columbia University Press, 2006.

Keirstead, Thomas. *The Geography of Power in Medieval Japan*. 2nd ed. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014.

———. “The Theater of Protest: Petitions, Oaths, and Rebellion in the Shoen.” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 16, no. 2 (1990): 357–88. https://doi.org/10.2307/132688.

Knechtges, David R., and Eugene Vance, eds. *Rhetoric and the Discourses of Power in Court Culture: China, Europe, and Japan*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012.

Kuroda Toshio. *Ōhō to buppō: chūseishi no kōzu*. Vol. Zōho shinpan. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2001.

———, and James C. Dobbins. “The Development of the Kenmitsu System as Japan’s Medieval Orthodoxy.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 233–69.

———, and Suzanne Gay. “Buddhism and Society in the Medieval Estate System.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 287–319.

———, and Allan Grapard. “The World of Spirit Pacification: Issues of State and Religion.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 321–51.

———, and Fabio Rambelli. “The Discourse on the ‘Land of Kami’ (Shinkoku) in Medieval Japan: National Consciousness and International Awareness.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 353–85.

———, and Jacqueline I. Stone. “The Imperial Law and the Buddhist Law.” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 3/4 (1996): 271–85.

Mass, Jeffrey P., ed. *Court and Bakufu in Japan: Essays in Kamakura History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

———. *The Development of Kamakura Rule, 1180-1250: A History with Documents*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979.

———. *The Kamakura Bakufu: A Study in Documents*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1976.

———, ed. *The Origins of Japan's Medieval World: Courtiers, Clerics, Warriors, and Peasants in the Fourteenth Century*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.

———. *Yoritomo and the Founding of the First Bakufu: The Origins of Dual Government in Japan*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999.

———., and William B. Hauser, eds. *The Bakufu in Japanese History*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985.

Matsunaga Kazuhiro. *Muromachi-ki kōbu kankei to Nanbokuchō Nairan*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2013.

Matsuoka Shinpei. *Kanmon nikki to chūsei bunka*. Tokyo: Shinwasha, 2009.

Matsuzono Hitoshi. "Chūsei no josei to nikki: 'Nikki no ie' no shiten kara." *Kanazawa Bunko Kenkyū*, no. 285 (September 1990): 1–18.

———. "Chūsei no miyake ni tsuite: Nanbokuchō/Muromachi-ki o chūshin ni." *Ningen bunka*, no. 25 (September 2010): 1–31.

———. "Kaki no kōzō: Kajūji-ryū Fujiwara-shi to sono nikki." *Nenpō chūsei-shi kenkyū*, no. 21 (May 1996): 69–100.

———. "'*Kanmon nikki*' ni mieru ama to amadera." *Ningen bunka: Aichi gakuin daigaku ningen bunka kenkyūjo kiyō*, no. 27 (September 2012): 1–18.

———. *Nikki no ie: Chūsei kokka no kiroku soshiki*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1997.

Matsuzono Jun'ichiro. "Muromachi bakufu zatsumu-sata no keisei to 'shakusho' no kōryoku." *Hitotsubashi Hōgaku* 16, no. 2 (July 2017): 303–34. https://doi.org/info:doi/10.15057/28727.

Mayo, Christopher Michael. "Mobilizing Deities: Deus, Gods, Buddhas, and the Warrior Band in Sixteenth-Century Japan." PhD Dissertation, Princeton University, 2013.

McCullough, Helen Craig. *Ōkagami, the Great Mirror: Fujiwara Michinaga (966-1027) and His Times*. 2nd ed. Michigan Classics in Japanese Studies, No.4. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1991.

McKelway, Matthew P. *Capitalscapes: Folding Screens And Political Imagination in Late Medieval Kyoto*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006.

Meeks, Lori. *Hokkeji and the Reemergence of Female Monastic Orders in Premodern Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010.

Mieda, Akiko. *Hieizan to Muromachi Bakufu: jisha to buke no Kyōto shihai*. Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2011.

