

Local Religion in Tokugawa History

Editors' Introduction

Barbara AMBROS and Duncan WILLIAMS

THE STUDY OF Japanese religions during the Tokugawa period has become increasingly sophisticated in terms of the traditions and themes covered by scholars both in Japan and the West. Although the Tokugawa or Edo period boasts a large number of extant religious textual and non-textual sources for researchers, Tsuji Zenosuke's "Buddhist degeneration during the Edo period theory" (*Edo Bukkyō darakuron*) held sway for so long that other than the study of National Learning (Kokugaku) and Confucian scholarship, the rich and complex religious life of the period had been marginalized in accounts of religion in Japanese history. Increasingly, however, the Tokugawa period is being recognized as a crucial link between the medieval and modern forms of religious practice in Japan, both in terms of popular religious cults and the institutional structures of mainstream Buddhism, Shugendō, and "Shinto" organizations.

Western scholarship on popular religion and the institutional history of Tokugawa religions has begun to examine the growth and institutionalization of the mainline Buddhist sects, the systematization of Shugendō and Shinto organizations, and the dramatic growth of popular religious movements both within and without the context of the Tokugawa bakufu's regulation of religion. In the United States, for instance, the Tokugawa Religions Seminar (a five-year project at the American Academy of Religion, 1997–2001) has provided a forum for new research on this period. Relatively new book-length works, such as Janine Anderson SAWADA's *Confucian Values and Popular Zen: Sekimon Shingaku in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (1993), Nam Lin HUR's *Prayer and Play in Late Tokugawa Japan: Asakusa Sensōji and Edo Society* (2000), and Helen Baroni's *Obaku Zen: The Emergence of the Third Sect of Zen in Tokugawa Japan* (2000) have provided substantial depth to the many article-length works that have gradually increased in number since the early 1980s.

The genesis of this special issue lies in the guest editors' hope to introduce some of the most cutting-edge research on religion in the Tokugawa period, with a particular emphasis on the role of local religion in Tokugawa society. This focus on religiosity as it appears in a local context emerges from the growing consensus in the field that Japanese religion as "lived religion"¹ was practiced in local settings, with regions, villages, towns, and cities as socially significant units to understand religion. Indeed the abundance of local sources for the understanding of religious life has allowed scholars of Tokugawa religions to present a much more detailed picture than scholars of ancient and medieval religions of the comparative strengths of each religious tradition in each region, how religious laws were implemented on the ground, and how religious specialists and laypeople actually participated in religious life.

If there were one person who had reoriented the study of Japanese religions toward both the formerly neglected Tokugawa period and toward the local, it would be Tamamuro Fumio 圭室文雄 of Meiji University, who has kindly given us his permission to translate one of his most recent pieces of research. Indeed, all the contributors to this special issue have worked with Tamamuro over the years, and have incorporated into their research program his insistence on working closely with the large volume of primary handwritten manuscripts of the Tokugawa period (often held at local archives he helped establish), to understand the dynamics between religion and the state, as well as religion as practiced by those who were not the most well-known priests. In this editors' introduction, then, we will briefly introduce Tamamuro's work (with a list of his major publications), as well as outline the topics covered by each article of the issue.

Tamamuro Fumio: The Local and Social in Tokugawa Religions

Although Tamamuro's research has had a tremendous impact on Japanese scholarship on the Tokugawa period, his essay in this volume on the temple registration system as experienced in two villages in Sagami Province is the first among his four monographs, twenty edited volumes, and over fifty articles on Tokugawa religions to be translated (ably by Holly Sanders) into a Western language.² Born in 1935 in Kanagawa Prefecture, Tamamuro Fumio was the first son of a Sōtō

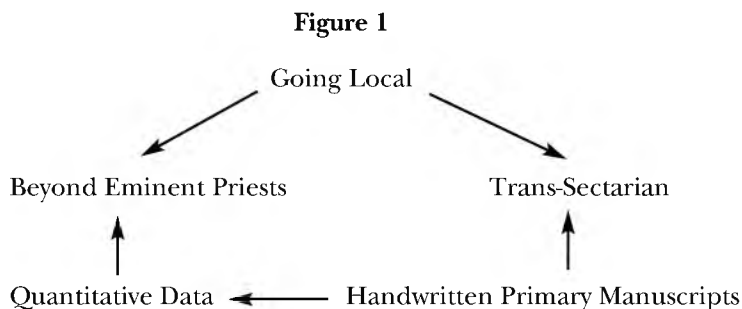
¹ A term popularized by the historian of American religion, David HALL (1989).

