

Localized Religious Specialists in Early Modern Japan

The Development of the Ōyama *Oshi* System

Barbara AMBROS

This paper discusses the emergence of oshi, lay religious specialists who contributed to the spread of regional pilgrimage cults in the Tokugawa period, by focusing on the example of Ōyama, Sagami Province. Over the course of the seventeenth century, Ōyama's oshi developed gradually as successors of shugenja and shrine priests who had lost much of their authority to the Shingon temples on the mountain in the first decade of the seventeenth century. In the second half of the seventeenth century the tradition of mountain asceticism largely disappeared from Ōyama. The former mountain ascetics of Ōyama needed new means of income, forcing them to run inns and develop parishes throughout the Kantō region. These parishes, from which most of Ōyama's pilgrims came, became the single most important source of income for Ōyama. The system spread from areas near Ōyama across the entire Kantō region. It was these oshi who sustained the bonds between parishioners and the mountain by making annual visits to their parishes and providing accommodations for pilgrims. Despite their conflict-laden genesis, the oshi were not in constant opposition to Ōyama's Shingon temples. They developed customary networks with temples to handle pilgrims and received licenses from the head Shingon temple of the mountain, Hachidai-bō, which helped them to distinguish themselves from their competitors in neighboring villages. Another reason why the oshi did not voice a united opposition to the temples was that they were a fairly diverse group with different lineages and levels of wealth. Some oshi were in the employ of Hachidai-bō and therefore shared the Shingon temples' interests. It was only in the late Edo period that several wealthy oshi began to seek affiliation with external sources of authority such as the Shirakawa house and to engage in anti-Buddhist rhetoric culled from the nativist Hirata School. This led to friction between the Shingon temples and the oshi and provided the basis for the separation of Shinto and Buddhism in the early Meiji period.

Keywords: *oshi* — *shugenja* — Ōyama—pilgrimage — Buddhist-Shinto relations

IN 1809, THE HEAD OF the Ōba family, who held the position of *daikan* 代官 (intendant) in Kamimachi, Musashi Province (modern Setagaya-ku, Tokyo), compiled a list of the yearly ceremonies celebrated by his family. He also made a list of regular donations given to representatives from sacred mountains and famous shrines that were located mostly in the Kantō region but also as far away as Mt. Kōya and the Ise Shrines. The family spent nearly 2000 *mon* per year on biannual donations to nearby Ōyama 大山, Mt. Haruna, Enoshima, and Mt. Mitake, and sent annual donations to the more distant Kashima Shrine, Taga Shrine, Tsushima Shrine, Mt. Atago, Mt. Fuji, Mt. Kōya, Mt. Akiba, and the Ise Shrines (KNG, pp. 109–13).

Who were those representatives collecting annual or biannual donations? In early modern Japan, many famous pilgrimage sites were known for their semi-lay proselytizers, who provided accommodations for pilgrims at their inns, acted as guides, distributed amulets, and collected donations. Even though it was these proselytizers who popularized the cults of sacred sites in early modern society, 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.¹ Despite their undeniable connection with other types of religious professionals, these lay proselytizers had a separate identity. At many sites, including the Ise Shrines, Mt. Fuji, Mt. Haruna, Enoshima, Mt. Mitake, and Ōyama they were called *oshi* 御師. *Oshi* literally means “venerable teacher” and originally appears to be short for *kitōshi* 祈禱師 (ritual prayer master). In the mid-Heian period, the term *oshi* was first used at Buddhist temples and also at shrines near the capital such as the Iwashimizu Hachiman Shrine (KD; SHINJŌ 1988, p. 152). By the Tokugawa period, *oshi* became an important integral part of the Japanese religious landscape, in which they contributed to the growth of pilgrimage cults. Ōyama provides one example of a regional pilgrimage site at which a complex *oshi* system developed out of mountain ascetics and shrine priests during the Tokugawa period. The *oshi* were the key factor behind Ōyama’s early modern transformation into a highly popular pilgrimage destination and again in Ōyama’s transformation from a Buddhist into a Shinto site during the early Meiji period.

¹ For an example of *oshi* being treated as a category of *yamabushi* see EARTHART 1970, pp. 23, 42, 60–65, 77–79, 168. The only lay proselytizers that have been discussed at some length in Western scholarship are *etoki* performers and Kumano *bikuni* (see RUCH 1977; ARAI 1990; FORMANEK 1995; KAMINISIII 1996 pp. 33–51, 164–84).

The Development of Oshi Systems at Ise and Kumano

In his research on the socio-economic development of pilgrimage in Japan, Shinjō Tsunetzō has outlined the emergence of the *oshi* systems in premodern Japan, focusing on Kumano and Ise. Because these two were the earliest and the most extensive systems, it is helpful to briefly summarize his findings. The oldest *oshi* system developed at Kumano.² From the early twelfth century, the Kumano *oshi* provided lodging and performed ritual prayers for pilgrims who were brought to their doors by mountain ascetics and Buddhist priests acting as pilgrimage guides (*sendatsu* 先達). It was partially due to the *oshi-sendatsu* system that the pilgrimage to Kumano began to expand beyond the aristocracy even when pilgrimages to other shrines and temples were still largely limited to the upper levels of society (SHINJŌ 1960, pp. 37–38). In the Kamakura period, the *oshi*'s patrons began to include not just aristocrats but also warriors. First the bond between an *oshi* and a pilgrim was only temporary and limited to the duration of the pilgrimage, but eventually customary ties appeared so that pilgrims from a specific warrior conglomerate would become regular patrons (檀越 *dan'otsu* or 檀那 *danna*) of a specific *oshi*. These patrons came from diverse provinces including Tōtōmi, Musashi, Dewa, and Kai Provinces. By the late fourteenth century, the *oshi*'s patrons even included extended families from the wealthy peasantry from the provinces around the capital, where the peasantry's standard of living was improving markedly. As the number of patrons from among the peasantry increased in the mid-fifteenth century, the *oshi* began to shift their attention away from the extended-family unit to the village unit. Around 1400, the *oshi* served patrons even from the most distant regions of Japan, including northeastern Honshu and the southern tip of Kyushu (SHINJŌ 1988, pp. 155–62).

In the Kamakura and Muromachi periods, *oshi* systems also developed at the Ise Shrines, the Matsuo Shrine, the Mishima Shrine, Mt. Fuji, and at Hakusan. At Ise, the *oshi* developed from the large number of low-ranking shrine priests who needed to supplement their income by providing accommodation for pilgrims. The system began at the Outer Ise Shrine in the early Kamakura period based on aristocratic and warrior patrons but did not start to flourish until the late Kamakura period when patronage expanded to whole warrior conglomerates. The Ise Shrines were able to forge ties with warriors in

² For an in-depth study of the early Kumano cult see MOERMAN 1999. Moerman's study focuses on the landscape and the pilgrims and deals with the Kumano *oshi*, *sendatsu*, and *bikuni* only in passing. This may be in part because his thesis covers the late Heian and Kamakura periods when the *oshi* system was still in its infancy at Kumano.

eastern Japan through the shrines' extensive land holdings there. It was primarily the activities of the *oshi* that spread the Ise cult in these areas. In contrast to the Kumano *oshi*, the Ise *oshi* tended to deal with their patrons directly without a *sendatsu* acting as a middleman. Once the patrons extended to peasant villages by the early sixteenth century, the *oshi* relied on village elders as middlemen in order to maintain their ties. These patrons collectively made up "parishes," which the Ise *oshi* considered their property that could be passed down from generation to generation or even sold. The same practice has also been documented at Kumano, sporadically in the Kamakura period and more frequently in the Muromachi period. Throughout the sixteenth century, the Ise *oshi* also kept careful records of their parish rounds, detailing their journeys and listing patron's names. These records show, Shinjō Tsunezō argues, that the interactions of the Ise *oshi* with their parishes became increasingly mercantile, with the *oshi* acting more as peddlers than religious professionals. On their rounds of patron households, the Ise *oshi* did not only administer purification rituals but also collected funds and distributed small trinkets, tea, and local souvenirs. The records also show regional differences in the composition of parishes: some consisted primarily of warriors and wealthy peasants whereas others comprised large numbers of ordinary peasants (SHINJŌ 1988, pp. 153-89).

In the early modern period, the *oshi* at Kumano declined in number because the Kumano *sendatsu* virtually disappeared by the mid-eighteenth century. However, the Ise *oshi* prospered since they had more direct, personal contact with their patrons. By the 1590s, there were 145 *oshi* at the Outer Ise Shrine. In order to quell the fierce competition among the *oshi*, the bakufu's Tōtomi Province office near the Outer Shrines issued a set of regulations to formalize the interactions of the Ise *oshi* into a unified system, recognizing parishes as hereditary possessions of the *oshi* and the extended household (*ie* 家) as the basic unit of a parish. On the whole, the *oshi* system expanded until the mid-eighteenth century but then declined in the late Edo period. In 1738, the number of *oshi* at the Outer Ise Shrine peaked at 592 but fell to 370 in 1832. Similarly, the number of *oshi* at the Inner Ise Shrine, peaked at 271 in 1777 but fell to 181 by 1866 (SHINJŌ 1988, pp. 160-82, 758-59).

In addition to Ise, many famous temples and shrines that became popular pilgrimage destinations in the early modern period (1600-1867) also adopted the *oshi* system. These sites included Dewa Sanzan, Enoshima, and Ōyama in Sagami Province, Mt. Mitake in Musashi Province, Mt. Fuji in Suruga and Kai Provinces, Mt. Minobu in Kai Province, Zenkō-ji in Shinano Province, the Tsushima Shrine in Owari

Province, Tateyama in Etchū Province, Hakusan in Kaga Province, the Taga Shrine in Ōmi Province, Mt. Atago in Yamashiro Province, Mt. Koya in Kii Province, and Mt. Hiko in Bizen Province (SHINJŌ 1988, pp. 187, 758–75, 853–996).

In order to illustrate how an *oshi* system developed at an early modern sacred site, this essay focuses on the example of Ōyama in central Sagami Province (modern Kanagawa Prefecture). Like Kumano and Ise, Ōyama owed its popularity to its *oshi*. Even though the Shingon clergy, who controlled Ōyama, developed a Kogi Shingon network in the Kantō region, they alone could not sufficiently spread the cult of Ōyama. It was up to Ōyama's *oshi*, who were the descendants of Ōyama's medieval mountain ascetics and shrine priests in a process of increasing professionalization, to form a link between the mountain on the one hand and Edo and villages throughout the Kantō region on the other. From the late seventeenth century *oshi* expanded Ōyama's most important asset—customary parishioners. Similar to the way Ise *oshi* had done since at least the sixteenth century, the Ōyama *oshi* made rounds to their parishioners to collect first fruits (*hatsuho* 初穂)—originally, the first harvested crops but later an equivalent amount in cash. The Ōyama *oshi*, like their Ise counterpart, also distribute gifts and amulets and provided housing for pilgrims when they came to Ōyama. The *oshi* were usually not celibate but passed their profession and parishes on to their heirs just as a merchant, artisan or performer would pass on the family trade. While their activities made them similar to itinerant peddlers, it is misleading to view the Tokugawa period as an era in which the *oshi* degenerated—as Shinjō Tsunetzō implicitly argues.

In fact, it was in the Edo period that the *oshi* system spread to many regional sacred sites such as Ōyama. As in the case of Ise, it was a time when the *oshi* system became increasingly formalized and professionalized, allowing *oshi* who had initially only had menial duties to take on greater ritual functions as well. Like Ise, the number of Ōyama *oshi* also reflects a pattern of growth until the mid-eighteenth century and then decline or leveling off until the mid-nineteenth century but these fluctuations are more a reflection of the increasing professionalization of the position of the *oshi* rather than of a decline of the profession. At Ōyama the *oshi* entered into a symbiotic relationship with the Shingon clergy who guaranteed their status when faced with competitors. To limit the pool of contenders eligible to become *oshi* and thus curb the competition among them, the Shingon clergy provided the *oshi* with licenses (*kabu* 株) that distinguished those living in Ōyama's *monzenmachi* from residents of neighboring villages keen on sharing the profits of a growing pilgrimage industry. In return, the *oshi* served

as liaisons between the Shingon Buddhist clergy on the mountain and pilgrims. In addition, the Shingon clergy employed a number of villagers for the administration of Ōyama and for the performance of certain ritual functions, which contributed to status distinctions between *oshi*. By the late eighteenth century, new developments undermined the previously unchallenged authority of the Shingon priesthood over the *oshi*. Many *oshi* challenged the authority of the Shingon clergy by obtaining shrine priest licenses from the Shirakawa 白川, a sacerdotal family affiliated with the imperial court, and by joining the Hirata School of national learning. Together with the impact of famines in the 1780s, 1830s, and 1840s, and repeated natural disasters such as an earthquake in 1855, there was a social fermentation that ultimately escalated in the early Meiji period during the separation of Shinto and Buddhism. Through this process the *oshi* emerged as an important factor in the early modern development of the Ōyama cult. Over the period, the fluid category of the *oshi* become more narrow and increasingly professionalized. We will first trace the development of Ōyama's *oshi* system from its roots in the seventeenth century to its full formation in the eighteenth century, and finally its fragmentation in the nineteenth century under the Shintoizing influence of the Shirakawa family and the Hirata School of national learning.

