Mark McNally

Tokugawa Japan From the "Outside" and the Inside

Wagaku and Kokugaku, Etics and Emics, Nationalism and Exceptionalism

During the Edo period, the study of Japanese antiquity, especially its religious and literary aspects, went by various names, but the two most common of these were *wagaku* and Kokugaku. In theory, both of these terms mostly signified the same thing, and so they should have been interchangeable. In fact, the usage of both during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries suggests just that. However, some scholars of the time did not think these terms were synonymous. These scholars recognized a fundamental difference between the two: one was coherent to individuals regardless of whether or not they resided in Japan (*wagaku*), while the other (Kokugaku) was only properly understood by those familiar with the intellectual context of the time. The terminological controversy between *wagaku* and Kokugaku was tantamount to a recognition by Tokugawa intellectuals of the differences between what Western scholars today refer to as etics and emics respectively. By understanding the terminological history of *wagaku* and Kokugaku, we can see how the shift from the former to the latter was a deeply ideological one. Specifically, the terminological victory of Kokugaku over *wagaku* signified the dominance of exceptionalism over ethnic nationalism.

keywords: Kokugaku—*wagaku*—emics—etics—nationalism—exceptionalism

Mark McNally is Professor of History at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

I F THE historical significance of the renowned Edo-period scholars of Shinto, Kamo no Mabuchi 賀茂真淵 (1697–1769) and Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730–1801), was connected to the fact that their work embodied both the application of a new textual methodology and the articulation of a new "nationalistic" ideology, then one can reasonably conclude that other scholars who enjoyed less renown represented one aspect but not the other. In fact, in ideological terms, there were other Tokugawa intellectuals who believed in Japan's inherent superiority. However, these were scholars who embraced the foreign intellectual institution of Confucianism—rather than rejecting it—and therefore they are not suited to Maruyama Masao's dialectical conceptualization of Kokugaku 国学 (national learning/the learning of the nation) as an intellectual movement that was separate and distinct from, and antagonistic toward, Confucianism. Thus, he left them out (MARUYAMA 1974).[1] At the same time, there were scholars who also used philological methods in their studies of Japanese antiquity, but without the goal of asserting Japan's superiority. Maruyama also chose not to analyze these scholars in any significant way within the context of Kokugaku. The result, especially for a work as influential as Maruyama's, is a skewed image of Kokugaku that invites readers to conclude that all Tokugawa scholars who studied Japanese antiquity did so with an extreme ideological agenda, which is how Mabuchi and Norinaga have been represented.[2] However, this was not the case. Specifically, there were intellectuals who studied Japanese antiquity yet referred to their work as *wagaku* 和学 (Japanese learning/the learning of Japan), not as Kokugaku. Any discussion of Kokugaku should therefore account for those scholars who self-identified with *wagaku*.

By denying the exclusive identification of Kokugaku with assertions of superiority—or what Americanists have called "exceptionalism"[3]—the focus shifts not only to other Tokugawa figures *outside* of Kokugaku who harbored such

1. Maruyama was one of the leading scholars of Japanese intellectual history in postwar Japan. His view of Kokugaku as the native, intellectual movement opposed to Confucianism, as a foreign form of scholarship, is still prevalent in the field of Tokugawa intellectual history today. See HAROOTUNIAN (1988); NOSCO (1990); BURNS (2003); HANSEN (2008); FLUECKIGER (2011); and WACHUTKA (2013).

2. Note that neither Mabuchi nor Norinaga used "Kokugaku" as the word to describe their scholarly work, although Norinaga admitted that "Kokugaku" was the least problematic of the various terms for such scholarship at the time. See MCNALLY (2005).

3. For more detailed discussions of exceptionalism, see GREENE (1993); HODGSON (2009); LIPSET (1963; 1996); LOCKHART (2003); MADSEN (1998); SOMBART (1976); and TURNER (1996).

views but also to figures *within* Kokugaku who did *not* subscribe to exceptionalist ideas; some of the prominent scholars who identified with *wagaku* fall into this group. Incredibly, there were intellectuals who are commonly associated with Kokugaku, yet who actually rejected the idea that Japan was superior to China. The existence of such intellectuals complicates any discussion of Kokugaku and may explain why Maruyama expressed his exasperation at the thought of producing any neat analysis of it. The association of these intellectuals with Kokugaku, I argue, is the result of ideological interpretations of Tokugawa intellectual history that began during the end of the Edo period and continued into the Meiji period. Some of these *wagaku* intellectuals actually denied that their work was part of Kokugaku at all, but their work was placed alongside that of their exceptionalist Kokugaku colleagues anyway. This issue goes to the very heart of the Kokugaku phenomenon, even to the emergence and meaning of the term itself. For the first half of the Tokugawa period, *wagaku* was the term intellectuals used to signify scholarship on Japanese antiquity. During the eighteenth century, the term "Kokugaku" emerged and the process of replacing *wagaku* began, a transition that ended in the late Meiji period. Thus, by analyzing Kokugaku as exceptionalism, it allows us to see more clearly the ideological cleavage within it, and to begin to understand how scholars dealt with this difference over time, revealing the ways in which Kokugaku has effaced *wagaku* for almost the last two centuries.

Kokugaku Through the Lens of Exceptionalism: The (Re)Emergence of Wagaku

At the outset, there are two issues that complicate our understanding of Kokugaku during the Tokugawa period. The first is that the use of exceptionalism as an analytical category assumes that assertions of superiority were based on the existence of an indigenous Japanese Way (*michi*, *dō* 道).[4] For scholars under the sway of Sinocentrism, the beliefs and practices of the Japanese people of antiquity did not constitute a distinct Japanese Way, since there was only China's Way of the Sages (*seijin no michi* 聖人の道). For these scholars, any claims of

---

4. To put it more precisely, exceptionalism emerges when there are claims that a nation, culture, or society is either "exemplary" or that it is "exempt" (Greene 1993). I (McNally 2016) argue that Tokugawa exceptionalism exhibited *both* of these characteristics, namely, scholars asserted that Japan was exemplary because it was exempt (chiefly from the Chinese tributary system) and because it was exemplary (typified by words like *shinkoku* 神国 [the realm of the kami]) it was exempt.

The foreign origins of Buddhism did not preclude medieval Japanese Buddhists from making exceptional claims—what Teeuwen (2013, 53) calls "nativism"—about Japan. Buddhism also did not necessarily present an ideological impediment to assertions of Japanese superiority for some medieval scholars of poetry. Note how Confucianism was also not an impediment for Edo Confucians under the sway of Tokugawa exceptionalism (McNally 2016).

superiority were odd, since Japan was not the birthplace of the Way of the Sages; while the Japanese eventually adopted the Way of the Sages, their ancient ancestors had no Way of their own at all in the era prior to that.

A second issue with which historians must contend is when and under what conditions the term "Kokugaku" came into usage as a signifier for the study of Japanese antiquity. The term likely developed during the first half of the eighteenth century, but Kokugaku is thought to have had adherents even during the seventeenth century, as noted by Maruyama (1974, 143). At the same time, there were scholars who never used the term "Kokugaku," yet whose work was later classified as such anyway. For them, *wagaku* was the more appropriate term to signify the study of Japanese antiquity. Their self-identification as scholars of *wagaku*, therefore, was erased, and it is important to understand how and why this happened as the forgotten ideological history of Kokugaku. I believe that these two issues are fundamentally related. Consequently, *wagaku* was the older term, and it simply meant the study of the imperial culture of Japanese antiquity, whereas Kokugaku signified a particular attitudinal approach, namely, an assertion of superiority coupled with an orientation toward Japan as a whole, what Conrad Totman (1982, 276) describes as a national ethnicity. For this reason, Kokugaku was already oriented toward exceptionalism in ways *wagaku* was not.