² One of his articles on the Meiji-period suppression of Buddhism has been translated into English (TAMAMURO 1997), and one of his Japanese articles on a local mountain cult was reprinted in a French publication (TAMAMURO 1988).

Zen Buddhist priest, Tamamuro Taijō, the well-known author of the classic study of Japanese Buddhist death rites *Sōshiki Bukkyō* 葬式仏教 (Funerary Buddhism, 1963). His father was also the abbot of a large Sōtō Zen temple in Kyushu, which meant that Tamamuro grew up in a Buddhist temple family. An incident from Tamamuro Fumio's early childhood hints at the scholarly approach he would later develop in his studies of Tokugawa religions. As a young boy, after helping his father conduct an ancestral memorial service at the temple for a family from the nearby village, he was playing with the son of the family who had just completed the memorial service. While he was outside playing with his friend, just beyond the temple kitchen, he could hear his friend's mother and her housewife friends chattering excitedly as they drank tea. Much to his surprise, he overheard the group of women complaining about how expensive temple memorial services had become at his father's temple. Suddenly, the women noticed he was standing at the door, and they quickly changed the subject. The young Tamamuro was confused and somewhat embarrassed. For him, that conversation was both enlightening and shocking and would influence his thinking about religion in the years to come. In the first instance, he wondered why all these women had regularly come to the temple expressing deep gratitude to his father and the temple for the memorial services over the years. For the first time he noticed that villagers questioned the authority of the Buddhist temple, while maintaining a respectful relationship to it in front of the priest. His future studies on religion in the Tokugawa period would be an effort to include perspectives of people beyond the priests or the religious institutions proper, to include the villagers, merchants, and government officials in developing a more complete picture of religion in society.

In Tamamuro's studies of Tokugawa religions there are five key orientations: 1) localizing the study of religion; 2) transcending sectarian boundaries; 3) focusing on the religious life of those other than eminent priests; 4) employing quantitative data; and 5) emphasizing the reading of handwritten primary documents over printed texts (see Figure 1).

By "going local," we mean Tamamuro's approach to the study of Tokugawa religions by analyzing the local and regional circumstances of religious life such as the local economic and political contexts within which religion was lived. It is at the local level that Tamamuro has utilized, and has continued to discover, handwritten manuscripts of local temples, governments, and villagers. From such documents he has been able to reconstruct quantitative data on the religious life of ordinary priests and laypeople across various sectarian affiliations.



Going Local

In the study of Japanese religions in general, there have been two discernable perspectives that depart from the traditional notion of Japan as a monolithic entity. On the one hand, a number of scholars of pre-modern Japanese religions have examined local and regional culture and history rather than examine religion via the lens of Japan as a unified phenomenon. These scholars argue that what we now call “Japan” would more accurately be described as a very loosely-aligned collection of strong local cultures. Hence, various Japanese and Western scholars have “gone local” in their study of Japanese religions by studying particular local religions and religious sites through the use of temple/shrine documents and materials held at local history archives.

On the other hand, some scholars, especially those in East Asian cultural studies and those who study the “borders” of Japan (for example, Okinawa and Hokkaido), view the Japanese islands as part of a larger East Asian region and focus on the tremendous cultural, economic, and religious interaction of the Japanese islands with the East Asian mainland. Rather than seeing Japan as an isolated “island nation,” these scholars suggest that the borders of Japan be seen as a semi-permeable membrane in which Japanese religions can be viewed as part of a complex East Asian religio-cultural matrix. While these two tendencies are, of course, not completely mutually exclusive, most scholars of Japanese religions have tended to choose one approach over another.