Mitsuhashi Tadashi. “Heian kizoku no shinkō sekai.” In *Nihon bukkyō 34 no kagi*, edited by Ōkubo Yoshitoshi, Sueki Fumihiko, and Matsuo Kenji, 40–47. Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 2003.

Mizuno Tomoyuki. *Muromachi jidai kōbu kankei no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2005.

———. “Muromachi jidai no saiban to soshō: Ashikaga Yoshimitsu/Yoshimochi-ki no jirei kara.” *Nihon rekishi*, no. 756 (May 2011): 20–30.

———. “Muromachi shōgun ni yoru kugeshū no kamon ando: Nanbokuchō-Muromachi o chūshin ni.” *Shigaku zasshi* 106, no. 10 (1997): 1791–1817.

Moerman, D. Max. *Localizing Paradise: Kumano Pilgrimage and the Religious Landscape of Premodern Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005.

———. “Paradigm Regained: Taking Syncretism Seriously.” Edited by Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli. *Monumenta Nipponica* 59, no. 4 (2004): 525–33.

Momosaki Yūichirō. *Muromachi no hasha Ashikaga Yoshimitsu: chōtei to bakufu wa ika ni tōitsu sareta ka*. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 2020.

Mori Shigeaki. “Akamatsu Mitsumasa shōkō: Ashikaga Yoshinori seiken no tokushitsu.” *Fukuoka Daigaku Jinbun Ronsō* 42, no. 3 (December 2010): 943–1001.

———. *Mansai: tenka no gisha kubō koto ni goshūshō*. Kyoto: Mineruva Shobō, 2004.

———. *Muromachi Bakufu hōkai: Shōgun Yoshinori no yabō to zasetsu*. Tokyo: Kadokawa gakugei shuppan, 2011.

———. *Nanbokuchō-ki kōbu kankei-shi no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Bunken Shuppan, 1984.

Morris, Ivan. *The World of the Shining Prince: Court Life in Ancient Japan*. 3rd ed. New York: Vintage Books, 2013.

Nakamura Kenji, Kyōto Daigaku Kokugogaku Kokubungaku Kenkyūshitsu, and Chūgoku Bungaku Kenkyūshitsu. *Kanmon nikki shihai Wakan renku yakuchū: “Ōei nijūgonen jūichigatsu nijūgonichi wakan renku” o yomu*. 1st ed. Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 2011.

Nakano, Chieko. “‘Kechien’ as Religious Praxis in Medieval Japan: Picture Scrolls as the Means and Sites of Salvation.” PhD Dissertation, The University of Arizona, 2009.

Nishiguchi Junko. *Onna no chikara : kodai no josei to Bukkyō*. Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1987.

Ochiai Hitoshi. “Kiyohara yoshikata denkō.” *Nō: Kenkyū to hyōron*, no. 16 (1988): 11–23.

Ogawa, Makoto. *Ashikaga ichimon shugo hattenshi no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980.

Ogawa Takeo. *Ashikaga Yoshimitsu: kōbu ni kunrin shita Muromachi shōgun*. Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2012.

Okano Tomohiko. *Genji chōja: Buke seiken no keifu*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2018.

Ōta Akira. *Seishi kakei daijiten*. Tokyo: Seishi Kakei Daijiten Kankōkai, 1934.

Oxenboell, Morten. *Akutō and Rural Conflict in Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2018.

———. “The Mineaiki and Discourses on Social Unrest in Medieval Japan.” *Japan Forum* 18, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 1–21.

Oyler, Elizabeth. *Swords, Oaths, And Prophetic Visions: Authoring Warrior Rule in Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006.

Piggott, Joan R. “What Did A Regent Do?: Fujiwara No Tadahira in the 930s.” In *Teishinkōki: The Year 939 in the Journal of Regent Fujiwara No Tadahira*, edited by Sanae Yoshida and Joan R. Piggott, 23–77. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2008.