Using exceptionalism as an analytical category allows us to analyze the ideological differences between *wagaku* and Kokugaku, so that the former can reemerge from the shadow of the latter. Without exceptionalism, there would be no compelling historiographical reason to analyze the differences between the two or to view them as separate forms of scholarship, since the category of proto/pre-nationalism is no less sufficient for the task, as it is equally applicable to both. *Wagaku* scholars were interested in describing and preserving Japan's distinct culture, one that they associated exclusively with the imperial court; Kokugaku scholars were also concerned with reviving Japan's ancient cultural institutions, even if they did not associate them solely with the imperial court. For these scholars, however, who not only identified themselves with *wagaku* but also specifically repudiated Kokugaku, it is important to understand what they meant. The category of exceptionalism represents a point of departure for this discussion.

At the same time, the anthropological concepts of emics (particular concepts) and etics (universal concepts) are also useful in analyzing the divide between *wagaku* and Kokugaku (Goodenough 1970; Harris 1979; 1999).[5] Within the

5. Since I interpret Kokugaku as an emic during the Edo period, I render it in capital letters without italics. By the same token, *wagaku* was an etic, and for this reason I use lowercase letters and italics. Consequently, *kokugaku* functions as an etic, a meaning that developed during the Meiji era, and so would be an anachronism in an Edo-period context. Within Japanese historiography this is obviously not an issue and so facilitated its unproblematic transition from emic to etic.

context of premodern Japan, *wagaku* was always an etic category whose meaning was dependent on terms like *tōgaku* 唐学 (learning of the Tang [dynasty]) and *kangaku* 漢学 (learning of the Han [dynasty/people]), two other etic concepts. The novel usage of Kokugaku as a signifier for a distinctive kind of scholarship was emic, with a meaning that was unique to Tokugawa Japan. So long as the two terms occupied different epistemological niches, one etic and the other emic, they could, and did, coexist. Once these distinctions were blurred—specifically when Kokugaku began to assume an etic function itself—confusion reigned, and the terms became interchangeable. Ultimately, the need for two etics waned, and Kokugaku prevailed. The exceptionalist orientation of the term, however, endured, and this represented a profound ideological shift away from *wagaku*.

The Origins of Wagaku

The evidence suggests that the word "Kokugaku," in its capacity as a signifier for a form of scholarship focused on ancient Japan, emerged during the first half of the Tokugawa period. Prior to this, it appears that the term *wagaku* was more common, as the writings of the *wagaku* scholars of the Tokugawa period tell us. These scholars indicated that references to scholarship on Wa (that is, Japan) emerged during the Heian period, arising from the need to distinguish between scholarship based on documents from China and scholarship based on those of Japanese origin. Murata Harumi 村田春海 (1746–1811), one of Mabuchi's most prominent students, observed the following:

> There was no one [during antiquity] who separately specialized (*sengyō seshi hito* 専業せし人) in *wagaku*. In the middle era (*chūsei* 中世), during the time of Horikawain 堀川院 (Fujiwara no Mototsune 藤原基経 [836–891]), if we look to the *Wagaku tokugōshō mondō* 和学得業生問答, written by Ōe no Masafusa 大江匡房 (1041–1111), we see that the term *wagaku* begins to be used… [shortly thereafter] *wagaku*, for the most part, started.   (*Wagaku taigai*, NST 39: 448)

Although Harumi argued that the term *wagaku* emerged during the ninth century, the oldest source he could find to substantiate this claim was from the eleventh century. Moreover, Harumi gives us no indication as to the extent to which the term was used among Heian intellectuals and government officials.

We should keep in mind that all etics began their conceptual lives as emics. Particular concepts, in other words, gradually become broader in their applications, and in this way become universal concepts. This, I argue, is true of both terms, Kokugaku and exceptionalism (MCNALLY 2016; 2022). They are special (exceptional) because they are etics that function as emics in the sense that they only apply to Japanese history, in the case of the former, and American history (for adherents of American exceptionalism), in the case of the latter. Emics that morph into etics that continue to retain their emic qualities are closely connected to exceptionalism (in its true etic sense).

His point is that by the time he penned his remarks in 1793, *wagaku* was a term with a nearly one-thousand-year history. During the *ritsuryō* era, Japanese intellectuals were engaged in adopting the legal codes and government institutions of the Tang imperial court. Although there were important documents that the Japanese themselves composed during this time—like the *Nihongi* 日本紀, *Kojiki* 古事記, and *Man'yōshū* 万葉集—court scholars were preoccupied with efforts to adopt Chinese institutions:

> Confucians in our own land did not understand the historical circumstances (*kokushi tenko* 国史典故) of our land. In that era, they were merely unhelpful to [the pursuit of] scholarship; they were like stubborn gentlemen. The duty of a Confucian was simply to understand Chinese books and to understand only that as their calling (*waza* 業). They viewed the matters of our own land as external (*soto no koto* 外のこと), thereby losing the true intention of the way of scholarship. (*Wagaku taigai*, NST 39: 448)

Once the pace of this effort began to subside, culminating in the end of the *ritsuryō*, scholars were able to turn their attention to ancient Japanese documents. Before the advent of *wagaku*, Harumi states that it was the Confucians (*jusei* 儒生) who had focused on Chinese works at the expense of Japanese ones. While the *ritsuryō* era was important for Buddhism with the rise of the Nara schools, Tendai, and Shingon, Harumi did not hold them to the same expectations as he did the Confucians. In a sense, he viewed the Confucians as authentic scholars in a way that he did not view the Buddhists, and he blamed the Confucians for their oversight.

Oyamada Tomokiyo 小山田与清 (1782–1847), one of Harumi's most famous students, not surprisingly accepted his teacher's views on *wagaku*, but he managed to add some supplemental opinions of his own: "In the *Honchō monzui* 本朝文粋, we see [the phrase] 'the scholarship of Watō' 倭唐, and this is where our term *wagaku* comes from (*Matsunoya hikki*, 2: 265). Tomokiyo provides us yet another instance of an ancient usage of *wagaku* in the form of a reference to scholarship regarding Wa, but the source he cites is different from that Harumi had cited roughly twenty years earlier. Harumi believed that the term *wagaku* appeared during the ninth century, but this view was based on an eleventh-century source, and Tomokiyo's oldest source for *wagaku* was also from the eleventh century. Like Harumi, Tomokiyo also found an ancient source that dated the first reference to the scholarship of the Wa to the ninth century:

> The meaning of the ideograph *Wa* 倭 is unfortunate, but in the ninth volume of the *Chōyagunsai* 朝野群載, Fujiwara no Akirakeiko 藤原明子 (829–900) [is recorded as saying,] "meaning [results from] the investigation of learning, past and present, and a combination of Wa and Tō 唐 (Japan and China)."

We must learn from the Way of scholarship that esteems antiquity and follow [Akirakeiko's admonition]. (*Matsunoya hikki*, 2: 584)

While Harumi had found an eleventh-century text with a ninth-century reference to *wagaku*, Tomokiyo found a twelfth-century text with a similar ninth-century reference. Tomokiyo attributes the first documented usage of *wagaku* to a female aristocrat who was the consort of Emperor Montoku 文徳 (827–858), and the daughter of Fujiwara no Yoshifusa 藤原良房 (804–872), the first of what are known today as the Fujiwara regents. Through Fujiwara no Akirakeiko, Tomokiyo believed that *wagaku* had its origins not only in the early decades of the Heian period, but that they were also firmly connected to the imperial court. This revelation, as important as it was to Tomokiyo, was perhaps secondary to the other major point in the above passage, namely, that scholars used the wrong ideograph for rendering *wagaku*. In antiquity, the Japanese called themselves the Wa, and early dynastic historians in China used the ideograph 倭 (meaning "the small people") to signify them. Once the Japanese had mastered classical Chinese, they stopped using 倭 during the Nara period in favor of 和, also read as "Wa," but bearing the meaning of "peace" or "harmony." To say the least, the appellation of 倭 was not a very flattering gesture by the Chinese. However, Tomokiyo, who had a reputation in Edo as a redoubtable evidential scholar, insisted that scholars, who had not used it for more than a millennium, should resume its use, since the authors of the ancient sources had used it, lending to it an aura of legitimacy that their contemporaries could not question. Tomokiyo's philological purism made him somewhat unique during the Tokugawa period, as the majority of scholars rendered *wagaku* as 和学 rather than 倭学.