Tamamuro Fumio was one of the first scholars advocating the “local” approach in the study of Japanese religions. His first scholarly article (TAMAMURO 1963) focused on Jōdo Shinshū Buddhism in Higo 肥後 Province (present-day Kumamoto Prefecture). From an early

stage in his scholarly career, Tamamuro viewed localizing the study of Buddhism, Shinto, and Shugendō as an important counterbalance to the over-generalizations that had accompanied earlier studies of Tokugawa religions, which rarely used local documents as evidence.

Tamamuro's use of *chishi* 地誌 (local histories) as a source for religious studies is not unique, but the extent to which Tokugawa-period local histories have informed his scholarship is remarkable. He not only employs local history for his research, but has been instrumental in establishing local archives within city, town, and village government offices such as those in the cities of Isehara, Samukawa, and Atsugi in Kanagawa Prefecture and Kumamoto City in Kumamoto Prefecture. Major efforts by Tamamuro and others led to the 1979 publication of the two-volume *Zenkoku rekishi shiryō hozon kikan ichiran* 全国歴史資料保存機関一覧 (Nationwide resource guide to historical archives), which provides information on local history archive collections maintained at city, town, and village governmental offices as well as at prefectural and university libraries throughout Japan.

Tamamuro also laid the groundwork for future studies of local history and religion by compiling the Tokugawa period sections of Kanagawa and Kumamoto prefectural histories in the 1980s when many prefectures were just starting to compile their regional histories. At the city, town, and village level, he was a major contributor to the Tokugawa religious history of the following cities and towns: Ichikawa, Mito, Fujisawa, Chigasaki, Kamakura, Isehara, and Samukawa. In addition to these official prefectural and city histories, Tamamuro has contributed to some of the earliest local history journals beginning in the mid-1970s up to the present. The level of detail found in these local history sources enhances our understanding of Tokugawa religions as they operated "on the ground." Tamamuro has been singular in his efforts to build up the basic data on religious activities in the Tokugawa period. While an increasing number of scholars use local studies in their research on Japanese religions, it has been rare to find religion scholars willing to be so deeply involved in the compilation of these vast local sources.

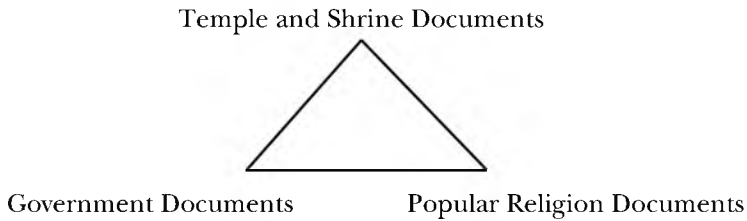
Beyond Eminent Priests

One of the major problems Tamamuro has tackled in his critique of prior research on Tokugawa religions was its almost exclusive focus on the philosophical writings of high-ranking monks and priests of the period. Although the Tokugawa period was the first time in Japanese history that all individuals from every social class and occupation had a Buddhist affiliation, historians of Japanese Buddhism, for instance,

tended to focus exclusively on the “great monks” such as Hakuin or Ryōkan. Despite the wide range of Tokugawa-period documents that can be used to reconstruct the religious lives of laypeople and mid-level priests, such as villagers’ diaries, collections of “miracle tales” of Buddhist and Shinto deities, or temple records of funerary rites and healing rituals, Tamamuro was one of the first scholars to devote research to the lived religion of ordinary people in Tokugawa Japan.