From Mountain Ascetics to Oshi: 1600–1670

In the sixteenth century, Ōyama was a site inhabited jointly by Shugendō mountain ascetics, shrine priests, and Buddhist monks. In the first decade of the seventeenth century, with the establishment of the Tokugawa as the military rulers of Japan, all but the Shingon Buddhist monks were ordered off the mountain and resettled in two villages at its foot. The Shingon monks, who had a seminary on the mountain and were led by the abbot of the head temple Hachidai-bō, were in charge of the central cultic centers, a Buddhist hall dedicated to Fudō on the mountain side, and several shrines on the summit. One of the two *yamabushi* settlements was in a farming village called Minoge 蓑毛 on the southwestern side of the mountain facing toward Odawara and Mt. Fuji. The other, called Sakamoto 坂本, was on the southeastern side facing Edo and the Kantō plain. With the city of Edo growing rapidly, Sakamoto prospered and had the pilgrimage business as its mainstay. Sakamoto was also different from Minoge in that it was located within the boundaries of Ōyama's temple land and thus under the jurisdiction of the Shingon clergy on the mountain.

Although few documents survive that shed light on the activities of Ōyama's mountain ascetics and shrine priests living in these two vil-

lages in this early period, the ascetics and priests do not seem to have acted in the capacity of *oshi* but were involved in the participation in rituals on Ōyama. This role made them potential rivals of the Shingon clergy claiming ritual authority over the site. From the law codes issued by Ōyama's head temple, Mt. Kōya, in 1609, we know that mountain ascetics participated in the yearly festival held in the second month; but because the elaborate rituals interfered with the Shingon clergy's control, their rituals and ritual offerings were sharply curtailed by regulations and placed under the supervision of the clergy. Likewise, mountain ascetics and shrine priests were only permitted to collect the donations at one chapel each on the mountain (STK, pp. 470–71). The *yamabushi* were therefore not the only ones who must have found these regulations overly restrictive. In 1618, Ōyama's shrine priests became involved in a dispute with Hachidai-bō, the temple of the Ōyama abbot, but unfortunately we do not know the exact nature of the dispute (ISEHARASHISHI HENSHŪ IINKAI 1999, p. 440).

The mountain ascetics also acted as *sendatsu* for pilgrims to Ise and Kumano. Between 1613 and 1616, Ōyama's *shugenja* disputed the right of Ōyama's Shingon clergy to guide pilgrims to Ise and Kumano as *sendatsu*, acting as a liaison between pilgrims and the Kumano or Ise *oshi*. According to Ōyama's law codes issued by the bakufu in 1609, the mountain ascetics at Ōyama had been forced to turn their patrons over to the Shingon clergy. Ōyama's mountain ascetics, who were affiliated with the Tendai Honzan branch of Shugendō, had acted as *sendatsu* for these patrons when they went on to western Japan to enter the mountains at Ōmine and also took them to Ise and Kumano, which were both activities for which the Honzan branch claimed exclusive privileges by bakufu decree. When Ōyama's Shingon clergy assumed those roles upon taking over the patrons from the mountain ascetics, twenty-four Tendai-affiliated Honzan-branch *shugenja* in the area, including Enzō-bō from Hasuge-san, appealed to the bakufu with the support of Hōrō-bō, their immediate head temple in Odawara (ISEHARASHISHI HENSHŪ IINKAI 1999, pp. 440–41, 446–48, SIBS, pp. 225–26).³

Since the Muromachi period, Ōyama had been the training ground of regional *shugenja*. Mountain ascetics from Ōyama went to nearby Hasuge-san to listen to dharma lectures and to train in caves or hermitages in its valleys. Likewise, until 1560, mountain ascetics from

³ Matsuoka Takashi takes Enzō-bō to be a Shugendō temple at Ōyama, but a temple by that name appears in no other document related to Ōyama. It is more likely that Enzō-bō refers to a temple by that name at nearby Hasuge-san. From the late Muromachi period to 1622, Hasuge-san was affiliated with Hōrō-bō in Odawara but then became directly affiliated with Shōgo-in in Kyoto (MIYAKE and ITOGA 1979, p. 487, SKFK pp. 225–27).

Hasuge-san practiced *mine-iri* (retreat into the mountains) twice a year in the spring and the fall, along a route leading from Hasuge-san via the Shugendō site of Iiyama, across mountains and valleys to Ōyama's summit ending the retreat at the Fudō Hall. After 1560, the retreat was held only in the spring despite failed attempts to revive the fall practice in 1617 and 1637. Suzuki Masashi has argued that the route, which led the ascetics from its starting point in the northeast to its endpoint in the southwest, was a symbolic journey to a western paradise. The retreat initially took 49 days—the length of the first period of mourning after death—but was shortened to 35 days in 1557. The last stretch of the route was shared with the route that led mountain ascetics from Hinata-san, Ōyama's direct neighbor, to Ōyama on their *mine-iri* retreat (SKFK pp. 226–27; SUZUKI 1991, pp. 177–81; MIYAKE and ITOGA 1979, pp. 495–502).

In part due to the emergence of an *oshi* system in the 1660s, Ōyama began to grow into a popular pilgrimage destination in its own right. It is in this decade that the tradition of mountain asceticism largely disappeared from Ōyama and its practitioners became *oshi*. In 1663, the magistrate of temples and shrines settled a dispute over land titles between Hachidai-bō and a group in Sakamoto consisting of five *shugenja* and seven *oshi*, all of whom ran small inns, and three Rinzai temples. The dispute ended with the banishment of the ringleaders from Ōyama's temple land. All other *shugenja*, except for three who were not involved in the dispute, were prohibited from maintaining their status as *shugenja*. Many, therefore, opted to become so-called lay *oshi* whereas some of the banished parties resettled in nearby villages such as Koyasu 子易 and Kamikasuya 上粕屋 (ISEHARASHISHI HENSHŪ IINKAI 1999, pp. 442–46, 455; ISZO, pp. 67–71). Therefore, 1663 marked the end of the tradition of mountain ascetics at Ōyama. It is also clear that even though there are no documents referring to Ōyama *oshi* prior to 1663, some *oshi* must already have been present at Ōyama because documents regarding the dispute mentioned the title *oshi* in reference to some of the involved parties. These *oshi* and the newly transformed former mountain ascetics may have modeled themselves after the *oshi* in Ise and Kumano since the *oshi* systems in both places must have been familiar to them through their activities as *sendatsu*.

What may have been the difference between these early “lay” *oshi* and *yamabushi*? Minoge, the second, smaller settlement on the southwestern foot of Ōyama, was not affected by the dispute in 1663 because the village was not on Ōyama's temple land. Therefore, the *shugenja* who had settled there remained mountain ascetics and were not forced to become *oshi*. As a result, the villagers in Minoge who

participated in the administration of the Oyama cult remained divided into *shugenja*, shrine priests, and “lay” *oshi* (SKFK, pp. 133; ISZO, pp. 92).⁴ A document from 1703 outlined the different duties for *shugenja* and so-called lay *oshi* during festivals at Ōyama:

Item: During the festival of Fudō, *shugenja* are to fulfill their customary duty before the deities.

Item: During the festival, lay *oshi* are to keep the path of the western entrance to the courtyard of the main hall clean.

Shugen

Enkyōin

Misshōin

Konzōin

Chōfukuin

Kōhōin

Lay Oshi

Heibe

Shōyuemon

Ribe

Kyūbei

Shōshō

Rokurōbei

Genpachi

Tahei

Shōbei

Rōyuemon

Saburōzaemon

Tōhei

Joyuemon

Mokuzaemon

⁴ The dispute seems not to have affected Minoge because Minoge was not part of Oyama’s temple land. Even in the late Edo period, Minoge had a much higher constituency of *shugenja* than Sakamoto, even though its *oshi* population was only about one tenth of Sakamoto’s. Of the eight Tendai-affiliated Honzan Shugendō households, five were located in Minoge, comprising about one third of those operating as Oyama *oshi* in Minoge. Furthermore, three *kannagi* (shrine-priest) households were located in Minoge.

Additionally, Minoge was never involved in any disputes with Sakamoto. The inns in Minoge posed no serious competition to those in Sakamoto because they were on an alternate, secondary pilgrimage route and few *oshi* lived in Minoge. Minoge had a higher yield of *koku* per household (2.86 *koku*) than Sakamoto (0.32 *koku*) in the late Edo period, making it a mixed farming and pilgrimage-business village. Minoge was involved in four farming-related disputes with its neighboring villages Kominoge, Higashitawara, Nishitawara, and Terayama over joint pastures in the surrounding mountains between 1633 and 1870, but there are no extant record of any quarrels with Sakamoto or of disputes regarding the right to deal with pilgrims (SKFK, p. 135; KADOKAWA NIHON CHIMEI DAJITEN IINKAI 1984, pp. 391, 845–46).

Riyuemon

Each is to do his duty without fail as stated above.

Genroku 16 (1703)/2/25

The western village at the foot of the mountain, Minoge

Village Headman Hondai-bō

Bunzaemon

To Ōyama-dera

His Excellency, the Abbot

(ISZO, p. 84)

Shugenja, who had religious names based on their hermitages (so-and-so -*in* or -*bō*), had ritual and sacerdotal duties consistent with their role in the early seventeenth century whereas lay *oshi*, who did not have religious names, had menial duties. Households with shrine priestly functions were left out of this division of labor even though they were clearly present in the village. In this document, one of them appears in the position of village headman alongside a peasant. From other documents, we know that there were at least three or four shrine priestly (*kannagi*) households in Minoge bearing names similar to the *yamabushi*'s hermitage names—namely so-and-so -*bō*—who were charged with the performance of ritual dances (ISZO, pp. 92, 111).

What gave shrine priests and mountain ascetics, in addition to their family pedigree, the qualification to perform these ritual duties? In other words, what qualifications distinguished an Ōyama *oshi* from other religious specialists at Ōyama such as Buddhist monks, mountain ascetics, and shrine priests? What made other religious specialists such as mountain ascetics and Buddhist monks of other sects more threatening to Hachidai-bō's authority than *oshi* and perhaps also shrine priests? The difference was that *oshi* were completely locally based whereas Buddhist monks, mountain ascetics, and even some shrine priests were increasingly bound into translocal hierarchical institutional systems through which they obtained their priestly qualifications. Their ritual qualifications and institutional autonomy from Ōyama's Shingon clergy made the latter three potential competitors.

Buddhist clerics were bound into their sect whose institutional hierarchies developed into a unified system from the early seventeenth century. Clerics, who were ordained and ideally celibate, received their qualification from a Buddhist school and were integrated through their temple into the head-branch-temple system that developed between 1600 and 1675. As members of a Buddhist school they were subject to the regulations (*hatto* 法度) issued by the bakufu between 1601 and 1615 to regulate specific temples and Buddhist sects (TAMAMURO 1986, pp. 6-7, 14-15). At Ōyama, the Shingon clergy had secured control over the Buddhist precinct on the mountain to

the exclusion of all other Buddhist sects since 1609. Three Jōdo temples that remained in Sakamoto serving as ordinary village temples for the merchants, artisans, and tenants at Ōyama were not particularly threatening to the Shingon clergy (SNOA, document 9) since they played no role in the dissemination of the Ōyama cult. More immediately disturbing was the presence of fourteen Rinzaï Zen temples that appear to have been more similar to the *shugenja* hermitages in the village. Consequently, the Shingon clergy had three of them banned in 1663. Ten others seem to have gone out of business by the early 1700s. Only one remained with the resident monk acting as an *oshi* until the late Edo period.⁵

By the 1660s, the institutional and licensing systems governing *yamabushi* and shrine priests became formalized throughout Japan based on bakufu decrees. Shugendō, the tradition of mountain ascetics, was organized into a sectarian system similar to the Buddhist sects. These mountain ascetics were not fully ordained and not celibate like Buddhist monks, but they were affiliated with either Tōzan-ha (Shingon) or Honzan-ha (Tendai). These Shugendō branches were subject to regulations issued by the bakufu in 1609 and 1613 respectively (TAMAMURO 1996a, pp. 108–109; TKK, pp. 97–98).⁶ The *shugenja* that remained at Ōyama beyond the purge of 1663—including three in Sakamoto and five to seven in Minoge—were all Honzan-ha *shugenja* affiliated directly with Shōgo-in, the Honzan-ha head temple in Kyoto, rather than Hōrō-bō, a locally powerful mid-level Shugendō temple in Odawara, with which Ōyama's *yamabushi* had been affiliated earlier in the seventeenth century. This pattern of affiliation contrasted sharply with other Honzan-ha *shugenja* in the area, such as twelve Honzan-ha *shugenja* at neighboring Hinata-san, who were affiliated with Hōrō-bō in Odawara. Such outside affiliations could also be used for leverage against the Shingon clergy as in their above-mentioned dispute of 1613–1616. In another dispute, centered on Honzan-ha Shugendō privileges in 1697, the Shingon abbots of Ōyama and Hinata-san

⁵ The ten that had gone out of business were listed as closed in a head-branch temple register from the late eighteenth century, but they appear in no other documents from the late seventeenth century on, which suggests that they disappeared much earlier (ISEHARASHISHI HENSHŪ IINKAI 1999, p. 607). The temple registration developed over the course of the seventeenth century. In Sagami Province, each village sustained on average about two to three village temples. With three to four temples per village, the ratio was slightly higher for Ōsumi District, where Ōyama was located (KIMURA 1981, p. 634). With two Shingon temples and three Jōdo temples functioning as village temples, Sakamoto was saturated, leaving no room for ten additional Rinzaï temples.