In 1769, a Confucian scholar, Matsumiya Kanzan 松宮観山 (1686–1780), wrote an important work on *wagaku*, his *Wagakuron*, in which he also claimed ancient origins for *wagaku*:

In antiquity, before the opening of maritime routes, the realm was untouched (*jun'itsu* 純一) [by foreign contact], and the people were ignorant [of the outside world]. Then, *kangaku* came [to Japan] and the term (*na* 名) *wagaku* emerged. (*Wagakuron*, MKS 2: 189)

Unfortunately, Kanzan is not any more specific as to the era of this emergence, which we see with Harumi and especially with Tomokiyo. He seems to argue that the ancient Japanese people had a sense of community, such that they were able to recognize a difference between themselves and arrivals from abroad bearing Chinese books with them.[6] It was this recognition that prompted them to distinguish their own scholarly endeavors from those of the foreigners. If

---

6. The encounter between natives and foreign immigrants is the beginning of nativism once the former begins opposing the presence of the latter (MCNALLY 2016; 2018).

interactions with foreigners spurred the ancient Japanese to create the term *wagaku*, then Kanzan seems to locate its emergence as early as the sixth century, when Buddhism is thought to have arrived in Japan from the Korean kingdom of Paekche. This dating, of course, would be much earlier than the tenth-century dates provided by Harumi and Tomokiyo. Kanzan, however, does not provide a philological source for such an implication; as a Confucian scholar, he may have tried, but ultimately failed, to ground this claim in Japan's ancient sources. His instincts, however, were good, since foreign interactions do elicit nativist responses. One might think that the first wave of arrivals in Japan—speaking different tongues and clutching strange books—would have inspired the ancient Japanese to reflect on their own language and culture and assert their differences appropriately, even though the nature of their own cultural/ethnic identities is one about which little is known. The emergence of a term like *wagaku*, therefore, would not be surprising and is certainly not beyond the imagination. Since Kanzan himself was not a scholar of *wagaku*, he did not adhere to its established philological standards, and so he was able to make such a logical and reasonable insight even without any hard evidence to substantiate it.

It is clear that Kanzan, Tomokiyo, and Harumi believed that the term *wagaku* had an ancient provenance, as did the scholarly tradition that it signified. Harumi and Tomokiyo found ancient sources with references to ninth-century usages of the term. Assuming that these sources are accurate—and that these references did not document the *first* time that *wagaku* was ever used—then it is reasonable to assume that the term predates even the ninth century; this line of thinking characterized Kanzan's approach. In any case, the views of all three scholars are in agreement on at least one thing, namely, that *wagaku* predates the Tokugawa period. So, one would expect that it was a commonplace term among intellectuals during the eighteenth century.

Kamo no Mabuchi was active about a generation before both Harumi and Tomokiyo, and he was a contemporary of Kanzan. Although Mabuchi was a central figure in the history of Kokugaku, "Kokugaku" was a term that he may not have actually used. In fact, he was officially a scholar of *wagaku*. From 1742 to 1746, a debate emerged over the political utility of verse in which Mabuchi was a participant (Nosco 1990, 109–118). The debate was instigated at the request of Tayasu Munetake 田安宗武 (1715–1771), the head of a cadet branch of the Tokugawa and son of the eighth shogun, Yoshimune 徳川吉宗 (1684–1751), who made his own scholarly contributions and requested the same of his personal tutor, Kada no Arimaro 荷田在満 (1706–1751). In the end, Munetake was more impressed with Mabuchi's views, and he asked Mabuchi to take Arimaro's place as tutor, as the latter had resigned as a result of the debate. Mabuchi became Munetake's *wagaku* "specialist" (*wagaku goyō* 和学御用) in 1746, a position he held until his retirement in 1760 (Nosco 1990, 117). In a letter dated the

twenty-eighth day of the second month of the first year of his appointment, Mabuchi reported the news of his appointment: "On the thirteenth of this month, the lord of the Tayasu retained me, with a stipend, as his specialist in *wagaku* and such" (TERADA 1979, 132). Mabuchi did not make many references to *wagaku* but they were unnecessary, since *wagaku* was in his job title. Since it was rather obvious that he was a scholar of *wagaku*, because of his focus on ancient and classical Japanese literature, the subject of what to call such a scholarly undertaking was never an issue for him, and likely not for other intellectuals as well. This issue, however, did become prominent by the time of Mabuchi's death, as scholars like Matsumiya Kanzan had to grapple with the emergence of a new term: Kokugaku.

Murata Harumi, as one of Mabuchi's closest students, was well aware of his teacher's position as a scholar of *wagaku*, with which Harumi himself identified. He observed that *wagaku* had not only very ancient roots in Japan's history, with deep connections to the imperial court, but that it also had even more profound connections to the Tokugawa Bakufu itself. Specifically, the state-sponsored Shōheizaka Academy (Shōheizaka Gakumonjo 昌平坂学問所,) established in 1640, included it as one of the five subject areas of its curriculum. Thus, it was under the leadership of the academy's director, Hayashi Gahō 林 鵞峰 (1618–1680), that *wagaku* became "an obligation that had to be pursued" (*Wagaku taigai*, NST 39: 448). Prior to the founding of the academy, according to Harumi, the situation for *wagaku* was dire as intellectuals focused on Confucian studies and neglected matters related to Japan. Within the academy, scholars divided *wagaku* into three distinct specialties: history (*kokushi jitsuroku* 国史実録), ancient legal codes (*ritsuryō tenko* 律令典故), and philology (*kogen* 古言, literally, "ancient words"). Harumi placed special emphasis on philology, since it was the intellectual foundation needed to understand the other two: "For the pursuit of *wagaku*, ignorance of ancient words creates many impediments to understanding the other two subjects" (*Wagaku taigai*, NST 39: 448). The Tokugawa Bakufu, for Harumi, had saved *wagaku* from the neglect of Confucianism by sheltering it in their academy where it could endure and even flourish.

The Problem with Wagaku

Writing in 1857, Ōkuni Takamasa 大国隆正 (1792–1871) commented on how *wagaku* had gone into decline as its scholars were unable to avoid irrelevancy:

> Early Japanese Confucians introduced the idea of benevolence and righteousness (*jingi* 仁義) to those who practiced *wagaku*. However, many [*wagaku* scholars] lost the truth of benevolence and righteousness, and this was embarrassing [for *wagaku*].… It makes one feel as if the *wagaku* scholars were surpassed by the Confucians (*jusha* 儒者).   (*Gakutō benron*, NST 50: 468)

Takamasa's point in this very brief passage is that *wagaku* scholars pursued their studies without any moral consideration, especially the values of benevolence and righteousness that were so highly valued by the Song Confucians and their philosophical inspiration, Mencius 孟子 (ca. 372–289 BCE). These values made the work of the Confucians socially and politically critical, and for that reason Song Confucianism was enshrined as exam orthodoxy in both the Ming and Qing dynasties. Even without an examination system in Japan, Song Confucianism enjoyed the support of the Edo Bakufu, becoming the basis for the curriculum of the bakufu's academy upon its founding in 1640. Takamasa's comment implies that *wagaku* was in decline by the middle of the nineteenth century, as its adherents were overly obsessed with trivial matters, such as the study of ancient poetry. As a form of relevant scholarship, *wagaku* could not compete, in a real sense, with Confucianism.