Tamamuro’s early childhood experience with the temple women who were complaining about the high cost of memorial services showed him the gap between religious institutions’ view of religion and that of ordinary people. It also inspired his earliest writings on religion that took a critical view of history written solely from the standpoint of religious institutions. He focused his work on revealing religion as understood by secular authorities on the one hand and non-eminent priests on the other. In regards to his research on secular authorities and religion, his major works in the 1960s and 1970s focused on outlining the role of the state in structuring the social frameworks within which Tokugawa religions operated. For example, in his first book, *Edo bakufu no shūkyō tōsei*, published in 1971, his major theme was the power of the state to control religious life. By the 1980s, however, Tamamuro’s work expanded to include a focus that included non-state factors affecting Tokugawa-period religious life such as the merchant economy, religious confraternities (*kō* 講), and new sea and land transportation routes for pilgrims.

This addition of a social history perspective on the religious lives of the majority of Japanese people can be seen especially in his works on prayers rituals (*hitō* 祈祷) for this-worldly benefits such for healing, rain-making, or commercial success. According to Tamamuro, Tokugawa religions take on a combination of other-worldly (funerary and memorial rites) and this-worldly (health and economic prosperity) concerns. Tamamuro examines this dual structure of salvation in the other-world (*ōjō* 往生) and benefits in this-world (*genze riyaku* 現世利益) in five of his edited or co-edited volumes on popular religion (TAMAMURO 1974, 1977, 1982b, 1987a, 1994). In these books and numerous articles on popular religion, Tamamuro explores religious life from the viewpoint of the majority of the people, the great grandfathers and great grandmothers of the housewives who were gossiping about how expensive memorial services were getting at his father’s Buddhist temple. By doing so he added this third perspective to scholarship on Tokugawa religions, which up till then, had focused only on religion from the perspective of religious institutions (temple and shrine documents) and that of the government. This three-fold use of documents has been a major feature of Tamamuro’s writings since the late 1970s (see Fig. 2).

Figure 2

In addition to using townspeople's and villagers' diaries or pilgrim logbooks found at inns to study popular religion, Tamamuro also excavated temple and shrine documents such as amulet sales records and chronicles of the miraculous powers of Buddhist and Shinto deities that had not been examined by earlier scholars of Tokugawa religions. For example, starting in the late-1970s, he began to research practices associated with popular Buddhist and Shinto deities such as Benzaiten 弁才天, Fudō Myōō 不動明王, Jizō 地藏 and Inari 稻荷. This orientation toward the religion of the majority signals Tamamuro's interest in social history and the social role of religion as a part of the fabric of everyday life. Thus in his studies of popular Tokugawa religiosity, he explores how religious institutions and popular cults played a role in such aspects of social life as medicine and healing, economic prosperity, money-lending, and education.

Crossing Sectarian Boundaries

It is not only in scholarship on Tokugawa religions, but in the study of Japanese religions as a whole, narrowly sectarian scholarship has hampered efforts to obtain a broader view of how religion is actually lived in Japan in the past and present. Buddhist universities such as Komazawa, Hanazono, Ōtani, Ryūkoku, and Taishō tend to employ scholars who study their particular Buddhist tradition. Shinto universities such as Kokugakuin or Kōgakkan and universities run by new religions such as Tenrikyō or Sōka Gakkai are no different. The study of Japanese religions at these major universities in Japan tend to be highly sectarian, which more often than not, masks, rather than reveals, the reality of religious life in the Tokugawa period, which consisted of a great number of dynamically interacting religious traditions and social forces.

Particularly because Tamamuro works at the secular Meiji University, he is among a handful of scholars who have had the freedom to move across a wide variety of religious traditions. Unlike most scholars in Japanese Buddhist studies who focus on a single sect, Tamamuro's research spans the Ji, Jōdo Shin, Sōtō Zen, Tendai, Shingon, Rinzaï Zen, and Nichiren sects. Furthermore, he has published extensively on the history and cultic activity of important Shinto and Shugendō sites such as the Ise 伊勢 Shrine, Konpira 金比羅 Shrine, Mount Fuji 富士, Mount Haguro 羽黒, and Ōyama 大山, as well as on Japanese Christianity during the Tokugawa period.