⁶ In 1609, Shōgo-in in Kyoto became the headquarters of the Honzan branch affiliated with the Tendai School of Buddhism. In 1613, Sanbō-in, a hermitage at Daigo-ji and also in the capital, became the headquarters of the Tōzan branch affiliated with the Shingon School.

found themselves in opposition to Hōrō-bō (SIBS, pp. 205–27). Since the head temple of the Ōyama *shugenja* was a great distance away, it presented less of a threat to the Shingon clergy. Nevertheless, the Honzan-ha *shugenja* at Ōyama maintained contact with their Shugendō hierarchy by performing ascetic exercises in the Ōmine mountain range—by which they gained advancement in Shugendō ranks—until a lack of disciples and successors forced them to abandon the practice by the late eighteenth century (OCSK, pp. 72–75; SKFK, pp. 106, 127, 134; ISZO p. 87).

Another type of religious specialists on the mountain, the shrine priests, were an amorphous group that is difficult to define. Shrine priests tended to obtain ranks from a sacerdotal family, the Yoshida 吉田, in the capital of Kyoto from the mid-seventeenth century and later also from the Shirakawa family.⁷ Many shrine priests, however, including those at Ōyama, chose to remain independent from outside institutions. Therefore, Hachidai-bō, which held the same kind of authority over shrine priests as over *oshi*, did not single them out as a group and seek to banish them despite the dispute in 1618. This attitude changed in the early nineteenth century, when large numbers of *oshi* claiming to be shrine priests sought affiliation with the Shirakawa and clashed with Hachidai-bō's interests, as we shall see below.

Despite the Shingon clergy's efforts to sever exterior institutional ties of the religious specialists managing Ōyama as a sacred site, there were Buddhist monks of non-Shingon sects, as well as *yamabushi*, shrine priests, and even a shrine carpenter who served as *oshi* (ISZO, pp. 86–92; SKFK, pp. 106–107, 120). An ordinary Ōyama *oshi*, however, did not have any outside affiliation unless he had special qualifications; he obtained his position as a religious specialist first through local custom and later through the licensing system controlled by the local Shingon clergy. While the presence of hybrid religious professionals who were *oshi* and Buddhist monks or *yamabushi* or shrine priests at the same time makes our task of defining the category of Ōyama *oshi* more difficult, it is clear that their presence is a result of the historical development of the *oshi* system at Ōyama during the seventeenth century. Yet, in general, the defining characteristic of Ōyama *oshi* was their local rather than trans-local source of religious authority.

⁷ In 1665 the bakufu issued a five-article law code entitled “Shosha no negi kannushi hatto” (Law Code for Shrine Priests and Shrine Head Priests) that defined shrine priests as those serving as hereditary ritualists at shrines. Most importantly, it required unranked shrine priests to wear white robes and all others to obtain ranks through the Yoshida house. Before that year, the bakufu had issued individual law codes for a few large shrines, namely the Ise Shrines (1603, 1633, 1635, 1644), the Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine (1628), Nikkō Tōshōgū (1634, 1655), the Sannō Shrine in Edo (1659) (TKK, pp. 1–10, 52–59).

Parishes as the Basis for Oshi Status: 1670–1700

With the conversion of most *yamabushi* into *oshi*, we should expect that former *shugenja* families that had performed ritual functions were loath to see their position turned into that of mere innkeepers charged with menial duties. Hence, the rights and duties of the *oshi* at Ōyama continued to evolve and become increasingly professionalized until the 1750s. The development is documented by a series of five codes that were issued by Ōyama's Shingon clergy in 1674, 1702, 1713, 1721, and 1753. These codes were issued in order to quell the competition among *oshi* and non-*oshi* villagers, which led to fierce disputes in 1702 and 1752 between the residents of Sakamoto and neighboring Koyasu on the route from Edo. The major sources of contention among the residents at the foot of Ōyama involved issues concerned with the handling of pilgrims and parishioners such as who was allowed to claim the title "*oshi*," what constituted a violation of the bond between the *oshi* and his parish, who could run inns and cater to pilgrims providing lodging and meals and acting as guides, who could sell amulets and collect *hatsuho*, and who could operate waterfalls for purification (ISZO, pp. 67–80).

Initially, it was the existence of a parish that gave the holder the status of an *oshi*. The mountain code from 1674 used the term *oshi* in a very vague sense. It was issued in order to quell disputes that had arisen after residents accused one another of stealing their customers. The code was meant to settle the issue of who could handle pilgrims traveling alone or in groups (*kō* 講). Not only were innkeepers to avoid luring their neighbor's customers into their own inn and to refrain from engaging in price wars, they were also obligated, as were noodle shop owners, to determine whether potential customers had customary ties to a specific *oshi* before catering to them. If a pilgrim had ties with an *oshi*, only that *oshi* could house or provide meals for him. If a group of pilgrims consisted of patrons of different *oshi* each of these *oshi* could house the entire group as long as they could lay claim to at least one parishioner among the group. If the group contained no fixed parishioners, anyone could house them. Violators were punished with stiff fines (ISZO, pp. 24–25).⁸ This suggests that the claim to be an *oshi* hinged primarily on the question of who could claim to have a customary parish and involved no restriction against the use of the title *oshi*.

⁸ Violators were charged one *ryō* per pilgrim on a *gonin gumi* basis to ensure that innkeepers kept an eye on their neighbors to avoid being punished for another's offense. Restrictions on the sale of meals and goods on an *oshi*-parish basis were lifted only during the yearly festival when there were presumably large numbers of pilgrims so that the *oshi*'s business would not suffer from losing customers to other shops.

These parishes were of course different from the parishes developed by Buddhist temples in the *terauke* system (temple registration system), even though both were called by the same name. *Oshi* did not provide funerals and memorial services for their parishioners nor was the affiliation mandated by the government. Unlike Buddhist temple parishes, *oshi* parishioners did not tend to live in the same village but lived in villages that were often separated from Ōyama by great distances.

How did the concept of a parish develop at Ōyama? Since when could these *oshi* lay claim to their parishioners? Ōyama documents from the early modern period use several different terms to convey the meaning of what I have translated so far as “parish” or “parishioner”: *danna* 旦那 or 檀那 (patron), *oshi ari no dosha* 御師有之道者 (a traveler who has an *oshi*), *danka* 旦那家 or 檀家 (patron household) or *danchū* 旦那中 or 檀中 (parish). The term *danna* first appears in the regulations covering Ōyama issued by the bakufu in 1609, in which married *yamabushi* were ordered to turn their *danna* over to the Shingon clergy. It is likely that the bakufu used the term *danna* in its original meaning as a patron rather than parish. It was certainly not used to refer to the families registered with temples for funeral services since this system had not been established yet.⁹ Other evidence also suggests that these patrons consisted of local warriors and their vassals similar to the pre-1500 patrons of Ise and Kumano.¹⁰

The term *danna* appears next in certificates documenting the sale of parishioners from one *oshi* to another. The earliest of these dates from 1665, two years after the term *oshi* appeared for the first time in documents from Ōyama (ISZO, pp. 183–93). Despite the voluntary association of parishioners with *oshi*, their ties had an element of permanence and exclusivity. *Oshi* even treated their parishes as valuable commodities that could be sold and acquired for money. For example, as early as 1680, Utsumi Jirōyemon bought parishioners from two other *oshi*:

Statement of Permanent Sale of *Danna*

Item: A total of 202 houses in Miura District, Mamoi Village,

⁹ By 1609, the *terauke* system was not put in place yet so that the terms *danna* and *danka* were not yet commonly used to describe the parishioner registered at a temple for the performance of funerals and memorial services. The *terauke* system was not put in place until 1638 in response to the Shimabara rebellion in 1637 and increasing regulation of the foreign trade after 1633, which culminated in the adoption of the closed-country policy in 1639. Even then it would take several decades to penetrate all of Japan (TAMAMURO 1986, pp. 19–21).

¹⁰ For example, the *kanbun* version of the *Ōyamadera engi* was copied and edited under the patronage of a local warrior called Yamanoue Tadanao, who commissioned one of his vassals to copy the text (STK, p. 432). The Yamanoue had a connection to the Wada, who lived at Ōyama and to whom it was related by marriage (OCSK, p. 89).

and Sanke Village are hereby permanently sold for 8 gold *ryō* and 3 *bu*. Relatives of the *danna* are to abide by this. This document serves as a sales certificate.

Enpō 8/9/29	Seller	Toshinosuke
	Seller	Sanzaemon
	Witness	Magobei
	<i>Goningumi-utsushi</i>	Shichibei
	Witness	Kihei
To Utsumi Jirōyemon		(ISZO, pp. 184–85)

The term *danna* equally appeared in the mountain code from 1674, reconfirming the *oshi*'s exclusive rights to their *danna*. Pilgrims were divided into those who had and those who did not have *oshi* (御師有 vs. 御師無). The first extant *danna* registers (*dannachō* 旦那帳 or 檀那帳) are from 1675 to 1680. Documents including sales certificates and mountain codes continue to refer to parishioners relatively consistently as *danna* until the mid eighteenth century. In 1703, however, a register referred to parishioners for the first time as *danka*, a term which appeared again in registers from 1756 to 1765. The term *danka* (patron household) was not frequently used in registers and sales certificates of parishes until 1800 when it replaced the term “*danna*” without apparent change in the meaning. The development of the term appears to be related to the spread of the concept of the *ie* (household). At the same time, the use of the term *danchū* 檀中 appears, which is akin to the term *kōchū* 講中 (religious association) (ISZO, pp. 23–27, 182–239; ISO, pp. 805–820). Ōyama's mountain codes, however, made very clear that the meaning of *danna* was not the same as the meaning of *kō* (confraternity). Members of a *kō* could belong to different *oshi* but ideally *kō* members were supposed to be from the same village. As we have seen, each *oshi* with a member in the group could host the entire group even though later it was the *oshi* of the *kō* leader who was to handle the donations for *kitō* rituals. This arrangement left room for potential conflict (ISZO, pp. 23–27).

Where did these parishioners come from? Extant records indicate that the *oshi* first developed parishes in Sagami Province, the province where Ōyama was located, and then gradually spread to neighboring provinces such as Musashi, Kazusa, Awa, and the city of Edo and finally throughout the Kantō region. The earliest extant parish registers and certificates of parish sales between 1665 and 1730 cover areas in the vicinity of Ōyama. They are concentrated in western Sagami (Ōsumi, Aikō, Kōza, and Miura districts) including farming villages inland and coastal fishing villages. There are also records of parishes outside Sagami Province in Musashi and Kazusa Provinces and very

limited evidence of parishioners in Edo from around 1700 (ISO, pp. 805–820).

Licensing Systems and Increasing Professionalization: 1700–1750

A parish did not remain the only element that distinguished an *oshi* from a non-*oshi* innkeeper. To avoid too many contestants for parishes, other limitations had to be established. The first indication that the place of residence played a role in who was allowed to call himself an *oshi* appears in documents regarding a dispute between Koyasu and Sakamoto and the mountain code from 1702. Originally, Ōyama was awarded about seventy-two *koku* in Sakamoto and twenty-seven *koku* in Koyasu, making both villages part of Ōyama's temple land, which totaled 100 *koku*. In 1666, a section of Koyasu was transferred to Sakamoto to replace land that had been washed away during a flood.¹¹ It is likely that Koyasu ceased to be part of Ōyama's temple land around the time of this transfer because by the late Edo period Sakamoto alone comprised Ōyama's 100 *koku*. The contrast between Sakamoto and Koyasu was stark. The former had virtually no land for cultivation whereas the latter was a farming village.¹²

By 1700, the popularity of the pilgrimage to Ōyama had increased as had rivalries between the residents of Sakamoto and Koyasu. In the spring of 1702, a dispute was brought before the magistrate of temples and shrines over whether residents of Koyasu had the right to call themselves *oshi* and sell amulets. The residents of lower Sakamoto, identifying themselves as “those who serve as *oshi* in the temple land of Ōyama,” contrasted their position with peasants acting as innkeepers in Koyasu. Pointing out the relative absence of fields in Sakamoto, its residents argued that catering to pilgrims and parishioners was the only business to sustain them. Their work also included acting as go-betweens for pilgrims who wanted to have rituals performed by the temples, distributing amulets, and collecting first-fruit donations. The residents of Sakamoto took issue with the villagers from Koyasu who

¹¹ No less than 3173 *tsubo* of land with a yield of about ten *koku* were transferred from Koyasu to become Sakamoto's Shin-chō to replace ca. 3175 *tsubo* of land yielding about 7.5 *koku* that had been washed away in a flood from Sakamoto to Koyasu (STK, p. 490).