Pinnington, Noel J. “Invented Origins: Muromachi Interpretations of Okina Sarugaku.” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61, no. 3 (October 1998): 492–518.

———. “The Early History of the Noh Play: Literacy, Authorship, and Scriptedness.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 68, no. 2 (2013): 163–206.

———. *Traces in the Way: Michi and the Writings of Komparu Zenchiku*. Cornell East Asia Series 132. Ithaca, NY: East Asia Program, Cornell University, 2006.

Pollack, David. *The Fracture of Meaning: Japan’s Synthesis of China from the Eighth Through the Eighteenth Centuries*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.

Rambelli, Fabio, and Mark Teeuwen. *Buddhas and Kami in Japan: Honji Suijaku as a Combinatory Paradigm*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Ramirez-Christensen, Esperanza. *Murmured Conversations: A Treatise on Poetry and Buddhism by the Poet-Monk Shinkei*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008.

Ratcliff, Christian D. “The Cultural Arts in Service: The Careers of Asukai Masaari and His Lineage.” PhD Dissertation, Yale University, 2007.

Rousmaniere, Nicole Coolidge, Nobuo Tsuji, John T. Carpenter, N. Y.) Gallery Japan Society (New York, and British Museum. *Kazari: Decoration and Display in Japan, 15th-19th Centuries*. New York, NY: Japan Society, 2002.

Ruch, Barbara. *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan*. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2002.

Sakawa Yukiko. *Muromachi sengoku-ki no dosō to sakaya*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2020.

Sakurai Eiji. *Muromachibito no seishin*. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2001.

Sango, Asuka. *The Halo of Golden Light: Imperial Authority and Buddhist Ritual in Heian Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2015.

Sansom, George. *A History of Japan, 1334-1615*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1961.

Satō Hiroo. *Kishōmon no seishinshi: Chūsei sekai no kami to hotoke*. Kōdansha sensho mechie. Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2006.

Satō Shin'ichi. "Ashikaga Yoshinori shiritsu-ki no bakufu seiji." *Hōsei Daigaku shigakkai*, no. 20 (March 1968): 3–9.

———. *Komonjogaku nyūmon*. 1st ed. Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppankyoku, 1971.

Scheid, Bernhard, and Mark Teeuwen, eds. *The Culture of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Shapinsky, Peter D. *Lords of the Sea: Pirates, Violence, and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan*. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 2014.

Shidara Kaoru. "Eikyo gannen 'Ukagaigoto kiroku' ishibun no shōkai to kenkyū: Ashikaga Yoshinori no 'Gozen sata' ni kansuru mishōkai shiryō." *Shigaku zasshi* 101, no. 8 (August 1992): 1466–82.

Shimizu Katsuyuki. *Nihon shinpanshi: Kuka tachi, yugishō, tekka gishō*. Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2010.

Shimokawa Masahiro. "Ashikaga Yoshinori bannen no zōtō girei." *Komazawa joshi daigaku kenkyū kiyō* 16 (December 24, 2009): 1–17. https://doi.org/10.18998/00001060.

———. "*Yamashina-ke raiki* ni miru zoto to sono kino." *Nihon Daigaku bunrigakubu jinbun kagaku kenkyu kiyo*, no. 75 (2008): 23–52.

Shinjō Toshio. "Chūsei Iwashimizu Hachimangū no Oshi." *Hōsei Shigaku* 30 (March 23, 1978): 46–57.

Sonobe Toshiki. *Nihon no mura to miyaza: rekishiteki hensen to chiikisei*. Tokyo: Kōshi Shoin, 2010.

Souyri, Pierre. *The World Turned Upside Down: Medieval Japanese Society*. Columbia University Press, 2001.

Spawforth, A.J.S., ed. *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Stavros, Matthew Gerald. *Kyoto: An Urban History of Japan's Premodern Capital*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014.