This ability to cross sectarian boundaries is remarkable not only because of the wide-ranging skills necessary to read and analyze manuscripts from such divergent traditions, but because temple and shrine officials generally offer their manuscripts only to researchers affiliated with their religious institution. For the past thirty years, Tamamuro has been invited to manage over ten cataloguing projects of Tokugawa-period documents including Shinto shrines such as Samukawa 寒川 and Konpira, Buddhist temples such as Eihei-ji 永平寺 and Takamuro-in 高室院 on Mt. Kōya, and Shugendō sites such as Ōyama and Haguro. Most recently in 2001, he began a five-year project to catalogue over 30,000 documents held at the Noto Sōji-ji 能登総持寺, overseeing dozens of scholars from Japanese and non-Japanese universities. Tamamuro has encouraged numerous religious institutions to make their Tokugawa-period documents more open and available to outside researchers, which will surely be a lasting legacy.

The advantage of a trans-sectarian approach to the study of Tokugawa religions lies not only in being able to better place particular traditions in a larger religious landscape, but in being able to analyze religious phenomena that are unrelated to particular sects. These include the worship of the healing powers of a Buddhist deity such as Jizō in nearly every Buddhist sect, or the cult of Inari, a deity that functions in both Shinto and Buddhist contexts. Tamamuro's research on pilgrimage sites such as Konpira, Ōyama, Mt. Haguro, Mt. Kōya, or Ise is another locus for trans-sectarian religious faith.

Ultimately, trans-sectarian research helps explain religious activity that would otherwise be overlooked or misunderstood. Tamamuro's research on the activities of the itinerant priests known as *Kōya hijiri* 高野聖, who were affiliated with the Shingon Buddhist headquarters on Mt. Kōya, is a particularly useful example of why trans-sectarian studies are essential to the study of Tokugawa religions. During the Tokugawa period, these priests would make rounds of Buddhist temples and village households as far away as Sagami Province carrying talismans (*juda* 札) as well as medicine from Mt. Kōya. These talismans, which

were kept by each temple and household for a year before the priests returned again to replace them, had the mantra “*Namu Daishi Henshō Kujō*” written on them, praising Kōbō Daishi, the founder of Japanese Shingon Buddhism and Mt. Kōya. One might assume that such talismans would only be distributed to Shingon temples and households affiliated with that sect, but Tamamuro has conclusively shown that hundreds of Sōtō, Rinzai, Jōdo, and Tendai temples and thousands of their lay members also requested and received these talismans and participated in the cult of Kōbō Daishi. Even the more sectarian-conscious Jōdo Shin and Nichiren temples had the talismans delivered by the *Kōya hijiri*, but with the mantras important in their respective traditions—“*Namu Amida Butsu*” and “*Namu Myōhō Renge Kyō*”—written on the talisman instead. Not only would the *Kōya hijiri* distribute talismans in the far-away regions, they took the faithful, again regardless of sect, as pilgrims to Mt. Kōya. Tamamuro has shown, for instance, that dozens of Sagami Province Sōtō Zen Buddhist priests and their temple members made pilgrimages to Mt. Kōya, but, because of the lack of interest, never to Eihei-ji, the headquarters of their own sect. This kind of trans-sectarian phenomenon, defying narrow sectarian definitions of what their religion ought to be, was a major facet of Tokugawa religions.

Reading Primary Manuscripts

One of the biggest obstacles to gaining a better understanding of Tokugawa religions is the relatively few Japanese and Western scholars who are trained to read pre-modern handwritten manuscripts (*komonjo* 古文書), which constitute over ninety percent of extant religious documents from the Tokugawa period. These handwritten temple, shrine, and legal documents are difficult to read not only because of grammatical differences with both classical and modern Japanese, but because the Chinese characters tend to merge into each other in a form of calligraphic writing. According to Tamamuro, less than ten percent of extant documents have been transcribed into the *katsuji* 活字 (printed text) form, which is what most scholars of Japanese religions rely on. The implication here is that scholars unable to read handwritten manuscripts have to study Tokugawa religions based on a small body of manuscripts and for this, they must depend on the printed text version that is compiled and edited by other researchers.