¹² In a survey from the Genroku period, Sakamoto's yield was officially still calculated as 72 *koku*, but it appears to have been 100 *koku* according to temple records; later it indeed rose to 100 *koku* in official records, indicating Ōyama's temple land was limited to Sakamoto and no longer included a section of Koyasu. By the late Edo period, the yield of Sakamoto was 100 *koku* (exactly the amount of Ōyama's temple land) with a ratio of 0.32 *koku* per household. Kamikoyasu and Shimokoyasu combined had 483 *koku* with 122 households, a much higher ratio of *koku* per household (3.96) (SKFK, pp. 103–105).

set up new inns and claimed to be *oshi*. In response, the residents of Koyasu also claimed a lack of fields in order to argue that it was necessary for villagers to operate inns. They also pointed out that although some residents of Koyasu had traditionally served as *oshi* and held parishes while others had traditionally operated inns, the allegation that Koyasu residents distributed amulets and collected first fruits (privileges of the Sakamoto *oshi*) was unfounded. The magistrate of temples and shrines recognized Sakamoto's claim that Koyasu had sold unauthorized amulets and ordered the confiscation of printing blocks for amulets and the prohibition of unauthorized sales. It also recognized the rights of traditional inns in Koyasu but banned newly opened inns from conducting business and pulling in customers. Similar disputes involving villagers from Koyasu and even neighboring Kamikasuya continued through the summer of 1702.¹³

In order to alleviate the tension between the residents of Sakamoto and neighboring villages, Hachidai-bō, under abbot Kaizō, issued another mountain code in the early autumn of 1702. Sumptuary regulations were to prevent extravagance at the inns as well as the soaring prices for lodging and palanquins. In addition, the code clarified that *oshi* had the exclusive right to provide lodging or sell goods to their parishioners but could make agreements to share this right with another *oshi*.¹⁴

The code also regulated the *oshi*'s relationship with the Shingon temples, giving them the role not only of innkeepers but also of intermediaries between pilgrims and clerics for distribution of amulets and the performance of rituals. *Oshi* could distribute amulets to any pilgrim but these amulets were to be consecrated by the Shingon temples. The *oshi* were reminded to follow the system of mediation for *goma* rituals

¹³ In the early summer of the 1702, Gendayū, a Sakamoto *oshi*, brought a suit before the bakufu claiming that a man named Kichibei from Koyasu had illegally provided lodging to sixteen of his parishioners. The investigation of the magistrate of temples and shrines concluded that Kichibei had not been at fault in this case because the pilgrims had come late at night, making it impossible for them to proceed to Sakamoto. However, the authorities also ordered that from now on innkeepers were to exact a written statement signed by the pilgrim, certifying that he had no ties to an *oshi*. Conflicts like this extended even beyond Koyasu into the neighboring Kamikasuya. A similar dispute arose because two villagers from Kamikasuya, Hikobei and Kanbei, claimed to be *oshi* and ran inns. No decision was reached by the authorities, however, because of the retirement of the official in charge. Kamikasuya bordered on Koyasu and was even further removed from Sakamoto but had been Ōyama's temple land in the Kamakura period and also lay on the pilgrimage route from Edo (ISZO, pp. 69–71).

¹⁴ The remaining articles repeated injunctions against the invasion of customary ties between *oshi* and their parish, adding nothing new except that donations for *kitō* by pilgrims traveling in mixed *kō* should henceforth be housed by the *oshi* of the *kō* leader. Punishments for violating these regulations ranged from a fine of one *ryō* per pilgrim to expulsion from Ōyama's temple land (ISZO, pp. 25–27).

Table 1. Number of *oshi* in Upper (Sakamoto-chō, Inari-chō, Kaisan-chō) and Lower (Fukunaga-chō, Inari-chō and Shin-chō) Sakamoto

	1718	1730	1735	1786	1824	1835
upper	62	66	60	61	63	NA
lower	69	87	81	82	81	NA
total	131	153	144	143	144	138

* The numbers for 1718, 1730, and 1824 are based on “Ōyama oshi toritsugi goma fuda toritsugi dera kakiage” (ISZO, pp. 105–112). In 1730, 173 villagers acted as intermediaries between the Shingon temples and pilgrims but only 153 of these had names that identified them as full *oshi*. The figure for 1735 is based on a Kōya *hijiri*’s record from Takamuro-in (SAMUKAWAMACHISHI HENSHŪ IINKAI 1992, pp. 84–87, 90–91; 1993, pp. 93, 101–103). This figure may be slightly low because the Kōya *hijiri* may not have visited all *oshi* households. In Minoge, for example, the Kōya *hijiri* recorded only the household of a village headman in 1735, but in 1762 the *hijiri* recorded one Rinzai temple, seven Honzan-ha *shugenja*, and not one peasant household. The figure for 1786 is based on “Ōyama jisha tamashii maruhadaka” compiled by the Ōyama shrine carpenter Tenaka Myō’ōtarō in that year (ISZO, pp. 86–97). The number for 1835 is based on “Ōyama chishi onshirabe kakiage,” a village survey compiled that year by village officials (OCSK, pp. 11–21).

Ariga Mitsuo and Matsuoka Takashi have compiled similar data about the numerical distribution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, reaching contradictory conclusions. Relying on the “Ōyama jisha tamashii maruhadaka,” the *Tōkaidō meisho zue*, “Ōyama chishi onshirabe kakiage,” and the *Shinpen Sagami no kuni fudoki kō*, Ariga argues that the number of *oshi* rose from 158 in 1786 to 166 in 1840 for Sakamoto and Minoge combined. He continues his calculation until 1985 showing that there was a drastic decline in the modern period leaving only 30% of the *oshi* in business, which he attributed to the aftermath of the separation of Shintō and Buddhism (ARIGA 1998, pp. 54). However, Ariga’s figures for 1797, 1835, and 1840 are not reliable. The *Tōkaidō meisho zue* only gives an estimate. The other two numbers do not reflect that several *oshi* had gone out of business.

Matsuoka surveys a larger number of documents, including temple and *oshi* registers and village surveys that predate Ariga’s material and are more reliable. Matsuoka argues that the number of *oshi* declined from 189 in the early eighteenth century to 133 in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century for Sakamoto and Minoge combined. He sees the most significant decline between 1730 and 1786 affecting especially *oshi* of middle or lower rank in the *toritsugi* system between *oshi* and Shingon temples. Matsuoka attributes the decline to the impact of natural disasters and famine between 1765 and 1790, which led to a decrease in pilgrims—a period in which wealthy *oshi* were more likely to survive (MATSUOKA 1992b, p. 25). However, even though Matsuoka’s documents are more reliable, the number he gives for 1730 is too high because he includes villagers who do not hold *oshi* licenses but only take pilgrims to the temples for *goma* services as *oshi*. His count for 1835 is slightly low. Therefore, although the decline there seems to have been drastic between 1730 and 1835, in fact there was no significant decline in the number of *oshi*.

held for pilgrims, which meant that specific *oshi* served as liaisons for a designated Shingon temple. They were also forbidden to overcharge pilgrims or to withhold donations from the Shingon temples.

Above all, the code established who could claim to be an *oshi*. The status of an *oshi* no longer hinged only on the presence of a parish but on the *oshi's* pedigree and a clearly defined licensing system administered by the Shingon clergy. One could no longer become an *oshi* simply by purchasing a parish. The title *oshi* was to be exclusively used by those whose families had traditionally performed ritual prayers (*kitō*) or practiced the way of the kami:

Item: *Oshi* who are not from families that have traditionally practiced the way of the kami or ritual prayers are not to practice as *oshi*. Henceforth, *oshi* are to request licenses from the temples on Ōyama.

Attachment: Lately there have been some who became *oshi* by buying *danna*. This practice is to cease. (ISZO, pp. 23–24)

If the Shingon clergy only licensed residents of Ōyama's temple land and made coveted amulets available only to those who had been licensed, the temples had an effective means of control over the growth of *oshi* households. The *oshi* of Sakamoto benefited from this arrangement because it gave them the exclusive right to the title *oshi* but it made them even more dependent on the temples, on whom they had to rely already for the performance of essential rituals (ISZO, pp. 23–24).

Subsequent codes from 1713 and 1721 defined the duties and privileges of the *oshi* even further. In the former, the role of the *oshi* as an intermediary was expanded: *oshi* were advised to act as guides to pilgrims during the yearly summer festival and make sure that pilgrims were not stained by ritual pollution. The latter contained the following definition that clearly stated the status and function of an *oshi*:

Item. An *oshi* is neither a peasant nor artisan nor merchant, but is without fixed status and abode. He makes a living by keeping the customs of the buddhas and the kami, performing spells and incantations, maintaining parishioners (*danna*) in various places, for whom he provides lodging should they come on pilgrimage, handing out amulets on several occasions, and receiving first-fruit donations (*hatsuho* 初穂).

(ISZO, p. 26)

Oshi were not considered a member of the three occupational groups that formed the basis of the early modern society headed by the warrior class. In this, *oshi* resembled Buddhist monks, mountain ascetics,

and Shinto priests, who were also excluded from the system. In order to indicate this difference and their status as religious specialists, many *oshi* adopted special names often ending with *-tayū*, a suffix also customarily used by Ise *oshi* and performers. By the 1730's, seventy-one Ōyama *oshi* used such names. By 1744, five more adopted a name ending with *-tayū* 大夫. Many others, even though their names did not contain the suffix *-tayū*, adopted names that were clearly different from ordinary merchant and peasant names, which tended to end in *-yue-mon* 右衛門, *-zaemon* 左衛門, or *-hei* 兵衛. One of the earliest examples of this is an *oshi* who went by the name of Utsumi Jirōyuemon until 1682 but suddenly adopted the name Utsumi Yūkei 祐慶 in 1683 after acquiring a large number of parishioners, reflecting the very process that the Shingon clergy would later prohibit: namely, becoming an *oshi* by purchasing a parish.¹⁵ In addition, many *oshi* ran inns with names that sounded like *yamabushi* hermitages—so-and-so *-bō* or *-in*—regardless of whether their ancestors had actually been *yamabushi* or not.

Through the tightly controlled licensing system, the number of *oshi* eventually stabilized at around 144, remaining virtually unchanged between 1735 and 1824. Licenses and *oshi* names were passed on from generation to generation, but could also be sold or passed on to adopted heirs, which still gave those coveting a license a way to acquire one even though the total number was limited.

An *oshi* name and with it an *oshi* license could be acquired by marriage, as in the case of the bean-curd vendor Denbei, who became Ogasawara Shōnosuke upon marrying the *oshi* Ogasawara Yūkei's daughter (ISZO, p. 91). It could also be obtained through purchase, as did Kanzaki Hantayū in 1803 (ISZO, p. 97). In several cases, new licenses were awarded by the Shingon temples upon official appointments. Tenaka Myō'ōtarō—the Ōyama carpenter—served as Ōyama *daikan* under Hachidai-bō abbot Hōnyō (1746–1757). He received a license to adopt the *oshi* name Ogawa. Henceforth, he was also known under his *oshi* name, Ogawa Ranbutsu. Similarly, Masuda Gennosuke and Nakayama Naiki were given their *oshi* licenses when the former was appointed as Ōyama *daikan* and the latter became a village headman (ISZO, pp. 90–91). The licensing system, therefore, provided the Shingon temples with a means to reward those serving their interests and created a symbiotic relationship between *oshi* and clerics.

However, the licensing system had two weaknesses: (1) it guaran-

¹⁵ Unfortunately, it is difficult to say how many of the *oshi* adopted this type of name in this period. Yet there is no documented use of this kind of name before 1695. Compare with Matsuo Takashi's chart listing the historical development of different types of *oshi* (ISE-HARASHISHI HENSHŪ IINKAI 1999, pp. 606–616). For relevant documents of parish sales see ISZO pp. 182–93.

teed no protection against inns outside Oyama's temple land and was only partially successful in limiting competition from neighboring villages; (2) it limited the number of innkeepers who could bring pilgrims to the Shingon clergy's doors, and thus ran counter to the temples' own interests. According to a dispute during the 1750s, small seasonal inns had sprung up in Koyasu and Kamikasuya that drained customers away from Sakamoto. Since both villages were outside Ōyama's temple land—being on bakufu and *hatamoto* lands—the Shingon temples had no authority to outlaw such establishments. Sakamoto's residents could find no redress from the Shingon temples; therefore, they had to turn to the magistrate of temples and shrines for judgment. What contributed to the problem was the fact that despite the licensing system established by Hachidai-bō, the Shingon temples apparently continued to accept the residents of Koyasu as go-betweens for the arrangement of services instead of making them the monopoly of licensed *oshi*. The Shingon temples appear to have been more eager to attract large numbers of pilgrims and their donations than to protect the interests of the *oshi* in Ōyama's temple land (ISZO, pp. 71–80).¹⁶

¹⁶ In the Hōreki era (1751–1763), villagers from Sakamoto filed another suit against the residents of Koyasu and Kamikasuya. According to the residents of Sakamoto, there were 43 innkeepers in Koyasu and 27 in Kamikasuya who drew pilgrims away from Sakamoto during the festival to the detriment of Sakamoto's *oshi*. Sakamoto also charged that in the Genroku era (1688–1703), Koyasu only had some twenty official inns but villagers opened unofficial yet attractive establishments with landscaped yards, adequate space to entertain customers, and even newly-opened waterfalls for purification during the summer festival. Women lured pilgrims into these establishments. Inns handled the pilgrims luggage, even offering special services such as sending luggage on to Mt. Fuji. Koyasu residents operated inns, acted as go-betweens for rituals held by the Shingon temples even though they were neither licensed by Hachidai-bō nor residents of Ōyama's temple land. Koyasu residents had been parishioners of *oshi* in Sakamoto in the past rather than being *oshi* themselves. Furthermore, the village harbored residents who had previously been expelled from the temple land but continued to call themselves *oshi* and hold parishes. Kamikasuya allegedly had not had any inns (*machi-yado* 町宿) originally but had imitated Koyasu and developed small inns (*hatagoya* 旅籠屋). Neither village was located at a crossroads, so the inns were set up for pilgrims to Ōyama. Consequently, fewer pilgrims stayed with *oshi* in Sakamoto, supposedly leaving some *oshi* without any business at all during the highly popular summer festival.