Takamasa's critical assessment of *wagaku* was certainly not the first of its kind during the Tokugawa period, since eighteenth-century intellectuals were also well aware of *wagaku*'s shortcomings. Nearly one hundred years earlier in 1758, a treatise on *wagaku* by Shinozaki Tōkai 篠崎東海 (1687–1740) entitled *Wagakuben* was published. Tōkai indicates another problem with *wagaku* that later influenced Kokugaku scholars like Motoori Norinaga and Hirata Atsutane:

> People in our realm call the learning of matters regarding our realm "*wagaku*," but this is looking down [at Japan] from [the point of view of] China. During the Han, there was no concept of *kangaku*; in the Tang, there was no concept of *tōgaku*; and in Korea, there is no concept of *chōsengaku* 朝鮮学 (Chosŏn 조선 learning). During the Tang, *wagaku* was an undertaking, and it meant learning about matters related to Japan…. [The same is true for Korea]…. Having the concept of *wagaku* in Tang China and in Korea makes sense. The concept of *wagaku* in Japan is regrettable. (*Wagakuben*, M 4: 175)

Put simply, Tōkai argues that *wagaku* was an inappropriate term for the Japanese to use in reference to the study of their own antiquity. He observes, however, that the definition of *wagaku* is as straightforward as it appears to be, as it merely signifies the study of subjects related to Japan, focusing exclusively on texts written by Japanese authors. Tōkai's complaint is that there were no analogous forms of scholarship to *wagaku* in China or in Korea; in fact, *wagaku* sounds to him like a term invented by Chinese or Korean scholars to denote *their* study of Japan, rather than a term the Japanese invented for the study of their own cultural and historical legacies. Tōkai suggests that the ancient Japanese invented the term *wagaku* out of a sense of shame—if not contempt—for Japan, feelings that the Chinese and the Koreans did not share about their own societies. By invoking the Tang dynasty specifically, Tōkai dates the emergence of *wagaku* to roughly the same era as Murata Harumi and Oyamada Tomokiyo, but he laments this

emergence as an unfortunate consequence of Japan's interaction with the more advanced society of the Tang. The Japanese of antiquity had bowed to the superiority of China by inventing *wagaku*, but this situation was only worsened with the perpetuation of that term over the centuries, as scholars of Tōkai's day continued to use it uncritically. While I argue that the term "Kokugaku" had strong connections to Japanese exceptionalism, *wagaku* had similarly strong connections to Sinocentrism *qua* Chinese exceptionalism, a fact that Tōkai recognized all too well.

Matsumiya Kanzan echoed Tōkai's sentiments in 1769: "However, Japanese Confucians (Waju 倭儒) celebrate *kangaku*, [while] they take the 'other' (*ka* 彼) as civilized and denigrate themselves as barbarians (*i* 夷)" (*Wagakuron*, MKS 2: 181). In the Chinese worldview, China represented civilization itself, since it was the birthplace of the sages and early kings, who then created the Way. China was, for this reason, inherently superior to the cultures and societies on its periphery, like Japan, whose people were "barbarians" before their adoption of the Way. Tōkai's complaint was that Japanese Confucians had surrendered to the Sinocentrism that resided at the core of Confucianism by using a term like *wagaku*, since it particularized Japan while preserving the universal applicability of Confucianism. For Kanzan, the self-loathing that was implicit in the term *wagaku* was made worse by the haughty attitudes of Japanese Confucians toward Shinto: "Scholars of *wagaku* are angry at Confucians (*jusha*) who show their contempt for Shinto, [and so *wagaku* scholars] despise *kangaku*" (*Wagakuron*, MKS 2: 183). Shinto held a special place within *wagaku* because of its ties to the imperial court, the material culture of which was a matter of great interest for specialists in *yūsoku kojitsu* 有職故実 (antiquarianism), one of the critical subfields of *wagaku* (CARTER 1996, 183). It is likely that Kanzan was referring to a notorious work written by Dazai Shundai 太宰春台 (1680–1747) called the *Bendōsho* 辨道書 (1735), in which Shundai refuted the idea that Shinto constituted a Japanese Way in antiquity (MCNALLY 2005, 38–39). This text spurred other prominent intellectuals to formulate their own views on the matter, whether in support of Shundai or against him, as was the case with Mabuchi and Norinaga. Kanzan's observation makes it clear that his sympathies were with the *wagaku* scholars, and not with those Confucians like Shundai who had ridiculed Shinto.

In 1776, Kanzan produced another treatise in which the status of *wagaku* was central. He repeated his earlier observation about the recognition of Chinese superiority:

> In the past, the "other" (*ka*) was [viewed as] civilized, so that we were the barbarians. In antiquity, our country had learned men (*hakase* 博士), [but] in this instance they were not at all [learned]. They took the interior for the exterior, and the exterior for the interior. This was an offense to lord and father and

harmed the national polity (*kokutai* 国体). Names were not rectified and meanings were not clarified. (*Kokugaku seigi*, мкѕ 2: 231)

Kanzan notes how the ascent of Confucianism, which resulted in the establishment of *wagaku* and the denigration of Japan, was accelerated by the dominance of warriors over Japanese society. Beginning in 1192, warriors were charged with the protection of Japan and the imperial court. Over the intervening centuries, the social and political prestige and power of warriors grew, as did their hold on Japan. As the Confucian scholars who served the warriors were well aware, Chinese elites had to strive to uphold a balance between warrior matters, what the Chinese called *wu* 武, and civilian, cultural pursuits, which they associated with *wen* 文. Kanzan himself was a Confucian who specialized in military tactics and strategy, so he believed in a connection between Confucian studies and warrior matters. He associated the civilian side of things with classical Japanese literature, that is to say, *wagaku*. Despite the fact that Confucianism encompassed a variety of complex theories regarding poetry, Kanzan qualified it as primarily a *wu* pursuit, and not a *wen* activity (Flueckiger 2011, 34). Because Confucians had never taken *wagaku* seriously, a situation developed in which "the scholars of *wen* know nothing of *wu*, and the scholars of *wu* know nothing of *wen*" (*Kokugaku seigi*, мкѕ 2: 230). In other words, the neglect of *wagaku* resulted in an imbalance between *wen* and *wu*, the consequences of which were social and political unrest. In order to pacify the unrest and restore the balance of *wen* and *wu*, the warriors, like himself, had to support *wagaku*.[7]

The Origins of "Kokugaku"

With the political stability that emerged following the establishment of the Edo Bakufu in 1603, Kanzan describes how a group of *wagaku* scholars, whom he refers to as the followers of Kokugaku, formed around the idea that the Japanese of antiquity practiced a Way that was separate from the Way of the Sages:

> The Kokugaku scholars are always talking about the Way of our land: "These are the words of Confucius and Mencius and are Chinese teachings. They do not suit our customs…." [The Confucians] do not understand the Way of central harmony (*chūwa* 中和). This is lamentable. (*Wagakuron*, мкѕ 2: 182)

This observation, which he made in 1769, is interesting for a number of reasons. Kanzan mentions that the followers of Kokugaku saw their scholarship as antagonistic toward Confucianism, viewing the latter as an institution that was particular to China. These are ideas that sound similar to those expressed by Kamo

---

7. Kurozumi Makoto (2003, 102–103) shows how ideologues of the early Tokugawa period prioritized *wu* over *wen*, which was a reversal of the Muromachi period's privileging of *wen* over *wu*. Kanzan's observations of *wen* and *wu* belie his belief that the two were equally critical.

no Mabuchi in his *Kokuikō* 国意考, which was penned only four years earlier. Mabuchi was somewhat of a celebrity by the 1760s and like Kanzan was a resident of Edo. While Kanzan does not name Mabuchi specifically in his *wagaku* treatise of 1769 (the year of Mabuchi's death), it is difficult to imagine that he had scholars other than Mabuchi in mind. Thus, from Kanzan's observations about Kokugaku, it seems like its adherents emerged from the ranks of the *wagaku* scholars during the eighteenth century, and the ideology that separated the followers of Kokugaku from their colleagues in *wagaku* was connected to the issue of whether or not the ancient Japanese had beliefs and practices that collectively constituted an indigenous Way. While such an idea was not by itself exceptionalist, it began the process of eroding the Chinese exceptionalism that underpinned Confucianism as Sinocentrism.