For Tamamuro, then, the ability to read such manuscripts is an essential skill for scholars of the Tokugawa period. Unlike the study of medieval Japanese religions, where a much smaller pool of extant documents (Tamamuro estimates that for every medieval document,

there are twenty Tokugawa period documents) has been largely translated into printed text, the study of Tokugawa religions is in its infancy in regard to the availability of primary documents that are accessible to scholars. Tamamuro has encouraged the study of handwritten manuscripts since the 1980s when he incorporated Tokugawa-period religious documents into a multi-volume document primer for students entitled *Nihon komonjogaku kōza* (Lessons in pre-modern Japanese manuscript reading, 1980). His seminars at Meiji University revolve around reading such manuscripts, and he has also taught document reading courses as a visiting professor at Paris, Princeton, and Harvard universities. It is not only in the classroom that he emphasizes the need to develop skills in deciphering such documents, but in his field research trips (*chōsa* 調査) to religious institutions as well. As mentioned above, Tamamuro has led numerous team expeditions to such sites as Konpira, Haguro, Noto Sōji-ji, Eihei-ji, and Samukawa, where his graduate students and others learn how to research and catalogue Tokugawa-period religious manuscripts. Recently, Japanese paleography in the West has received a major contribution in the form of Nathalie Kouamé's primer on the subject, *Initiation à la Paléographie Japonais: à travers les manuscrits du pèlerinage de Shikoku*. This text (KOUAMÉ 2000) teaches students how to decipher Tokugawa-period script as it appears in different genres of texts. Particularly useful for scholars of Tokugawa local religions, Kouamé uses manuscripts from the Shikoku pilgrimage as the basis for this primer, including manuscripts concerned with village, transportation, and legal matters.

Quantitative Data

A final aspect of Tamamuro's work has been his use of quantitative data to study Tokugawa religions. His propensity for quantification could have been inherited from his father, whose early works like *Meiji Ishin haibutsu kishaku* (The campaign to "abolish Buddhism, demolish Shakyamuni" during the Meiji Restoration, Tokyo: Hakuyōsha, 1939), featured statistical data on the impact of the government's anti-Buddhist campaign during the Meiji period. Or perhaps it was Tamamuro's early undergraduate career in the natural sciences that influenced him to use evidence in the form of quantitative data. In any case, it is impossible not to notice the predominance of "numbers" (reminiscent of the early French Annalist school) in his writing from the earliest days of his career.

One reason why Tamamuro has had a propensity to use quantitative data in his research on Tokugawa religions could be the lack of hard data to support general conclusions about the religious history

of the period by earlier scholarship. In addition to being wary of overgeneralizations, he has also been hesitant to accept uncritical sectarian histories at face value because, in his assessment, religious institutions often unintentionally inflate temple and membership numbers and overestimate their impact on society. For Tamamuro, a more representative picture of religious life in the period is gained from analyzing information such as the numbers of pilgrims who traveled to a sacred site or the number of healing amulets distributed by a temple. He calls this kind of quantification of religion *detāka* (データ化) or the compilation of quantitative data. While this type of research is not particularly appealing to most researchers, it is the hard and basic work that helps other researchers understand the basic benchmarks for such things as assessing regional differences in each sect's relative strength or the number of temple or shrine priests and parishioners who lived in a particular locality.

This type of primary research on Japanese religions, based on handwritten manuscripts held in various localities and transcending sectarian boundaries, helps us understand religion from the perspective of secular authorities and the majority of people. Perhaps Tamamuro Fumio's legacy lies in this kind of multi-dimensional work. It is not only his efforts in providing researchers access to documents such as at local history archives, but his methods that provide at least an initial orientation to Tokugawa religions.