Koyasu and Kamikasuya denied these charges vehemently. Koyasu claimed that those women were not prostitutes but merely the wives and daughters of nearby peasants who helped out during the festival. They also stated that they did not keep logbooks listing their customers, which they could turn over for proof. Moreover, Koyasu and Kamikasuya emphatically denied charges of hosting parishioners at their inns. Sakamoto countered the denial by naming specific cases of parishioners hosted by residents of Koyasu such as a monk from Enoshima, Man'yuemon, and Denbei from Edo, and Ōki Hanbei from Chichibu District in Musashi. As proof they pointed out that Hanbei had signed the *kitō* register at Hōtoku-in, indicating that he stayed at Rokuyūemon's inn in Koyasu. The magistrate of temples and shrines suspected wrongdoing on the part of Koyasu and Kamikasuya but refused to rule against them for lack of proof that they had violated the law (ISZO, pp.

The Shingon clergy did, however, recognize special privileges in their dealings with *oshi* as intermediaries. Even though the clergy was legally entitled to all the donations made by pilgrims for rituals performed at the temples, *oshi* received a cut of the donations. If pilgrims did not stay with *oshi* but in Koyasu or came to the temples on their own accord, the *oshi* might miss their opportunity to claim their share. Therefore, the mountain code that was issued in 1753 addressed the *oshi*'s interests by regulating the distribution of pilgrims' donations among their *oshi*, the Shingon temples, and the village office. *Oshi* were reminded to turn over the appropriate share to the temples and the village office, whereas the temples had to ensure that the *oshi* was given opportunity to claim his share of the *kitō* offerings should the pilgrims fail to use his services as go-between (ISZO, pp. 27). Over the course of fifty years, the *oshi* had therefore developed from parish-holding innkeepers to tightly regulated religious professionals, who had the privilege to collect donations from and distribute amulets to their parishioners and who acted as intermediaries between the Shingon temples and pilgrims from which they also derived a guaranteed source on income.

The Ōyama Cult's Saturation of the Kantō Region

In addition to the competition the Sakamoto *oshi* faced from neighboring villages, a second important factor contributed to the need to limit the pool of those eligible to hold the title of *oshi*. Until the early eighteenth century, when the Ōyama cult's popularity was on the rise and the *oshi* developed new parishes across the Kantō region, the expanding sphere of the Ōyama cult was able to sustain a growing number of *oshi*. However, by the second half of the eighteenth century, the Kantō was saturated with *oshi* parishes, no longer allowing the *oshi* unlimited expansion of their territory. Therefore, it was essential to limit the number of licenses.

On the basis of extant parish registers and parish sales between 1730 and 1780, we know that the first parish holdings were concentrated in Sagami, Musashi, and Kazusa Provinces (ISO, pp. 805–820; ISZO pp. 183–239).¹⁷ Over the course of the eighteenth century, there

71–80). According to Matsuoka, the magistrate of temples and shrines ultimately supported Sakamoto's charges and prohibited the residents of Koyasu from acting as *oshi*, but I have found no evidence for this in the Hōreki documents (MATSUOKA 1992b, p. 11).

¹⁷ From 1665 to 1698, the *oshi* Utsumi Jirōyemon—who later adopted the *oshi* name Utsumi Kageyu—acquired about 4845 *danna* for a total of about 193 *ryō* at an average price of about 25 houses per *ryō* in Sagami, Musashi, and Kazusa. Parishioners in Kazusa and

is also increasing evidence of parishes in Edo. These parishes were attractive because they were more convenient to administer than parishes in more distant areas. The *oshi* collected *hatsuho* from and distributed amulets to parishioners. In nearby villages, *hatsuho* were collected in smaller amounts several times per year. Distant villages were more difficult to reach, and *hatsuho* were accordingly collected more infrequently. Nearby parishes therefore provided a small but steady source of income.¹⁸ When *oshi* acquired new parishioners, they kept such practical considerations in mind. When buying parishioners from other *oshi*, for example, they would not simply buy large numbers of parishioners scattered across a wide area but parishioners in neighboring villages as well. Often they would buy parishioners from the same villages repeatedly, gradually increasing their holdings as did Utsumi Yūkei in Miura and western Kazusa during the seventeenth century (ISZO, pp. 182–93).

The number of extant records increases dramatically after 1780. Again, Sagami Province has the highest number (i.e., the highest concentration of parishes), followed by Musashi, Edo, and Kazusa. However, due to the high number of existing parishes in these regions, it was difficult to establish new parishes. Therefore, should *oshi* seek to expand their parishes in these regions, they had to shift parishes from one *oshi* to another through sales and pawning as indicated. Indeed, most transactions like this were limited to Sagami, Musashi, and Kazusa.

Parishioners became an ever-more treasured possession. TAMAMURO even argues that the price of *danka* became more expensive toward the Bakumatsu period, but his evidence is limited because it is only based on documents from one *oshi* (1987, pp. 288–90). A broader survey of extant sales certificate does not suggest a price increase for parishioners but that the *oshi* were less willing to part with their parishes permanently. Instead, the practice of pawning and leasing one's parish to another *oshi* appeared over the course of the eighteenth century. In 1733, for example, Utsumi Shikibu lent money to Yano Izumo, who used parts of his parish as collateral:

Musashi were about the same average price but parishioners in Sagami were slightly more expensive. He acquired the parishioners primarily from other residents of Sakamoto but also from a few residents of Koyasu (ISZO, pp. 183–93).

¹⁸ The *oshi* Murayama Hachidayū has been studied in detail by Kimura Motoi, Tanaka Sen'ichi, Tamamuro Fumio, and Matsuoka Takashi. Tamamuro focuses on nearby parishes in Sagami, whereas Tanaka and Matsuoka focus on more distant parishes in Shimōsa and Kazusa. The studies are based on material from the Tenpō era to the early Meiji period. As Matsuoka had shown, much of the material was compiled by Hachidayū upon his retirement from a Hachidai-bō office (KIMURA 1981, pp. 764–74; TAMAMURO 1987, pp. 278–91; TANAKA 1982, pp. 157–91; MATSUOKA 1996, pp. 49–65).

Monetary Loan

2 ryō 26 monme in Edo currency

This certifies that I have received the amount stated above [seal]. Therefore, I have handed over forty-five of my *danna* [seal] in Tsuchiya Village. The money shall be promptly returned before the twentieth of the seventh month of the coming year of the tiger (1734). If the payment is overdue in the least, the pawned item shall be confiscated by the guarantor. This document also bears the seal of the *goningumi* representative and the guarantor below.

Kyōhō 16 (1733)/7/19	Borrower	Yano Izumo [seal]
	<i>Goningumi</i>	Gohei [seal]
	Guarantor	[illegible] <i>tayū</i> [seal]

To Utsumi Shikibutayū

(ISZO, p. 195)

The first such practice is documented in 1730 and continued into the early Meiji period, taking place with increasing frequency from the 1830s. Similarly, from 1757, there is evidence that *oshi* began to rent out parts of their parish for a limited number of years (usually ten) to another *oshi* who would have the exclusive right to the parishioners for that time period. From the 1810s, pawning and renting out parishes became far more frequent than the final sale of parishioners.¹⁹

By the late Edo period, Ōyama's popularity spread to regions further away from Sagami Province. Even though *oshi* may have preferred nearby parishes, the scarcity of available parishes forced them to expand their holdings in distant areas, where they could control larger parishes in larger areas. Eventually their total holdings of parishioners in more distant regions outnumbered their holdings in closer areas. From 1778, there are records of parishes in Shimōsa Province. After 1790, there are also records of parishes in Awa, Hitachi, Suruga, Izu, Kai, Kōzuke, Shimotsuke, and Mutsu provinces.

Despite the high number of documents from this period, it is impossible to gain a comprehensive sense of the exact spread of parishes for the early modern period based on scattered parish registers. The *Kaidōki* (1873), an early Meiji Ōyama parish survey, reflects the distribution of earlier holdings and allows us to estimate the range of Ōyama's cult in the pre-Meiji era. An estimate of the number of *danka* is about 930,000 (or about 7860 per *oshi*) concentrated in Sagami and Musashi (about 40%). Although the number of *danka* was not

¹⁹ For a list of all documents pertaining to *danka* sales, pawning, and leasing see ISSM. For examples of specific documents, see ISZO, pp. 183-239.

necessarily the highest, Sagami, especially the districts closest to Ōyama, had the highest density of *danka*. More distant regions were shared among fewer *oshi*, contained larger parishes, and a lower concentration of parishes. This supports the claim that these nearby areas were the earliest regions covered by *oshi* whereas more distant regions were explored later. Furthermore, whereas *oshi* from Sakamoto held parishes in all provinces, *oshi* from Minoge had parishes primarily in Sagami, Musashi, Izu, and Suruga and scattered holdings in Kai and Shinano. Minoge lay along the western pilgrimage route to Ōyama. Therefore, it made sense for Minoge *oshi* to cultivate parishioners who would pass through Minoge rather than Sakamoto on their pilgrimages to Ōyama (ARIGA 1998, pp. 65–96; TANAKA 1992, pp. 193–204).

Status Differences between Oshi

Initially, the presence of such parishes gave the *oshi* their status, but since the early eighteenth century licenses and pedigree became equally important. These marks of distinction created the basis for status differences among the *oshi*. The number of licensed *oshi* was fairly stable, which curbed the competition between them, but not all *oshi* had the same pedigree, *danka* size, or relationship with the Shingon clergy.

One way to distinguish between different levels of *oshi* was a ranking system based on parish size. The system—used by the Shingon temples from 1718 to classify *oshi* who came to their temples to have *goma* rituals performed and to collect amulets—was divided into three levels according to their parishes: upper, middle, and lower rank. The upper and middle ranks were occupied by about 140 fully licensed *oshi* with proper *oshi* names. Those with lower ranks had no *oshi* names and were shopkeepers and artisans, who acted as go-betweens in a similar fashion as the full *oshi*. The difference between mid-level and upper-level *oshi* is not completely clear, but according to MATSUOKA, the distinction probably reflected the size of their parishes (1996, pp. 34–35). There was a certain degree of mobility between the ranks. Occasionally, some *oshi* went out of business or moved to a lower ranking. In some cases, upper-level *oshi* temporarily sank to mid-level *oshi* to be restored to their previous level in the nineteenth century. More frequently, mid-level *oshi* became upper-level *oshi*, and lower-level shopkeepers obtained *oshi* licenses and were promoted to mid-level rank (ISZO pp. 105–12; MATSUOKA 1998, pp. 30–35). Hachidai-bō could also raise the rank of an *oshi* as a reward for his services. When the roof of the main hall was remodeled with copper tiles in 1807, five *oshi* who had fallen to a lower rank were restored to their original rank to

mark the auspicious occasion (ISZO, pp. 106–10). Last but not least, Hachidai-bō could also award an *oshi* the rights to his parishes as recompensation for the *oshi*'s service as a village official (MATSUOKA 1996, pp. 54–60).²⁰

The second way of differentiating between *oshi* was their family pedigree, which may also have played a role in the assignment of rank. When Ōyama's shrine carpenter, Tenaka Myō'ōtarō Kagenao, who also bore the *oshi* name Ogawa Ranbutsu, compiled a listing of all the *oshi* at Ōyama in 1786, he distinguished between several types: those who were plain *oshi* with a long family tradition, those who were related to sixty former *shugenja* families, those who still were *shugenja*, those who acted as shrine priests, those who acted as representatives serving Hachidai-bō, and new *oshi* who were of merchant or artisan stock and had acquired licenses recently. These new *oshi* whose origins we can identify came primarily from a merchant background—several had run rice-wine, bean-curd, or noodle shops and a few had been artisans (e.g., a carpenter or wheelwright) before becoming *oshi* (ISZO, pp. 91, 111).²¹ New *oshi* made up about one quarter of the *oshi*, a significant number (see Table 2).

Tenaka Myō'ōtarō Kagenao also indicated a related means of differentiation: several *oshi* held special ritual duties (ISZO, pp. 86–92).²²

²⁰ The ranking of *oshi* in Minoge is not recorded. The number of *oshi* in Minoge was much smaller—between fifteen to seventeen—and the *oshi* could easily be distinguished based on their family pedigree, which was another way of distinguishing *oshi*. There were five Honzan-ha *shugenja* and sixteen *oshi* with full *oshi* names in Minoge. Of the sixteen, five seem to have acquired the *oshi* name at some point whereas four *oshi* may have lost theirs after 1718. Three others were incorporated into the *torisugi* system but did not bear *oshi* names (ISZO, pp. 92, 111).

²¹ According to Matsuoka, we can distinguish six different types of *oshi* in 1730:

- 1) one Buddhist monk at the Rinzaï temple Seijū-an functioned as an *oshi*
- 2) eight Tendai affiliated *shugenja*, two in Sakamoto and six in Minoge also served as *oshi*
- 3) about one third of the *oshi* (69) could trace their heritage back to a former Shugendō household and used a hermitage name (*bō* or *in*) for their inns
- 4) eight *oshi* served as *shinke*, three in Sakamoto and five in Minoge
- 5) about one sixth of the *oshi* (33) were lay *oshi* who could trace their history back to before the Kanbun era
- 6) about one third of the *oshi* (71) were so-called new *oshi*, who took up their business relatively recently and many of whom had been merchants before (MATSUOKA 1992b, pp. 12–25).