While Kanzan noted the emergence of Kokugaku in his treatise on *wagaku*, he was concerned enough with this development that he wrote a separate study of Kokugaku in 1776, the *Kokugaku seigi*. He writes that the "foundation (*ken'yo* 権輿) of Kokugaku" is embodied in the "august seal (*mishirushi* 御璽) of the emperor" and the "three divine treasures" (*sanshu no shinpō* 三種神宝), a reference to the imperial regalia (*Kokugaku seigi*, MKS 2: 221). As the study of Japanese antiquity, according to Kanzan, Kokugaku was rooted in both Shinto and in the imperial institution. Such a connection was likely the source of Confucian derision, since their loyalties were with the warriors who governed Japan through the bakufu, rather than with the politically emasculated imperial government in Kyoto. Dazai Shundai and other influential scholars of the first half of the eighteenth century ridiculed Shinto as so much superstition, a necessary evil in the ongoing pacification of an ignorant population (MCNALLY 2005, 39). Kanzan had mentioned the tense exchanges between Confucians and the scholars of Japanese antiquity over the issue of Shinto seven years earlier, but that was in the context of *wagaku*, and the same connection with Shinto arose once more in his discussion of Kokugaku. Consequently, Shinto, in Kanzan's mind, was not what separated *wagaku* from Kokugaku. The difference between the two forms of scholarship was loyalty to Japan:

> Things favorable to the country are [called] Kokugaku. The Confucians (*seiju* 世儒) take the other as civilized and ourselves as barbarians. Even though they are learned, they do not pursue Kokugaku. There is no distinction between interior and exterior. Moreover, they do not understand the shortcomings of the martial (*bu*). Learning is about loyalty to the realm. Only this is Kokugaku. (*Kokugaku seigi*, MKS 2: 238–239)

In defining Kokugaku as scholarship that manifests loyalty to Japan, Kanzan juxtaposes Kokugaku against Confucianism, because the scholars of the latter studied the texts of China while those of the former focused on ancient Japanese

texts. Kanzan therefore disqualifies the work of scholars who ignore Japanese antiquity as Kokugaku, but even for those who did focus on Japan, their work only earned the Kokugaku designation so long as it did not reinforce Sinocentrism. Thus, the scholarship of celebrated Confucians like Yamaga Sokō 山鹿素行 (1622–1685), Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇斎 (1619–1682), Kumazawa Banzan 熊沢蕃山 (1619–1691), and even that of Kanzan himself qualified as Kokugaku as long as it was based on ancient Japanese texts and was laudatory of Japan (not China). At the same time, the scholarly endeavors of intellectuals like Murata Harumi and Oyamada Tomokiyo, self-identified scholars of *wagaku* who upheld the supremacy of Chinese Confucianism, were not Kokugaku at all according to Kanzan's definition. This realization serves as the crucial context necessary to understand Harumi's proud declaration in the early nineteenth century that he was a Confucian (quoted in Izumi Makuni 和泉真国 [ca. 1765–1805], *Meidōsho*, NST 51: 139). We should also remember Shinozaki Tōkai's observation that the term *wagaku* itself upheld Chinese superiority at the expense of denigrating Japan. Thus, if we combine Tōkai's observations with those of Kanzan, his contemporary, the development of the term "Kokugaku" becomes clear: Kokugaku was a term that functioned as an ideological alternative to *wagaku*, one that signified a focus on Japanese antiquity but without supporting the idea that China was superior to Japan. The middle decades of the eighteenth century were the era in which this critical development occurred.

Ōkuni Takamasa concurred that Kokugaku developed in the eighteenth century, but he emphasized a different context for its emergence:

> In our realm of Japan, among [the various types of Asian scholarship] only Buddhism and Confucianism arrived [here]. Until recently, it was thought that there were no others apart from these two. However, beginning in the Kyōhō 享保 era (1716–1736), the scholarly methods (*gakujutsu* 学術) of *rangaku* 蘭学 and Kokugaku emerged, and they formed a natural opposition [to each other]. The opposition of Confucianism and Buddhism is that of the manifest and the hidden, while the opposition of *rangaku* and Kokugaku is that of the ancestor (*moto* 本) and the descendant (*sue* 末). (*Gakutō benron*, NST 50: 464)

Here we see a dating for the emergence of Kokugaku that dovetails with Kanzan's observations about Kokugaku as an offshoot of *wagaku* during the eighteenth century. The combination of Kanzan's critical evaluation of Confucianism and the date of his treatises on *wagaku* and Kokugaku (1769 and 1776 respectively) would indicate that Kanzan was referring to Mabuchi's scholarship, and that he may have viewed Mabuchi as one of Kokugaku's pioneering figures. Takamasa, however, provides us with an era that predates Mabuchi's prominence, symbolized by his employment as *wagaku* tutor to Tayasu Munetake, by at least a decade. Peter Nosco (1990, 94) has found a reference to Kokugaku as early

as 1719, which seems to confirm Takamasa's description in the above passage, which he made in 1857. Kanzan, of course, pitted Kokugaku against Confucianism, but this was not an absolute confrontation, since his definition of Kokugaku did not necessarily exclude all Confucian scholars, only those who put China before Japan. The "opposition" that Takamasa mentions between Confucianism and Buddhism is not absolutely confrontational, but complementary. That is to say, Takamasa associated Buddhism with religious/spiritual matters, while Confucian scholars focused their attention primarily on secular/political matters. In the same way, Takamasa believes that Kokugaku and *rangaku* developed as intellectual counterparts of one another. By referring to Kokugaku as the "ancestor," and *rangaku* as the "descendant," Takamasa betrays his intellectual allegiance to Atsutane's teachings, in which the study of Western science and technology would only generate further confirmation of the ancient Way's legitimacy.

Wagaku and Kokugaku: The Era of Confusion

More than a generation following the appearance of Kanzan's *Kokugaku seigi*, a monk named Ryūkō 立綱 (1763–1824) compiled short biographies of whom many intellectuals of the time thought were the three greatest scholars of Kokugaku: Keichū 契沖 (1640–1701), Kamo no Mabuchi, and Motoori Norinaga. Although Ryūkō's work was the first set of biographies for these three scholars whom he associated with Kokugaku, there were at least two earlier references to the same three men in the context of *wagaku*'s greatest minds—one by Shimizu Hamaomi 清水浜臣 (1776–1824) in 1808 and the other by Murata Harumi in 1809—a further indication that terminological usage was in flux during this period (McNally 2005, 143). Ryūkō called his work the *Santetsu shōden*, which he completed in 1818. His text circulated among scholars interested in the study of Japanese antiquity, who found its content both interesting and useful. A student of Ryūkō, Ezawa Tokinaga 江沢講修 (1781–1860), added a preface to the work in 1828, to which Oyamada Tomokiyo appended an additional preface in 1832, as did Yamamoto Gakuhan 山本学半 (1805–1853) in 1837. Until Hirata Atsutane completed his *Tamadasuki* 玉襷 in 1832, the *Santetsu shōden* was the only biographical work of its kind on the lives of influential Kokugaku scholars, exhibiting a noticeable influence on not only Atsutane's work but also subsequent biographies, notably, the *Kogaku shōden* and the *Kokugakusha denki shūsei* 国学者伝記集成. Ryūkō's work was the inspiration for all of these biographical texts, and its importance in the history of Kokugaku for that reason cannot be understated. The *Santetsu shōden* exhibits evidence of the transition from the use of *wagaku* to signify the study of Japanese antiquity to Kokugaku. In the whole text, there is only one reference to *wagaku*, as *yamatogaku* やまと学 (an alternative reading of 和学), in the context of Mabuchi's life (*Santetsu shōden*, KD 2: 142).