The Articles

The contributors to this special issue, in addition to Tamamuro himself, have all involved themselves in one or more of the five orientations mentioned above to the study of Tokugawa religions. Helen HARDACRE's article, for example, introduces an invaluable type of source for local historians: provincial gazetteers (*chishi* 地誌) compiled in the first half of the nineteenth century. Through her survey of two gazetteers, the *Shinpen Musashi no kuni fudoki kō* 新編武蔵国風土記稿 and the *Shinpen Sagami no kuni fudoki kō* 新編相模国風土記稿, Hardacre introduces the kind of data on late Edo-period religion that scholars can expect to derive from these sources, both of qualitative and quantitative nature. The two gazetteers convey detailed information on the economic and cultural assets of shrines and temples and how these institutions functioned in their local context. They also allow scholars to reconstruct sectarian networks of Buddhist temples and affiliations through sacerdotal licensing for shrine priests while depicting at the same time the close institutional ties between shrines and temples. As Hardacre suggests, local gazetteers used in conjunction with additional

localized source material provide scholars of local religious history an important tool to situate their site in its regional context and to grasp the concrete implications of regional and sectarian differences that were the hallmark of premodern Japanese religion.

The focus on how religion appears at the local level is also central to TAMAMURO Fumio's article on the *danka* 檀家 or temple parishioner system, which was originally established as a component of the bakufu's policy of suppressing Christianity, but by 1700 had become a government-instituted and temple-run system to monitor and control the populace as a whole. Tamamuro investigates how through the issuance of certificates of temple registration, Buddhist temples participated in this system and benefited from having a stable parish membership and financial base. Indeed, the essay points to the essential role of this policy to make all Japanese at least nominally Buddhists, through parish membership and the obligations, such as funerary and memorial rites, it involved. Tamamuro also examines how this system, especially in the payment structure for posthumous Buddhist names or *kaimyō* 戒名, served as the financial backbone of Buddhism during the Tokugawa period. Although the *danka* system was imposed from the center, the manner in which it became implemented and the different ways in which it was challenged from locality to locality has been largely neglected. Using newly discovered local temple documents, this groundbreaking essay provides a highly textured reading of the implementation of this system within the context of village life, including cases when parishioners tried to break their customary ties to their family temple because of the sexual misconduct of a parish priest, or out of faith in a charismatic priest of a different sect.

In contrast to much of the earlier scholarship on Buddhism in the Tokugawa period, Alexander VESEY's essay reminds us not to accept the common impression that Buddhist temples in the Tokugawa period provided nothing but funerals and memorial services for their local village communities. His article on *nyūji* 入寺 (entering the temple) discusses how Buddhist temples provided refuge to their parishioners when the latter were accused of misconduct in legal cases. Although little is known about the villagers' actual stay at the temple, Vesey sheds light on how the practice was seen as an act of submission, even as punishment, but equally gave the accused an opportunity to escape harsh treatment in official courts where cases might swiftly turn from a civil to a criminal case. In other words, it presented an extra-legal means of conflict resolution for villagers. Even though temples were no longer as legally independent as in the medieval period, the extra-systemic status of temples (especially those with temple lands) and the Buddhist clergy in Tokugawa society provided the structural basis for

the practice of sanctuary. Like Tamamuro, Vesey's careful examination of hitherto unpublished handwritten manuscripts reveals how such sanctuary and mediation practices by Buddhist temples in local contexts, such as Ōno Village in Musashi Province, subverted any implementation of a totalistic Tokugawa legal order. The type of social history of Buddhist clergy presented by Vesey here demonstrates the potential for trans-sectarian studies of Japanese Buddhist institutions and its place in the life of ordinary people.