²² These positions were hereditary. Those who had held special positions in Sakamoto in 1786 still held them by 1835 because they also appear in the *Ōyama chūshi onshirabe kakiage* (1835) and the *Shinpen Sagami no kuni fudoki kō* (1840). In Tenpō 6 (1835) an official survey of Ōyama—*Ōyama chūshi onshirabekakiage*—was conducted by the *oshi* Okumura Sanrōtayū and Murayama Hachitayū. Of course Hachidai-bō supplied information about its own temple as did all the other temples on the mountain and in town. However, two other *oshi*, Uchiyama Kōnosuke and Ogasawara Tōyūemon, were in charge of providing data on Sakamoto. This compilation became the basis for the entry on Sakamoto and Ōyama in the SKFK.

Table 2. *Oshi* Pedigree

	plain <i>oshi</i>	<i>yama- bushi</i>	shrine priest	former <i>yamabushi</i>	temple servant	new (merchants/ artisan/unclear)	total
Sakamoto	1	—	1	4	—	2(2/0)	8
Inari	4	—	—	8	3	5 (2/0/3)	20
Kaisan	1	1	1	23	1	6 (3/0/3)	33
upper total	6	1	2	35	4	13 (7/0/6)	61
	9.8%	1.6%	3.3%	57.3%	6.6%	21.3%	100%
Fukunaga	2	1	2	17	—	8 (7/0/1)	30
Bessho	8	2	2	10	—	13 (5/1/7)	35
Shinmachi	6	—	—	7	—	4 (0/1/3)	17
lower total	16	3	4	34	—	25 (12/2/11)	82
	19.5%	3.7%	4.9%	41.5%		30.5%	100%
total	22	4	6	69	4	38 (19/2/17)	143
	15.4%	2.8%	4.2%	48.3%	2.8%	26.6%	100%

* Table based on ISZO, pp. 86–92.

Five controlled access to waterfalls at the foot of the mountain that were used by pilgrims for purification rituals. Four held special licenses as retainers for Hachidai-bō. One was a head shrine priest (*kannushi* 神主) who had a license from the Yoshida House, and three others were shrine priests (SKFK, pp. 106–107; ISZO, pp. 91–92). Through *hatto* issued by Kōya-san in 1609 the retainers and *shinke* had special ritual duties and rights to donations from the shrines they administered on the mountain (STK, pp. 470–71; ONK, pp. 61–63). In addition, two in Sakamoto and three in Minoge were *kannagi* sacerdotal families charged with the performance of sacred dances. One, the above-mentioned Tenaka Myō'otarō, served as the head Ōyama carpenter and held a license from the sacerdotal Shirakawa House that was issued to him in 1773 (ISZO, pp. 85–97; ONK, pp. 56–57). Like three of the *kannagi*, the household of the Ōyama carpenter, Tenaka Myō'otarō, claimed to have come to Ōyama with Rōben (SKFK, pp. 107, 134–35). In addition, several *oshi* controlled tutelary shrines and small Buddhist halls in Sakamoto.²³

²³ The Rinzai temple Seijū-an was in charge of Ko no Jinja, the tutelary shrine of Sakamoto-chō. Also in Sakamoto-chō, Take Eitayū administered the waterfall Motodaki and the Tobitaki Gongen Shrine. Wada Hantayū controlled the Goshā Inari Shrine, dedicated to the tutelary deity of Inari-chō. Fuji no Bō oversaw Rōbendaki and Rōbendō. Genchō-bō controlled the Suwa Daimyōjin Shrine, the village shrine of Kaisan-chō, on whose festival on

A third way that created status differences between *oshi* was the award of village offices by Hachidai-bō, such as *daikan* or administrative duties at Hachidai-bō. Sakamoto consisted of six *chō* divided into upper (Sakamoto-chō, Inari-chō, Kaisan-chō) and a lower town (Fukunaga-chō, Bessho-chō, Shin-chō). Three fifth of the *oshi* in Sakamoto resided in the lower section of the village concentrating in Fukunaga-chō and Bessho-chō (see Table 2), but the percentage of merchants, artisans, and tenants was higher in the upper part of the village (SAMUKAWA-MACHISHI HENSHŪ IINKAI 1993, pp. 101–103). There were six village heads (*nanushi* 名主) and six elders (*toshiyori* 年寄), one for each section of the village. In addition, the upper and lower sections of town each had a bailiff (*daikan*) and an overseer (*metsukeyaku* 目付け役) (ISZO, p. 87). These offices were assigned by Hachidai-bō to villagers who belonged to the *oshi* population because *oshi*—especially if they had large parishes—were wealthier than small-scale merchants, artisans or tenants who accounted for the remaining non-*oshi* population in Sakamoto. If they were not *oshi* before the appointment, village officials were given an *oshi* license upon their appointment as we have seen above.

Such appointments did not always accord with the wishes of the community and could lead to conflicts between different sections of the village. In 1771, there was a riot in Sakamoto that was sparked by the appointment of Negishi Gondayū (Sakamoto-chō) as *daikan* of upper Sakamoto. This was the first time in over one hundred years that Sakamoto's residents were in open disagreement with Hachidai-bō. Like many uprisings in this period, however, their criticism was not directed at Hachidai-bō itself but against a fellow villager and his appointment to office. Under the leadership of three *nanushi* from lower Sakamoto (namely, Utsumi Shikibu [Bessho-chō], Utsumi Shuzen, and Shimoyama Oriie [Bessho-chō]), the dissatisfied villagers filed a complaint with Okabe Okadayū (Shin-chō), lower Sakamoto's *daikan*. Hoping that things would quiet down, Okabe did not pursue the matter. The angry villagers stormed into the residential quarters of Lower Hachidai-bō, which had been erected in Bessho-chō and functioned as the village administration office. The villagers were dispersed after making their demands. In response to the affair the village *toshiyori* Sasako Senzō (Bessho-chō) handed in his resignation but was denied his request. When Hachidai-bō appealed to the magistrate

the twenty-seventh of the seventh month miscanthus reeds were gathered on the shrine grounds to be offered to the deities. Roen-bō in Bessho-chō was in charge of Ōtaki, a Tairokuten Shrine, and the Kiyotaki Inari Shrine. Ganjō-bō in Fukunaga-chō controlled Atago-daki and the Atago Shrine, which had its yearly festival on the twenty-fourth of the seventh month. Kannondō in Fukunaga-chō was held by Zōkin-bō whereas Jōkan-bō handled a Sengen Shrine (OCSK, pp. 7–8, 24–43; SKFK, pp. 105–106).

of temples and shrines to sentence those responsible for the riot, the *bugyō* sentenced the three *nanushi* from Lower Sakamoto to be expelled from the village and the other 130 some *oshi* to pay a fine. The *daikan* Okabe was reprimanded for the way he handled the matter. The *toshiyori* Sasako escaped punishment because he had died before the judgment was handed down. Otherwise he would have shared the fate of the three *nanushi*: having his land confiscated and being expelled from the village (TOMA 1984, pp. 100–103). The system of administration could therefore create tension between the upper and lower parts of the village.

To make matters worse, four of the five shrines on the summit were destroyed in a brushfire in the spring of 1771. Without sufficient funds, the shrines were not rebuilt until the bakufu granted 100 *ryō* in 1777. As if the fire on the summit was not enough, another fire broke out in Shin-chō, which nearly wiped out the town in the early winter of 1774. Another disaster struck Sakamoto again in 1780 when a flood caused many casualties. In 1792, a flash flood suddenly struck the town but miraculously no one was injured (ONK, pp. 52; OFRK, IX.3 and XV.3).²⁴ The disasters during this period were not confined to Ōyama and Sakamoto but affected the whole Kantō region. According to a record from 1783, pilgrims had declined after 1781 due to floods (probably within Sakamoto) and earthquakes. Other natural disasters also struck the Kantō region such as the eruption of Mt. Asama in 1783, which caused massive starvation and affected the local economy. Therefore the *oshi* requested grain assistance. The decline in business continued through the next few years. In 1784 the *oshi* requested a delay in the payment of taxes. In 1787 the village officials resigned from their offices after filing another request to delay tax payments (ISZO, pp. 144–45; MATSUOKA 1992b, p. 3). Even though the total number of *oshi* remained stable, we can only presume that events led to considerable ferment in the village, heightening the disparities between rich and poor. Seventy years later the destruction caused by the great Kantō earthquake in 1855 led to social change at Ōyama by giving wealthy *oshi* an opportunity to enhance their status at Ōyama.

Fragmentation of the Oshi System: 1800–1868

There is evidence dated precisely during the late 1700s, when social

²⁴ The compiler of the *Ōyama Fudō reigenki* also reports that during these years Ōyama Fudō, the main image of worship, suddenly shed tears and large branches kept falling off trees in the village and on the mountain without explicable cause, all of which he took as mysterious omens foreshadowing the disasters that struck the village and the region at this time.

Table 3. Shirakawa Affiliates in Sagami Province

	Yoshida shrines (shrine priests)	Shirakawa shrines (shrine priests)	unaffiliated shrines (shrine priests)	total
1816	NA	9 (10)	NA	NA
1830s	69 (31)	6 (7)	40 (80)	115 (118)
1868	NA	22 (71)	NA	NA

* Based on TOKI 1979, p. 66.

unrest and natural disasters caused devastation at Ōyama, that several *oshi* and artisans traditionally affiliated with the Shingon temples were seeking outside affiliation independent from Hachidai-bō. After 1665, any shrine priest who wanted to wear priestly robes other than white ones (indicating that he had no rank) officially needed to obtain a license from the Yoshida, a sacerdotal family at the Yoshida Shrine who had managed to win the patronage of the Tokugawa bakufu in the early seventeenth century and had taken on a role that resembled that formerly played by the *jingikan* 神祇官 (Department of Divinity) at the Heian court in certain Shinto state rites (e.g., in the rebuilding of the Ise Shrines or the dispatch of imperial messengers) (MASE 1985, pp. 65–67). However, in late 1679, another sacerdotal family, the Shirakawa, who had connections with the imperial court also won shogunal patronage and from 1751 also began to assume a *jingikan*-like function by imperial order. While the Yoshida were able to expand their influence over many previously unaffiliated shrines, their control also met with strong resistance from some shrines who did not welcome interference from the Yoshida. To escape the encroachment of the Yoshida, some shrines turned to the Shirakawa beginning in the late eighteenth century, whose affiliates rose from about fifty in the mid-eighteenth century to almost three hundred by 1816. In Sagami Province, the number of Shirakawa affiliates among shrines more than doubled and among shrine priests multiplied by seven between 1816 and 1868 (see Table 3). In the 1830s the Shirakawa affiliates were concentrated in Ōsumi District, where they actually equaled the number of Yoshida affiliates. Their concentration in Ōsumi District is significant because this was the district where Ōyama was located.

However, the Shirakawa not only rivaled the Yoshida in their appeal to shrine priests but also attracted a much wider circle of affiliates. Since the 1790s, the Yoshida had been repeatedly admonished not to issue licenses to peasants who had not traditionally acted as shrine

priests and could not produce the necessary documents issued by domain officials proving their traditional status (TKK, pp. 17–20). By contrast, the Shirakawa were not limited by such restrictions but could issue licenses to anyone who could claim a connection with the imperial house, however tenuous. By the mid-nineteenth century Shirakawa affiliates not only included shrine priests but also many village heads, peasants, and artisans such as carpenters, woodcutters, roofers, and sweet makers, who eventually came to outnumber Shinto priests with Shirakawa licenses (TOKI 1979, pp. 57–66).²⁵ Among this diverse group were also *oshi* affiliated with sacred mountains such as Mt. Fuji, Mt. Mitake, and Ōyama.²⁶

At Ōyama, what began as a way to obtain permission to wear special ritual robes and hats during carpenterial rituals evolved into a way to defy the authority of the Shingon clergy. To Ōyama *oshi* who sought an alternative to the licensing system of Ōyama's Shingon clergy, the model set by shrine priests seeking to escape the control of the Yoshida was appealing. Before the nineteenth century only three households at Ōyama held Shinto licenses: two *oshi* held Yoshida licenses respectively from 1652 and 1729²⁷ and Ōyama's shrine carpenter, Tenaka Myō'otarō, held a Shirakawa license from 1773. The first holder of a Shirakawa license, the Ōyama shrine carpenter, did not find himself in conflict with the Shingon clergy because he obtained the license in his position as carpenter, not as an *oshi*, even though he had both titles. The Tenaka Myō'otarō carpenters passed their license on from generation to generation—having them occasionally renewed such as in 1811, 1821, 1827, and 1854—and in 1811 also arranged for one of their apprentices to receive a license (SMC, pp. 175–79). As long as these licenses were limited to few members of the community, causing limited but not entirely disruptive friction among the *oshi* and posing

²⁵ See also MASE 1985; MATSUOKA 1992a; SHINNO 1986; ENDŌ 1999; INOUE 1997.

²⁶ See sections on Suruga, Kai, Sagami, and Musashi Provinces in SMC.