With the sole exception of Tomokiyo's use of *kogaku*,[8] all other references to the study of Japanese antiquity use "Kokugaku" or some variation thereof.

It is unclear if Ryūkō was a formally enrolled student in any of the private academies maintained by prominent scholars associated with either *wagaku* or Kokugaku. Tokinaga's preface takes up this issue in brief, implying that Ryūkō undertook his studies of Japanese antiquity all on his own:

> [T]here was no hint of inquiring into the remnants of antiquity [during the eighteenth century]. Then, by chance, he (Ryūkō) read the works of Enjuan 円珠庵 (Keichū), the venerable Agatai 県居 (Mabuchi), and the great man (*ushi* 大人) of the Suzunoya 鈴屋 (Norinaga), and they explained how [people] had been led astray for all of these years, and how the imperial, august realm [Japan] surpassed (*koete* こえて) foreign lands and was auspicious and worthy of respect. Theirs was a felicitous achievement. (KD 2: 129)

In this passage, Tokinaga claims that Ryūkō had difficulty finding books related to Japanese antiquity until he came across the works of the three men profiled in *Santetsu shōden*. This might be an indication of the fact that Ryūkō had no formal ties to a prominent teacher. Kada no Azumamaro 荷田春満 (1669–1736), Mabuchi's teacher and whom Atsutane hailed as the founder of Kokugaku, was active in Edo during the first half of the eighteenth century, along with his adopted son, Arimaro, and his brother, Nobuna 荷田信名 (1685–1751). It is also intriguing that Tokinaga praises the three men for their assertion that Japan was superior to all other countries in the world, in other words, their exceptionalism. While the exceptionalist ideas of Mabuchi and Norinaga are well known, the issue of exceptionalism in the case of Keichū is an interesting one. While Keichū referred to Japan as the "realm of the kami" (*shinkoku* 神国), which can certainly function as shorthand for "superior," he was more focused on demonstrating the various ways in which the Japanese embodied the teachings of Buddhism. For Keichū, the quality of Japan as an earthly realm lay in the extent to which it successfully adopted Buddhism. As was the case with many of Japan's Confucians, who believed that China surpassed Japan, Buddhists like Keichū harbored similar views of Japan's relationship to India (McNally 2005, 139–143). While Tokinaga may have exaggerated Keichū's views somewhat in order to make him conform more neatly with his later counterparts, the association between exceptionalism and Kokugaku is prominent and is consistent with Kanzan's earlier observations about Kokugaku.

8. *Kogaku* was a term employed by scholars during the Edo period, both those who supported Confucianism and those who did not. This ideological neutrality likely signified that it functioned more as an etic term than an emic one. However, as a term signifying philology, it could have functioned as an emic as well.

In the epilogue of *Santetsu shōden*, an obscure scholar named Shirai Nobutsune 白井信常 (d.u.) suggests that Tokinaga was self-taught before meeting Ryūkō:

> [H]e studied Chinese texts with the great man (Yamamoto 山本) Hokuzan 北山 (1752–1812) of Edo, but for matters of the imperial realm, there was no one who knew the heights of antiquity from the beginning. So, he naturally read the works of recent scholars (*hakase*), among them the works of the great men (Mabuchi and Norinaga), as well as those of the Azari 阿闍梨 of Naniwa 難波 [Keichū], took them as his own teachers, and therefore became a learned person of antiquity. Thus, these three men became the fathers of his scholarship, as he used to say. He then visited Ryūkō Daitoku 大徳 in Edo and saw that he had a work on [the lives of] these three Great Men and was overjoyed. He consulted with Daitoku, naming it *Santetsu shōden*, and had woodblocks made [in preparation for publication]. (KD 2: 152–153)

Nobutsune mentions that Tokinaga tried to find books related to Japanese antiquity but was only able to read those authored during the Tokugawa period. If true, Tokinaga may have been confronted with the reality that the works associated with *wagaku* in the pre-Tokugawa period, such as those authored by perhaps the greatest of the Muromachi scholars, Ichijō Kaneyoshi 一条兼良 (1402–1481), were inaccessible, intellectually or otherwise (VARLEY 1990, 482). This was an indictment of *wagaku* as either a tradition shrouded in secrecy or as an esoteric pursuit bereft of relevancy. By invoking the new term "Kokugaku" to signify the study of Japanese antiquity, scholars may have sought to distinguish between these pre-Tokugawa scholars and their Tokugawa counterparts, the most illustrious of whom were enshrined in the *Santetsu shōden*.

Ryūkō authored his text in 1818, so the terms that he uses to describe the study of Japanese antiquity give us a glimpse into how the terminological shift from *wagaku* to Kokugaku began. In narrating the lives and accomplishments of Keichū and Norinaga, he uses the term 御国学, a term that was likely read as *mikuni no manabi*. It is easy to see, even at a cursory glance, how this term is related to Kokugaku: the main Chinese ideographs are the same with the addition of the honorific prefix *mi* 御. The prefix is necessary so that readers understand that this term refers to Japan, and not to any other country, or to countries in the abstract. Interestingly, there is no confusion as to which "realm" the term "Kokugaku" refers, even without such an honorific prefix. With the prefix, the readings for the remaining two ideographs must be Japanese or *kun* 訓 readings, rather than Sinitic or *on* 音 readings. Again, by comparison, the term "Kokugaku" uses *on* readings and not *kun* ones, which might strike one as odd, especially given its exceptionalist foundation. If one were determined to display

their loyalty to Japan, as Kanzan admonished scholars to do, then *mikuni no manabi* seems a more fitting term than "Kokugaku."

When discussing the life and work of Kamo no Mabuchi, Ryūkō uses two different terms: *mikuni no furukoto no manabi* 御国のふることの学 and *yamatogaku*. This likely strikes one as somewhat strange, since Mabuchi is the middle figure, chronologically speaking, between Keichū and Norinaga. If they were all engaged in the study of Japanese antiquity, and doing so from a common ideological orientation, then it stands to reason that the term that signifies their scholarly endeavors would be the same. I would argue that this is still the case, even with the two different terms used by Ryūkō. *Yamatogaku* is another reading for 和学, where Wa is read as Yamato; since Mabuchi was retained by Tayasu Munetake as his *wagaku goyō*, *yamatogaku* is a reference to Mabuchi's official position. As for the other term, *mikuni no furukoto no manabi*, this phrase is the equivalent of *mikuni no manabi*, and therefore, Kokugaku. The word *furukoto* (ancient matters) is sandwiched between *mikuni* and *manabi*, but its meaning is rather redundant, as Kokugaku signified the study of Japanese antiquity already, so *furukoto* does not add any new or different meaning to *mikuni no manabi*.

We see a similar emphasis on "ancient matters" in the preface that Oyamada Tomokiyo added in 1832:

> Ezawa Tokinaga of the village of Hehara in the district of Ishimi, in the province of Kazusa, rectified his body and mind and studied ancient matters (*furukoto*). He inquired deeply into the lives of these pioneers (*sendatsu* 先達) of *kogaku*, and recorded these details very carefully. (KD 2: 126)

Tomokiyo's reference to ancient matters is linked to *kogaku*, which signified the rigorous philological analysis of ancient texts. So, by referring to ancient matters in his narrative on Mabuchi's life, Ryūkō drew the reader's attention to Mabuchi's scholarly methodology. Of course, Tomokiyo classified the work of all three scholars profiled in *Santetsu shōden* as *kogaku*, not just Mabuchi, and Ryūkō could have done the same thing. In any case, it is interesting that Tomokiyo did not use either *wagaku* or Kokugaku (or any of their variants). In the case of Kokugaku, it is understandable that he wanted to avoid using this term, since he argued that it was not at all a valid term. He could have used *wagaku* to refer to the work of the three scholars, but even this term was problematic, since it signified the study of Japanese antiquity, something which was rather obvious to anyone reading the *Santetsu shōden*. For Tomokiyo, what made these scholars so important was not that they studied Japanese antiquity, or even their efforts to demonstrate Japan's exceptionalism, but that they were methodological innovators.