Stavros, Matthew, and Norika Kurioka. "Imperial Progress to the Muromachi Palace, 1381: A Study and Annotated Translation of Sakayuku Hana." *Japan Review*, no. 28 (2015): 3–46.

Stone, Jacqueline I. "Do 'Kami' Ever Overlook Pollution? Honji Suijaku and the Problem of Death Defilement." *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 16 (2006): 203–32.

———. *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003.

———. *Right Thoughts at the Last Moment: Buddhism and Deathbed Practices in Early Medieval Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016.

Tabata Yasuko. *Muromachi shōgun no midaidokoro: Hino Yasuko, Shigeko, Tomiko*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2018.

Takagishi, Akira, and Heather Blair. "The Reproduction of Engi and Memorial Offerings: Multiple Generations of the Ashikaga Shoguns and the Yūzū Nenbutsu Engi Emaki." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 42, no. 1 (2015): 157–82.

Tambiah, S. J. "The Magical Power of Words." *Man* 3, no. 2 (1968): 175–208. https://doi.org/10.2307/2798500.

Tambiah, Stanley J. "Form and Meaning of Magical Acts: A Point of View." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 7, no. 3 (December 1, 2017): 451–73. https://doi.org/10.14318/hau7.3.030.

Tanaka Makoto. "Kōei sannen ni okeru Muromachi bakufu hikitsuke kata kaihen ni tsuite." *Ritsumeikan Bungaku*, no. 624 (January 2012): 712–22.

———. "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin zaishoku kōshō-kō (1): Genkō 3-nen (1333)-Kōei 3-nen (1344)." *Ritsumeikan Bungaku*, no. 651 (March 2017): 1110–1090.

———. "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin zaishoku kōshō-kō (2): Jōwa 1-nen (1333)-Bunna 1-nen (1352): Tsuki bugyōnin shizoku kenkyū (Yasutomi-shi)." *Ritsumeikan Bungaku | The Journal of Cultural Sciences*, no. 653 (September 2017): 130–100.

———. "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin zaishoku kōshō-kō (3): Bunna 2-nen (1353)-Jōji 6-nen (1367): Tsuki bugyōnin shizoku kenkyū (Jibu-shi)." *Ritsumeikan Bungaku*, no. 663 (August 2019): 248–216.

———. "Muromachi bakufu bugyōnin zaishoku kōshō-kō (4): Ōan 1-nen (1368)-Meitoku 3-nen (1392): Tsuki bugyōnin shizoku kenkyū (Fuse-shi)." *Ritsumeikan Bungaku*, no. 669 (September 2020): 242–193.

———. "Shoki Muromachi bakufu ni okeru onshō kata: 'onshō-kata bugyōnin' no kōsatsu o chūshin ni." *Komonjo kenkyū*, no. 72 (October 2011): 42–62.

Teeuwen, Mark, and John Breen. *A Social History of the Ise Shrines: Divine Capital*. Bloomsbury Shinto Studies. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017.

Tomita Masahiro. "Chūsei kuge seiji monjo no saikento 3: 'hōsho': tensō hōsho." In *Nanbokuchō jidai no buke monjo*, edited by Uejima Tamotsu, Chūsei 3:213–29. Nihon komonjogaku ronshū 7. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1986.

Tonomura, Hitomi. *Community and Commerce in Late Medieval Japan: Corporate Villages of Tokuchin-Ho*. Stanford University Press, 1992.

———. “Sexual Violence Against Women: Legal and Extralegal Treatment in Premodern Warrior Societies.” In *Women and Class in Japanese History*, edited by Hitomi Tonomura, Anne Walthall, and Wakita Haruko, 135–52. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, the University of Michigan, 1999.

Toriyabe Teruhiko. “Chūsei no Iwashimizu hōjōe no ongaku ni mirareta ‘shibu’ to ‘sayū’ ni tsuite.” *Tōyō ongaku kenkyū* 2006, no. 71 (2006): 21–38.