²⁷ Satō Chūmu, who traced his lineage back to a *bushi* holding the position of Ōyama *bettō* in the medieval period, obtained a Yoshida license in 1652. He received his license thirteen years before Shinto priests were required to obtain such licenses for certain privileges, such as higher ranks, by the “Shosha negi kannushi hatto,” issued by the bakufu in 1665. In order to ensure his continued privileged position, Satō Chūmu may have sought special certification from the outside so that he could express his status by wearing robes of special colors during kami rituals to distinguish him from other priests only wearing white, for which he needed a Yoshida license. For the following one hundred years he was the only shrine priest at Ōyama to have held such a license. The remaining nine other Ōyama shrine priests in Sakamoto and Minoge had no Yoshida licenses but were commissioned by Hachidai-bō to perform *kagura*. Another *oshi*, Yano Izumono Kami, who obtained his *oshi* license from Manakura Seitayū and was henceforth known as Yano Seitayū, was able to obtain a Yoshida license in 1729. From his name, it appears that he claimed a *bushi* heritage and was thus able to obtain the license (SKFK, pp. 106–107; ISZO, pp. 91–92; SMC, p. 184).

Table 4. Shirakawa Licenses at Ōyama 1773–1868

	carpenter	<i>oshi</i>	total
1773	1		1
1811	1 (+1 renewal)		1 (+1 renewal)
1818		1	1
1821	(1 renewal)		(1 renewal)
1824	(1 renewal)		(1 renewal)
1828		1	1
1837		1	1
1854	(1 renewal)		(1 renewal)
1855		7 (+1 renewal)	7 (+1 renewal)
1856	2	30	32
1857		2 (+2 upgrade)	2 (+2 upgrade)
1858		(3 renewal)	(3 renewal)
1859		2 (+1 renewal)	2 (+1 renewal)
1865		6 (+ 42 ackn.)	6 (+ 42 ackn.)
1868		4 (all Minoge)	4 (all Minoge)
total:	4	54	58

* This Table, except for the first license from 1773, is based on SMC. The reference to 1773 is based on a document quoted in “Myō’ōtarō raiyū” (ONK, pp. 56–57).

no direct challenge of Hachidai-bō’s authority, the Shingon clergy did not oppose such licenses.

The carpenterial rituals performed by the Tenaka Myō’ōtarō carpenter of Ōyama demonstrate how he used his Shirakawa license to distinguish himself from other carpenters in the community. He was after all not the only carpenter in the village, which had a total of five in 1735 (SAMUKAWAMACHISHI HENSHŪ IINKAI 1993, pp. 101–103). As the shrine carpenter, Tenaka Myō’ōtarō had played a ceremonial role during the reconstruction of Ōyama’s shrines even before obtaining a Shirakawa license. During the 1690s and 1770s, the Tenaka Myō’ōtarō carpenter served in similar capacities, but there was an important difference between the two occasions: the source of his authority to carry out special rituals. In the 1690s, his qualifications were primarily based on local tradition and precedent. During the reconstruction of Ōyama’s temple complex in the late seventeenth century, he served as head carpenter at the shrines on the summit. He and his assistants made offerings and wore priest-like ceremonial robes and hats during

rituals held at some of the shrines on Oyama.²⁸ Tenaka Myō'ōtarō's role was very similar during the reconstruction of the shrines on the summit in the 1770s; it was also based on local tradition and precedent, but in addition, he also held a newly acquired Shirakawa license that distinguished him from other villagers serving as carpenters. Again he served as head carpenter, but it was the Shirakawa license that he named as his qualification to recite liturgy, some of which had been transmitted to him by a shrine priest with a Shirakawa license from a neighboring village. This suggests that tradition was no longer enough to secure special privileges in the village, but licenses were needed to prove one's qualifications. The Shingon clergy did not see any reason to object to his new Shirakawa license. The clergy also recognized his elevated status as head carpenter, attended the rituals held by him, and eventually granted him the highest payments for his services among carpenters.²⁹

²⁸ In the summer of 1692, carpenters sent by the bakufu began their work ceremoniously on the main hall whereas the Oyama carpenter Tenaka Myō'ōtarō was responsible for the shrines on the summit. Prevented by ritual pollution from performing rituals himself, Tenaka Myō'ōtarō sent his assistants as representatives to the shrines where they performed a ceremony, offering rice cakes, rice, money, and rice wine, and held a procession down the mountain. Upon the completion of the construction work in the fall of 1693, ridgepole *fuda* were installed at the shrines on the summit and at the Myōō Gongen Shrine behind the main hall. The ridgepole *fuda* at the shrines on the summit reveal that the work was carried out by Tenaka Myō'ōtarō and his local assistant with the sponsorship of the bakufu under Shingon abbot Küben. At the Myōō Gongen Shrine, Tenaka Myō'ōtarō shared his responsibility with the carpenters sent from the magistrate of temples and shrines. One month later, Tenaka Myō'ōtarō presented ceremonial offerings at the shrines on the summit: four paper-strip wands, three mirrors, three sashes, three bundles of hemp, nine fans, two rolls of cotton, three *kanme* of coppers, three trays of rice, rice cakes, rice wine, red rice, two wooden bows, and four other bows. The attending assistants were also formally dressed in *eboshi*, court robe, and *hakama* and wore bows (ISZO, pp. 43–52; TOMA 1984, pp. 86–90).

²⁹ In 1771, the shrines on the summit had been destroyed by a fire. Tenaka Myō'ōtarō Kagenao resumed responsibility for supervising the reconstruction and carrying out carpenterial rituals. In 1773, Kagenao received permission by the Shirakawa to deify his distant ancestor, who he claimed had come to Oyama with Rōben in the eighth century. In the spring of 1775, Kagenao copied instruction on how to conduct offerings and recite liturgy for a pacification ceremony for the groundbreaking rite from the shrine priest at Hibita Shrine in Koyasu, which was a local Shirakawa Shinto center. He presumably recited these prayers, which include a prayer for the Sekison Shrine, during his work on the shrines. About twelve to fourteen carpenters participated in the construction work, but Kagenao acted as foreman. In the spring of 1778, Kagenao recited liturgy for the pillar-erecting ceremony and offered a mirror, broad sword, votive paper wands, three headdresses with *sakaki* branches, and eight trays with cooked rice and sake. In the early summer, the ridgepole-raising ceremony was held. On that occasion Kagenao performed a ritual that was attended by all the Shingon monks, several village officials, and a few stray pilgrims. According to Kagenao himself, he performed the liturgy because he held a Shirakawa license (ISZO, pp. 156–68, 173–76). Below is a translation of his prayer held for the ridgepole raising ceremony at the Daitengu Shrine:

We offer these words at the Inner Aburi Shrine. For you, whose august name is

Hachidai-bō's attitude toward Shirakawa licenses changed, however, when large numbers of *oshi* sought affiliation with the Shirakawa family, so that by the end of the Edo period a total of 52 *oshi*, or about 35% of Ōyama's *oshi*, held Shirakawa licenses even though Hachidai-bō initially resisted the surge. The first of these obtained a license in 1818 and was followed in 1828 and 1837 respectively by two *oshi* who had been in charge of Shinto rituals as shrine priests previously but had not held licenses from an external institution. These licenses granted the holders the right to wear special ceremonial robes (MATSUOKA 1992a, p.153; SMC, pp. 175-77, 185). After Ōyama was destroyed by fires in the aftermath of a disastrous earthquake in 1855, large numbers of *oshi* and two more carpenters sought to obtain Shirakawa licenses. This included members of two other households who had previously held positions as shrine priests: a *kannagi* in 1856 and the head shrine priest in 1857. The Yoshida license of the latter did not prevent him from seeking an additional license from the Shirakawa. These were, however, the exceptions as all the other *oshi* had not held positions as shrine priests prior to their affiliation with the Shirakawa. *Oshi* from Minoge, who were fewer in number and less affected by the tensions existing in Sakamoto, did not seek Shirakawa licenses until 1868 (MATSUOKA 1992a, pp. 152-55).

The initial rush after the great fire was partially occasioned by the

Daitengu, we erected a great pillar as we did the same time for the main deity. The carpenters who made this ridgepole used tools protected by heaven and struck it three times by three times, making nine times. May the pillars and beams, the doors and windows be sturdy. May there be no disasters from the rocky peak to the deepest root of Ōyama. May the realm be safe. May the people live in abundance and peace. May the five grains be plentiful and all be well. Myō'otarō Inbe no Kagenao, his sleeves tied behind his weak shoulders and wielding a votive paper wand, reverently offers these prayers in the prosperity-granting morning sun. (ISZO, p. 177)

Very similar prayers were held during the ridgepole-raising ceremonies at the Sekison Shrine, Shōtengu, Fūgū, and the Hakusan-Dōryō Shrines. The prayers at the Shōtengu Shrine and Tokuichi Shrine were identical. His prayers at the other shrines differed in their requests: at the Fūgū, he added prayers for protection from disaster caused by wind and rain, whereas he asked for protection from thunder, peace, and safety, and for protection of the precinct at the Sekison Shrine (ISZO, p. 176-80). Dressed in ceremonial robes, his vice-headman Saburō offered cloth and one of the four assistant carpenters recited a prayer. On an earthen altar at the five shrines, a box with a great sword was displayed and at one of the ridgepoles of the five shrines votive wands with fifteen cloth strips were displayed. After the ritual was finished, everyone descended to the upper Hachidai-bō, where the carpenters (but not the *oshi*) were remunerated for the performance of their prayers. Tenaka Myō'otarō received the highest payment of all the carpenters. Tenaka Myō'otarō received one *kanmon*, his vice-headman Saburō 500 *mon*, the four assistants 300 *mon* each, and the village carpenters 100 *mon* each for the prayers performed at the beginning of the construction work. Similarly, they were rewarded in cash and in kind for the pillar-raising and ridgepole-raising ceremonies (ISZO, pp. 165-66).

rituals involved in the reconstruction of the shrines on Oyama's summit and slopes. Two of the applicants in 1856 were carpenters introduced by Tenaka Myō'otarō, who sought licenses to perform ridgepole-raising ceremonies and wear ceremonial robes and hats, a practice that does not seem to have disturbed Shingon clerics at Ōyama, even though one of the carpenters was also an *oshi* just like Tenaka Myō'otarō. As long as their Shinto ritual duties were limited to carpenterial rituals they posed no threat to the Shingon temples.

However, when seven applicants claimed to be shrine priests (*shikan* 祠官) and requested licenses to perform *shinpai* 神拝 (kami worship) ceremonies at their home altars and wear ceremonial robes and hats in 1855, they failed to obtain the necessary documents from Hachidai-bō in order to have their licenses officially recognized. The other applicants between 1856 and 1859 could not obtain official recognition either. In 1860, Hachidai-bō went as far as to prohibit all *oshi* from joining outside schools, such as the Shirakawa, which led the *oshi* to appeal to the magistrate of temples and shrines with the support of the Shirakawa in the summer of 1860 (MATSUOKA 1992a, p. 155). The Shirakawa pointed out that the Sekison Shrine was in fact originally a Shinto shrine since it had appeared in the tenth-century *Engishiki* under the name Aburi jinja but had later become a mixed Buddhist-Shinto site under the *honji-suijaku* theory of the Buddhist clergy. Among the contemporary *oshi* were those whose ancestors had held the positions of shrine priests and who now sought licenses to perform their hereditary function and wear their priestly ceremonial robes. However, the Shingon abbot failed to recognize their claim and to issue the necessary documents to make their Shirakawa licenses official because he argued that the Shingon clergy had been granted authority over Ōyama's land and that the temple on Ōyama had been revitalized by the Shingon monk Gangyō in the Kamakura period, setting a strong precedent for the exclusive authority of the Shingon clergy over the site. According to the Shirakawa, the abbot's argument was faulty because the Shinto faction based its claim on the authority of tenth-century *Engishiki*, which predated Gangyō's late thirteenth-century connection with Ōyama and proved that Ōyama had once been under the authority of the *jingikan* and that the Buddhist elements were a later accretion. In addition, there was precedent for the presence of other schools at Ōyama. For example, two *oshi* had held Yoshida licenses from 1652 and 1729 respectively and several others were *shugenja* affiliated with the Tendai School. The Shingon abbot should have therefore issued the necessary documents just as his predecessor had done in 1729 when an *oshi* had become affiliated with the Yoshida. This proved that *oshi* did not just receive their title and rank through

the Shingon abbot and his mountain codes but also through other forms of authority (SMC, pp. 173–74).

In the spring of 1861, the Hachidai-bō abbot Shōdō was summoned to the magistrate of temples and shrines. The *oshi* were represented by three Shirakawa-affiliated *oshi*, two of whom had obtained their Shirakawa licenses before the dispute (1818 and 1828). One of the latter two (Utsumi Shikibu) and the remaining third representative (Sudō Shigeo) had also become members of the nativist Hirata School in 1847. The Shingon clergy petitioned a prolonged recess because of the Hachidai-bō abbot's illness and then had him represented by monks from Ōyama's subtemples rather than lay village officials drawn from the *oshi* population. The Shirakawa-affiliated *oshi* continued to make their case using strong language. They claimed, for example, that the evil monks at Ōyama had unfairly wrenched control over the *oshi*'s parishes from the *oshi* and monopolized rituals and the issuing of amulets at the Sekison Shrine and the Fudō Hall. They prohibited the *oshi* from serving what these *oshi* claimed was their traditional function as shrine priests, which included the right to issue amulets of the deity at the Sekison Shrine and conduct Shinto rituals (MATSUOKA 1992a, pp. 155–59). In the fall of 1860, the situation escalated when the *oshi* tried to hold a Shinto funeral for an *oshi* who sought a Shirakawa license. The Shingon clergy was vehemently opposed to the performance of a Shinto funeral (TENAKA 1998) because virtually all *oshi* in Sakamoto were parishioners of Raigō-in and Kannon-ji, the two funerary Shingon temples in Sakamoto that were branch temples of Hachidai-bō (SNOA, documents 8–10).³⁰ A Shinto funeral was an open rejection of the Shingon clergy's authority over the *oshi*. In the following year, the *oshi* renewed their appeal, represented by Shirakawa-affiliated *oshi* Yamada Hyōma who had also been affiliated with the Hirata School since 1857. The controversy remained unresolved for several years until after the death of abbot Shōdō in 1864. It was not until 1865, when another six *oshi* joined the Shirakawa school, that Hachidai-bō finally gave its official permission to recognize the Shirakawa licenses of forty-eight *oshi* (MATSUOKA 1992a, pp. 155–59).