Despite Tomokiyo's classification of the scholarship of Keichū, Mabuchi, and Norinaga as *kogaku*, the final preface that was added to the *Santetsu shōden*, before the publication of its modern edition in 1919, was penned by Yamamoto

Gakuhan in 1837, five years after Tomokiyo's preface. Gakuhan ends the terminological confusion by stating definitively that the intellectuals profiled in *Santetsu shōden* were associated with Kokugaku:

> Ezawa is from Kazusa Province. From an early age, he esteemed learning and took my father, Hokuzan, as his teacher. [Under my father's guidance, he] researched the classics and history, and came to esteem Kokugaku. He always revered Keichū, Mabuchi, and Norinaga, but not much was known about their lives. It was troubling that their scholarship was as yet unknown as the years went by. (KD 2: 123)

In this passage, Gakuhan classifies Tokinaga's scholarly interest in Japanese antiquity as Kokugaku, and this interest prompted him to research the lives and works of the three scholars profiled, none of whom actually used the term "Kokugaku" to describe their own work. Their association with Kokugaku was the result of the various contributors to the *Santetsu shōden* seeking to avoid using the term *wagaku*; following the use of a few transitional terms, they finally settled on "Kokugaku." The *Santetsu shōden* itself captures in microcosm the transition from *wagaku* to Kokugaku over the course of 1818 to 1837.

Hirata Atsutane and the "Eticization" of Kokugaku

Another indication of the terminological transition to Kokugaku is seen in the writings of Hirata Atsutane. Atsutane's exceptionalism was more virulent and even hostile than was the case with the two other canonical figures of Kokugaku, Mabuchi and Norinaga. I argue that these two phenomena appear related when analyzing Atsutane's life and work, namely, that his adoption of Kokugaku as a term reflects his more aggressive exceptionalism.

Atsutane began his career by assuming the position that the study of Japanese antiquity had no name:

> The learning of antiquity is called *wagaku*, and this name is inappropriate. The reason for this is as discussed in our teacher's (Norinaga) *Tamagatsuma* (*sic*) and *Uiyamabumi* うひ山ぶみ, namely, that scholarship is associated with *kangaku*. Learning about the antiquity of the imperial realm is called *shingaku*, *wagaku*, Kokugaku, and such. All of these take China as the foundation and marginalize the august realm, and this will not do…. Those who focus on the learning of the imperial realm are numerous and refer to the learning of Chinese books as *kangaku*, *jugaku*, and such. Learning of the imperial realm can be simply referred to as scholarship…. *Wagaku* refers to learning matters of the august realm from [the perspective of] foreign countries. Ponder this well… Kokugaku can be useful for reverent people, but the ideograph "realm" (*kuni/koku* 国) makes it an unacceptable expression.
>
> (*Nyūgaku mondō*, SHAZ 15: 99–100)

Atsutane wrote these observations in 1813, less than ten years after linking his private academy, the Ibukinoya 気吹舎, to the academy of Motoori Haruniwa 本居春庭 (1763–1828), Norinaga's biological son, thereby becoming one of Norinaga's "posthumous students" (*botsugo no monjin* 没後の門人). He cites Norinaga's views on the matter regarding what term is the most suitable for the study of Japanese antiquity, as we will see shortly, and Atsutane has nothing new to add to what Norinaga had already stated. He acknowledges that *wagaku* is the generic term that scholars used, but that the term "Kokugaku" had also emerged, even though he does not explain why this happened. It is clear that Atsutane tried both to align himself completely with Norinaga on this issue and to avoid using any term other than *gakumon* 学問 (scholarship) itself to signify the study of Japanese antiquity.

Atsutane composed one of his most important works, the *Tamadasuki*, during the 1820s, which he completed by 1832. Despite the admonition to his students that they should refer to the study of Japanese antiquity as simply "scholarship" so as not to disrespect Japan, he uses the term "Kokugaku" in the *Tamadasuki*. His use of "Kokugaku" is interesting, given his earlier observation that the generic term for the study of Japanese antiquity was *wagaku*, not Kokugaku, even though he acknowledged that the latter was a more respectful term. Atsutane essentially replaced *wagaku* with Kokugaku as the generic signifier for the study of Japanese antiquity, and his discussion of Kada no Azumamaro is especially revealing in this regard.

Perhaps the most important ideological contribution of the *Tamadasuki* was Atsutane's biographical narration of the lives of the great scholars of Kokugaku, and this narration was similar to and was likely inspired by the *Santetsu shōden*. There are, however, two significant differences between the two biographical accounts. First, the biographies of the *Santetsu shōden* do not link the lives of the three men profiled together; the biographies are independent of one another, which might explain why Ryūkō used the same term, *mikuni no manabi*, for Norinaga and Keichū, but a different one, *mikuni no furukoto no manabi*, for Mabuchi. Atsutane, however, focused on the connections between the scholars in his biographies, specifically as teachers and students. If we speak of the *Santetsu shōden* as a hagiography, then its counterpart in the *Tamadasuki* narrates a kind of apostolic succession (McNally 2005, 139–164).

The second major difference between the two biographical accounts is Atsutane's inclusion of Kada no Azumamaro, a figure left out of the *Santetsu shōden*. Atsutane emphasized Azumamaro's historical role within Kokugaku as Mabuchi's mentor and as the author of the *Sōgakkōkei* 創学校啓. Atsutane hailed Azumamaro for trying to secure bakufu support for a school dedicated to the study of Japanese antiquity with this document that was alleged to have been submitted to Shogun Yoshimune in 1728. It turns out that the petition was not authen-

tic, as it was likely authored by one of Azumamaro's students (Miyake 1932, 269). Atsutane, however, was convinced that not only was it authentic, but that it was also one of the most important documents in the history of Kokugaku. The "school" to which the petition refers, according to Atsutane, was one dedicated to Kokugaku (*kokugakkō* 国学校), which made Azumamaro a kind of founding figure for Kokugaku (*Tamadasuki*, SHAZ 6: 483). The version of the petition to which Atsutane and others had access dated to 1798 (Yanase 1942, 64). Although uncertain, it is likely that this version referred to the founding of a Kokugaku school, so that Atsutane's esteem for Azumamaro emanated from it. However, an older version of the text was also known in Atsutane's day, and this text refers to the establishment of a *wagaku* school, not a Kokugaku school (Yanase 1942, 65). Between the time of the composition of this earlier version and the 1798 version, the references to *wagaku* were changed to Kokugaku. This shift in terminology roughly coincided with Kanzan's comments on the advent of Kokugaku as a form of scholarship whose adherents were manifesting their loyalty to Japan. However, if the 1798 version that Atsutane used also referred to *wagaku*, like the earlier version, then it is possible that Atsutane himself had a role in the terminological switching from *wagaku* to Kokugaku.

Atsutane did not ignore Keichū in his narrative, but he included him with Azumamaro as early scholars of Kokugaku: "Of those who supported Kokugaku, there were Keichū and the venerable old man [Azumamaro]" (SHAZ 6: 486). Like he had done with Azumamaro, Atsutane clearly connected Keichū to Kokugaku, which is further proof of his replacement of *wagaku* with Kokugaku. The association of Keichū with Kokugaku was something that Ryūkō had made as well in his *Santetsu shōden*, and so it was not as overtly an ideological fabrication on Atsutane's part as the connection of Azumamaro to Kokugaku. For Atsutane, the issue with Keichū, and the reason for his exclusion from Atsutane's orthodox Kokugaku lineage, was the fact that Keichū was a Shingon monk, while Azumamaro had been a Shinto priest. Atsutane was doubtlessly aware of the supreme irony of naming a Shingon priest as the founder of the orthodox Kokugaku lineage, as Keichū's allegiance to Japan was undermined by his devotion to Buddhism. For this reason, Atsutane's biographies of the great scholars of Kokugaku include Keichū, like the *Santetsu shōden*, but exclude him from its orthodox lineage (*dōtō* 道統), an issue which the various contributors to the *Santetsu shōden* never addressed.