Tsang, Carol Richmond. *War and Faith: Ikkō Ikki in Late Muromachi Japan*. Harvard University Asia Center, 2007.

Tyler, Royall. *The Miracles of the Kasuga Deity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.

Ueda Shinpei, and Ōsawa Izumi. “Fushimi no miya Sadafusa shinnō no shūhen: *Kanmon nikki* jinmei hitei no saikentō.” *Shoryōbu kiyō*, no. 66 (2014): 1–24.

Ueno Shiro. “Yoshinori-ki ni okeru Muromachi bakufu soshō seido no hen’yō ni tsuite.” *Shakai kagaku kenkyū* 22, no. 2 (2002): 19–57.

Verschuer, Charlotte von. *Across the Perilous Sea: Japanese Trade with China and Korea from the Seventh to the Sixteenth Centuries*. Translated by Kristen Lee Hunter, 2010.

———. “Illustrated Debate over Wine and Rice (Shuhanron Emaki): Dining and Socializing in Late Muromachi Japan.” *Monumenta Nipponica* 72, no. 2 (2017): 189–222.

———. *Rice, Agriculture, and the Food Supply in Premodern Japan*. Translated by Wendy Cobcroft. Routledge, 2016.

Wajima Yoshio. *Chūsei no jugaku*. Nihon rekishi sōsho 11. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1965.

Wakabayashi, Haruko Nishioka. *The Seven Tengu Scrolls: Evil and the Rhetoric of Legitimacy in Medieval Japanese Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2012.

Wakita Haruko. “Towards a Wider Perspective on Medieval Commerce.” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 1, no. 2 (1975): 321–45. https://doi.org/10.2307/132129.

Wakita, Haruko, and Suzanne Gay. “Marriage and Property in Premodern Japan from the Perspective of Women’s History.” *Journal of Japanese Studies* 10, no. 1 (January 1984): 73–99.

Yamada Tōru. “Ashikaga shōgun-ke no shōen seiteki kiban: ‘Goryōsho’ no saikentō.” *Shigaku zasshi* 123, no. 9 (2014): 1644–69. https://doi.org/10.24471/shigaku.123.9_1644.

———. “Muromachi bakufu shomu sata to sono henshitu.” *Hōsei-shi kenkyū*, no. 57 (2007): 41–84. https://doi.org/10.5955/jalha.2007.41.

Yamada Yasuhiro. *Ashikaga Yoshitane: Sengoku ni ikita fukutsu no taishōgun*. Tokyo: Ebisu Kōshō Shuppan, 2016.

Yambe Kōki. “Muromachi bakufu soshō kikan no shōgun shinsaika.” *Shigaku zasshi* 94, no. 12 (1985): 1855–81. https://doi.org/10.24471/shigaku.94.12_1855.

Yashiro Kazuo, ed. *Muromachi gunki Akamatsu seisuiki: kenkyū to shiryō*. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1995.

Yokoi Kiyoshi. *Kanmon gyoki: “Ōja” to “shūsho” no hazama nite*. Vol. 16. Nikki kiroku ni yoru Nihon rekishi sōsho: Kodai/Chūsei hen. Tokyo: Soshiete, 1979.

———. *Muromachi jidai no ichi kōzoku no shōgai: “Kanmon nikki” no sekai*. Tokyo: Kōdansha, n.d.

Yoshida Kenji. *Ashikaga Yoshimochi : ruiyō no bushō o tsugi, itchō no jūshin tari*. Kyoto: Mineruva Shobō, 2017.

———. “Shōgun Ashikaga Yoshinori-ki no kanrei hōsho.” *Nihon komonjo gakkai*, no. 57 (May 2003): 49–65.

Yukawa Toshiharu. “Shiryō shōkai: *Morimitu kōki* ni miru Harima no kuni no kinri ryōsho ni tsuite: Akamatsu Masanori kōshitsu Dōshōin-ni hakkyū no inbanjō mo karamete.” *Shisen*, no. 104 (July 2006): 23–37.