What led these *oshi* to adopt such a strong anti-Buddhist stance and suddenly challenge the authority of the Shingon clergy? In the first instance, the *oshi* witnessed several Shirakawa Shinto-style carpenterial rituals during the reconstruction of Ōyama's shrines on the summit after 1855, which may have suggested a return to native Shinto wor-

³⁰ Only the remaining Tendai-affiliated *shugenja* were allowed to perform their own funerals.

Table 5. Members of the Hirata School in Sagami Province

	<i>Oshi</i> Joining the Hirata School (<i>Oshi</i> With Additional Shirakawa Affil.)	Others in Sagami (Affiliated with a Shintō Shrine)
1814	—	1
1818	—	1
1847	2 (2)	—
1857	2 (2)	—
1858	2 (2)	—
1859	1 (2)	—
1861	—	1
1862	1 (1)	—
1864	2 (1)	2
1865	2 (1)	—
1866	—	3 (3)
1867	—	1 (1)
1868	—	1 (1)
total	12 (11)	10 (5)

* Table based on MATSUOKA 1992a, p. 160.

ship to those looking for an alternative to the Shingon clergy's strong Buddhist hold over Ōyama's rituals. The impact of such rituals must have been even stronger in light of the destruction of nearly all of Ōyama's Buddhist temples and halls in the aftermath of the earthquake, which served as a physical reminder that even these institutions were not permanent and that it was time for a renewal. Furthermore, three of the four leaders of the anti-Buddhist Shirakawa faction—Sudō Shigeo, Utsumi Shikibu, and Yamada Hyōma—had a strong connection with the nativist Hirata School founded by Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), who had himself become licensed by the Shirakawa in 1840. Among the various schools of national learning, all of which examined Japan's classical literature and ancient writings to find the “truly” indigenous roots of Japan, the Hirata school had a strong focus on Shinto cosmology and offered religious professionals such as Ōyama's *oshi* and shrine priests an appealing alternate view on a subject that was dominated largely by Buddhist concepts. The brand of national learning at Ōyama is perhaps best exemplified by the *Aburi jinja kodenkō* (1848), a overtly anti-Buddhist work authored by Sudō Shigeo one year after he joined the Hirata school and six years before he became licensed by the Shirakawa. Sudō Shigeo's interest in national learning went far beyond a mere interest in literature.

Through an examination of the *Kojiki* (712), *Nihongi* (720), and *Engishiki* (927), and a critical analysis of works that he attributed to the Shingon clergy (e.g., *Ōyamadera engi* [The founding legend of Ōyama-dera],³¹ *Ōyama Fudō reigenki* [A record of miracles of Ōyama Fudō; 1792]), Shigeo attempted to reconstruct Ōyama's pre-Buddhist roots—its deities, places of worship, name, and rituals before the monk Rōben's arrival. He accused the Shingon clergy of deceiving Japan's rulers and residents of the Kantō region with evil magic and argued for a conversion of the Buddhist site into its pre-Buddhist predecessor, Aburi jinja. In the process, Shigeo also reevaluated the mountain codes issued under Kaizō. He viewed the mountain codes, which had initially protected the rights of *oshi* in regard to their parishes and licenses vis-a-vis competition from Koyasu Village, as oppressive:

The sixth abbot Kaizō... laid down various regulations for the mountain. These were all ways to take away the power of those who had served as *shishoku* 祠職 (shrine priests) since days of old. Once the monks had come to power, they set up regulations and charged various people with duties.

(STK, p. 491)

To Sudō Shigeo, the mountain codes did not protect the rights of the *oshi* but merely served to take away their power in the same way as the Tokugawa legislation did in the beginning of the seventeenth century. He considered the *oshi* the rightful heirs to the original shrine priests who he thought had served at Aburi jinja before the arrival of Buddhism at Ōyama. He expressed their connection by spelling *shishoku*—an alternative name for *oshi* 御師—with the characters 祠職, meaning shrine priest, rather than the more usual spelling 師職. He argued for the restoration of original Shinto ceremonies based on the *Engishiki* under the leadership of the descendants of the shrine priests (STK, pp. 472–73, 490–91). This was essentially the argument used by the Shirakawa faction in their dispute against the Shingon clergy at Ōyama.

Sudō, Utsumi, and Yamada were not the only nativist *oshi* at that time, but Sakamoto was the at foremost center of the Hirata school in Sagami Province: before the Meiji period, twelve of twenty-two members in Sagami were Ōyama *oshi*. In the area, the school recruited most of its members through a network of Shinto priests in the Kantō

³¹ The *Ōyama-dera engi* probably dates from the late thirteenth century, but the oldest extant manuscript of it is a vernacular version from 1532. The oldest extant manuscript of the *kanbun* version dates from 1637.

region. Ten of the twelve *oshi* also already held or later acquired Shirakawa licenses, indicating that there was a close relationship between the *oshi*'s Shintoist and nativist interests. Between 1847 and 1857, the first Hirata School members at Ōyama were introduced with the help of outside shrine priests. The first two *oshi* to join the school were Utsumi Shikibutayū and Sudō Shigeo—who joined in 1847, four years after the death of Hirata Atsutane, the founder of the school. Both Utsumi and Sudō were introduced to the Hirata school by a shrine priest (*kannushi*) at a Hachiman shrine in Shimōsa. As in the case of the rush to acquire Shirakawa licenses after the fire in 1855, several other *oshi* joined the Hirata school then. In 1857, about two years after the great fire, Yamada Hyōma and another *oshi* were introduced to the Hirata School by a native of Shinano Province who later became the head shrine priest (宮司 *gūji*) at the Atsuta Shrine in Owari Province. At that time, Yamada and the other *oshi* both had already attempted to obtain Shirakawa licenses as had six of the eight other *oshi* who joined subsequently between 1858 and 1865 after they were introduced to the school by one of their peers at Ōyama.

The overlap between those holding Shirakawa licenses and those who became members of the Hirata School indicates a strong leaning toward national learning within the Shinto specialist contingent of the *oshi*. Even though not all of the *oshi* licensed by the Shirakawa had become members of the Hirata school ten of the fifty-three (about 20%) had (MATSUOKA 1992a, pp. 153, 159–61).³² Forty-one of the fifty-five *oshi* who held Shirakawa licenses and/or were members of the Hirata School can be identified as *oshi* who ranked either as upper-level (29) or mid-level (12) in the *toritsugi* system. This suggests that they were *oshi* who were rather well to do with large parishes.³³ For these wealthy *oshi* the great fire in 1855 had provided a fertile ground in which they could prosper at Ōyama. The anti-Buddhist rhetoric of the nativist Hirata School provided ammunition on ideological grounds whereas their Shirakawa affiliation gave them the necessary institutional backing to oppose the authority of the Shingon clergy. These nativist scholars, including Sudō Shigeo, and holders of Shirakawa licenses were to become instrumental leaders in the separation of Shinto and Buddhism during the early Meiji period.

³² Making a distinction between the *oshi*'s reasons to join the Shirakawa and Hirata schools, Matsuoka argues that the former was related to sacerdotal rights whereas the latter was motivated by an interest in literature. While this may be the case, it is difficult to separate the two as most *kokugaku* members were also licensed by the Shirakawa and little is known about what motivated these Shinto specialists to enter the Hirata school.

³³ This calculation is based on a classification of *oshi* in MATSUOKA 1992b, pp. 12–23.

Conclusion

The kind of return to ancient ways that these nativist *oshi* envisioned was not simply a return to pre-Tokugawa Ōyama but a mythical, pre-Buddhist site. They did not seek a reinstatement of Ōyama's Shugendō but a pure Shinto tradition. They attempted to reject their status as *oshi* and redefine themselves as Shinto shrine priests. Ironically, however, they took for granted the highly popular Ōyama cult, which had been the result of the *oshi*'s symbiotic relationship with the Shingon clergy during the Tokugawa period.

Yet it had been their role as *oshi* that contributed to the spread of the Ōyama cult in the Kantō region. Over the course of the seventeenth century, they developed gradually out of the *shugenja* and shrine priests who had lost much of their authority to the Shingon temples on the mountain in the first decade of the seventeenth century. Eventually, the tradition of mountain asceticism largely disappeared from Ōyama in the second half of the seventeenth century and left the former mountain ascetics to seek new means of income, forcing them to run inns and develop parishes throughout the Kantō region. These parishes from which most of Ōyama's pilgrims came became the single most important source of income for Ōyama. The system spread from areas near Ōyama across the entire Kantō region. It was these *oshi* who sustained the bonds between parishioners and the mountain through making yearly rounds of their parishes and providing accommodations for pilgrims. Despite their conflict-laden genesis, the *oshi* were not in constant opposition to Ōyama's Shingon temples. They developed customary networks with temples to handle pilgrims and received licenses from the head Shingon temple, Hachidai-bō, which helped them to distinguish themselves from their competitors in neighboring villages. Another reason why the *oshi* did not voice a united opposition to the temples was that they were in fact a fairly diverse group with different heritages and levels of wealth. Some *oshi* were in the employ of Hachidai-bō and therefore shared the temples' interests. It was only in the late Edo period that several wealthy *oshi* began to seek affiliation with external sources of authority such as the Shirakawa house and to engage in anti-Buddhist rhetoric culled from the nativist Hirata School. This rhetoric eventually led to friction between the Shingon temples and the *oshi*, and provided the basis for the separation of Shinto and Buddhism in the early Meiji period.

As travel increased in the Tokugawa period, pilgrimages to various sacred sites became popular throughout Japan. Religious specialists like the *oshi* contributed to the growth and continued popularity of these pilgrimage centers. Rather than relying on sporadic haphazard

pilgrims, the *oshi* and their parishes gave the sites stability by forming systems of pilgrimage management. That is the reason why the most popular early modern pilgrimage centers such as sacred mountains (e.g., Ōyama, Mt. Fuji) or famous temples and shrines (e.g., Zenkō-ji, Ise) had *oshi* or comparable systems. The concrete organizational structures differed from site to site. While Ōyama's *oshi* were controlled by the resident Shingon abbot, Mt. Fuji's *oshi* were organized in self-governing guilds and at Zenkō-ji low-ranking Buddhist priests in forty-six hermitages serving as innkeepers were controlled by the Tendai abbot of Zenkō-ji. Like Ōyama's *oshi*, they also held parishes, collected donations, and distributed amulets. These proselytizing innkeepers all provided the sacred sites with a comparatively stable base of income. They also helped to stem competition and strife by limiting the pool of contenders who could participate in the system and by strictly regulating the interactions with pilgrims and parishioners.

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- ISSM *Iseharashishi shiryō shozai mokuroku* 伊勢原市史資料所在目録, vols. 2–5. Iseharashi sōmubu sōmuka 伊勢原市総務部総務課, ed. Isehara: Iseharashi, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1994.
- ISZO *Iseharashishi shiryōhen zoku Ōyama* 伊勢原市史資料編続大山. Iseharashishi henshū iinkai, ed. 伊勢原市史編集委員会. Isehara: Iseharashi, 1994.
- KD “Oshi” 御師. In *Kokushi daijiten* 国史大事典 vol. 2, p. 826. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980.
- KNG *Kōyaku karei nenjū gyōji: Kamimachi Ōbake* 口訳家例年中行事—上町大場家. Tōkyōto Setagayaku kyōiku iinkai 東京都世田谷区教育委員会, ed. Tokyo: Tōkyōto Setagayaku Kyōiku Iinkai, 1989.
- OCSK “Ōyama chishi onshirabe kakiage” 大山地誌御調書上. In *Ōyama chishi shirabe kakiage* 大山地誌調書上. Copy at Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, 1921. (Frst compiled in 1835 as “Chishi oshirabe kakiage,” copied in 1877)
- OFRK *Ōyama Fudō reigenki* 大山不動靈験記. Shinzō 心藏 ed., Sagami Ōyamadera Yōchiin, 1792.
- ONK *Ōyama engi narabi kiroku* 大山縁起併記録. Copy at Tōkyō Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, 1921.
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- SMC *Shirakawa monjin chō* 白川門人帳. Kondō Yoshihiro 近藤喜博 ed. Tokyo: Seibundō, 1972.
- SNOA "Shūmon ninbetsu on'aratamechō" 宗門人別御改帳. Documents 8-10. *Satō Ryōjike shozō monjo* 佐藤良次家所蔵文書. Microfilm copy at Iseharashishi Hensanshitsu, 1781.
- STK *Shintō taikai: Jinjahan* 神道大系 神社編, vol. 16, pp. 426-493. Tokyo: Shintō Taikai Hensankai, 1982.
- TKK *Tokugawa kinrei kō* 徳川禁令稿, vol. 5. Tōkyō: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1932.

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