Local religion in the Tokugawa period, of course, also included many religious professionals who were not necessarily ordained clergy. Barbara AMBROS introduces a category of semi-lay religious specialists called *oshi* 御師, who played a central role in making such sites as the Ise Shrines, Mt. Fuji, Mt. Haruna, Enoshima, Mt. Mitake and many other sacred places grow into large pilgrimage destinations during the Tokugawa period. These proselytizers accommodated pilgrims at their inns, acted as guides, distributed amulets, and collected donations for their respective sacred sites. Because of their non-ordained status, they have been largely ignored in Western scholarship, which has treated them—if at all—as a subcategory of mountain ascetics, shrine priests, or low-ranking Buddhist monks. Ambros focuses on the role of these *oshi* in the spread of a regional pilgrimage cult in the Tokugawa period at Mt. Ōyama 大山 in Sagami Province, a popular destination for residents of the city of Edo and the surrounding Kantō plain area. The essay details the genesis and development of a complex *oshi* system which supported the growth of Ōyama's parishes and pilgrimage confraternities. Using a trove of primary documents collected by the Isehara City's local history archive, Ambros accounts for how the sacred mountain's religious institutions employed these *oshi* as intermediaries to the parishioners and pilgrims and how they gradually developed distinct and independent roles and statuses within the Tokugawa religious landscape.

In deflecting exclusive focus on high-ranking monks and priests, the role of religious practitioners in healing is highly instructive. Hartmut O. ROTERMUND's article introduces the author's groundbreaking research on smallpox deities—previously only available in French and Japanese—to the Anglophone readership. In his essay on changing perceptions of smallpox in Tokugawa Japan, Rotermund effectively explains the taboos and magical practices that made it difficult for the Japanese to accept modern inoculation. Even though there were the likes of Hashimoto Hakuju, who viewed smallpox as a contagious disease and suggested avoidance and isolation as preventive measures, smallpox was commonly viewed as a disease caused by demons. Because diseases, especially those difficult to cure, were so often

explained in religious terms in pre-modern Japan, the role of religious treatments, which ranged from pilgrimage, spells, potions, and elaborate rituals involving ordinary daily objects, must be explored. Though Rotermund's study does not focus on any one particular local context, his survey of medical texts and popular verse covers a wide range of folk practices outside the confines of established religious institutions and reveals how healing was a trans-sectarian concern for ordinary people.

Finally, MIYAZAKI Fumiko and Duncan WILLIAMS's essay on the cult of Jizō at Osorezan reminds us that popular deities take specific topographic forms and that local geographic and socio-economic conditions shape the ways in which they are worshiped. Osorezan is often portrayed today as a remote place in the Shimokita Peninsula, a borderland between this world and the other world where female mediums called *itako* communicate with the dead. This essay sketches the historical development of Osorezan with evidence from local archives, travel records, temple collections, and inscriptions from stone monuments, establishing that the cult of Jizō (and the death-associated rituals associated with the bodhisattva) was a later Tokugawa-period development and that the female mediums who have made the site so famous only began their communications with the dead at the mountain in the twentieth century. Indeed, what the historical evidence suggests is that Osorezan was a complex site, which developed late for a major pilgrimage destination, wherein the other-worldly concern with the dead (through the worship of Jizō) was only one aspect of the Osorezan cult. In addition to its institutional history and its cult of Jizō, the article identifies three factors that contributed to its development into a nationally-known site: 1) the healing Jizō (especially in the context of hot spring cures), 2) the ability of the Osorezan Jizō to save people from hell (especially children and women at its Sai no Kawara and the Chi no Ike Jigoku sites), and 3) the consciousness among merchants and fishermen about the site's ability to protect those at sea (especially from the dangers of the rough seas of the western sea coast).

What these articles suggest is that only by looking at religion in its local and specific context can we begin to understand just how various religious traditions functioned in the lives of ordinary clergy and ordinary people. This is multidisciplinary research that requires painstaking attention to primary and locally-held manuscripts which has been propelled by some of the most senior scholars of Japanese religions in Japan, the United States, and Europe: Tamamuro Fumio, Miyazaki Fumiko, Helen Hardacre, and Hartmut Rotermund. In addition, the work of a number of younger scholars (Barbara Ambros, Alex Vesey,

and Duncan Williams) based on recently-completed or near-completion doctoral dissertations are included as examples of these new orientations in the study of Tokugawa religions.



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