Other than being the author of the petition, Azumamaro, in Atsutane's estimation, was a prominent Kokugaku scholar as the teacher of Kamo no Mabuchi. He praised Mabuchi for ridding himself of the Chinese mind:

> The great man, Agatai [Mabuchi], on the matter of his status as a forebear in ancient learning, purely separated himself from the Chinese mind and

inquired especially into the meanings and words of antiquity. It was this schol-
arship that began with our great man, Agatai.   (*Tamadasuki*, SHAZ 6: 501)

Atsutane's reference to "ancient learning" (*inishie manabi* 古学) in the above pas-
sage functions in the same way as Tomokiyo's reference to ancient learning in the
Santetsu shōden, namely, to draw the reader's attention to a philological meth-
odology. While he linked Azumamaro to Kokugaku, he referred to the teach-
ings that Azumamaro passed on to Mabuchi as "the learning of the ancient Way"
(*kodōgaku* 古道学), which we should interpret as emanating from Kokugaku
(*Tamadasuki*, SHAZ 6: 488). Just as Kanzan had conceptualized Kokugaku as an
offshoot of *wagaku*, Atsutane conceived of *kodōgaku* as an offshoot of Kokugaku;
when viewed in this way, it appears that this is another instance in which Atsu-
tane replaced *wagaku* with Kokugaku. Keichū plays an important role in this
substitution, since Atsutane observes how both scholars were renowned for their
work in Kokugaku, but that it was only Azumamaro who had transmitted the
correct version of it to the next generation, namely, to Mabuchi. Atsutane's claim
that Mabuchi was the first Kokugaku scholar to rid himself of the Chinese mind
is curious, given the way in which he narrates Azumamaro's achievements; the
implication, of course, is that Azumamaro had not succeeded in ridding him-
self of the Chinese mind. There are a couple of reasons why this is the case.
One should bear in mind that Atsutane never met Mabuchi, and Mabuchi died
several years before Atsutane was born, so his views of Mabuchi are heavily
indebted to Norinaga's observations, as Norinaga had actually met Mabuchi. In
fact, Atsutane's praise for Mabuchi in the above passage is essentially the same
as Norinaga's in the *Tamakatsuma*. While Norinaga had clearly esteemed Mabu-
chi as his mentor, he had no particular praise for Azumamaro. Atsutane had to
emphasize Azumamaro's position as Mabuchi's teacher, since the whole point of
his biographies in the *Tamadasuki* was to demonstrate the existence of an ortho-
dox lineage for Kokugaku. Norinaga, however, had no such goal in mind when
he made his observations regarding Mabuchi. Although Keichū's work was well
known among scholars in Atsutane's day, he was never Mabuchi's teacher, and
so Atsutane was unable to place him into his orthodox lineage, and, of course,
Keichū was a Buddhist monk. Azumamaro was crucial to Atsutane's conceptual-
ization of Kokugaku, but Atsutane's predecessors did not share his views.

   Although Atsutane praises Azumamaro for his composition of the *Sōgakkōkei*
in the *Tamadasuki*, he has virtually nothing else to say about any of Azuma-
maro's other writings. It is highly likely that Atsutane's knowledge of Azuma-
maro's work was limited to the *Sōgakkōkei* (MIYAKE 1981, 1: 269). If this is the
case, it is not surprising that Atsutane saw vestiges of the Chinese mind in Azu-
mamaro's work, since the *Sōgakkōkei* was composed entirely in literary Chinese.
Many of the most prominent scholars associated with Kokugaku, like Mabuchi,

Norinaga, and others, including Atsutane, composed their scholarly works in styles other than classical Chinese, such as the ancient styles of the *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 or the *Kojiki* 古事記, or in a classical style reminiscent of the *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語. Atsutane's intention with his narrative on Azumamaro was not to criticize his scholarly forebear, but to build up his image as much as possible in order to enhance the gravity of his position as the one who transmitted the wisdom of Japan's ancient Way to Mabuchi. As the first scholar to cast off the Chinese mind, Mabuchi was also the first scholar to revive his Japanese heart (*Yamatogokoro* 大和心), and this was his orthodox legacy for Norinaga.

While Atsutane lavished praise on Mabuchi for shedding the Chinese mind, he was not so generous with his assessment of Mabuchi's students:

> These students [of Mabuchi] take the Chinese mind as their own. Although they belong to the orthodox lineage of Agatai, there is not one who grasps the main point (*makoto no mune* 眞旨) of the great man.

Atsutane indicates the extreme irony of Mabuchi's intellectual legacy, namely, that he had scores of students who had direct ties to Mabuchi himself, thus assuring their places in the orthodox lineage, yet none of them actually understood Mabuchi's teachings. The sole exception to this rule, of course, was Motoori Norinaga. For Atsutane, there were two orthodox lineages, an inauthentic, institutional one, and a genuine, spiritual one, what he referred to as *kodōgaku*; as a student of Mabuchi, Norinaga had a place in the former, along with many others, but he was the only member of the latter. Norinaga was Mabuchi's true successor for Atsutane:

> Even though the number of the great man Agatai's students is more than one hundred, only our teacher, the great man [Norinaga], emerged who could grasp the great meaning of *kodōgaku*. The rest [of Mabuchi's students] just wrote poetry.   (*Tamadasuki*, SHAZ 6: 512)

Although Mabuchi had many students in Edo and in Hamamatsu 浜松, Atsutane reserved his scorn for one particular group led by Murata Harumi:

> However, while Harumi's students advance even pledges [of loyalty to Mabuchi], they [limit] the Way of antiquity to the living, and this was not the great man Agatai's intention. It arouses the Way of the Chinese sages and is not the True Way.   (*Tamadasuki*, SHAZ 6: 512)

Atsutane was aware of Harumi's debate with Izumi Makuni in 1803 in which Harumi denied the existence of an ancient Way for Japan, claiming that the only Way was the Way of the Sages (MCNALLY 2005, 69–78). Atsutane likely had Harumi's denial of the ancient Way in mind when he made the above reference. We should also recall that Harumi identified himself as a scholar of *wagaku*;

although he did not deny the legitimacy of Kokugaku as a proper term, his student Oyamada Tomokiyo did. Thus, Harumi made the connection between the absence of an indigenous Way and *wagaku*. For scholars like Atsutane, who believed in the existence of a Japanese ancient Way, and deliberately identified themselves with Kokugaku, there was a similar connection between the ancient Way and Kokugaku. Rather than view Harumi and the rest of Mabuchi's students in Edo as adherents of a separate scholarly tradition, namely *wagaku*, Atsutane *included* them in his history of Kokugaku, only so that he could *exclude* them from its true orthodoxy. A by-product of this effort, I argue, was the substitution of *wagaku* for Kokugaku.

Toward the end of Atsutane's scholarly career in the 1830s, he had dropped references to *wagaku* in favor of Kokugaku, but that should not lead us to think that such a preference was universal. In 1857, Seimiya Hidekata 清宮秀堅 (1809–1879) compiled yet another set of biographies of scholars who studied Japanese antiquity. Rather than refer to their work as Kokugaku, he associated the scholars he profiled with *wagaku*:

> The scholarship of our imperial realm, in the beginning, was with the imperial court; in the middle era (*chūsei* 中世) it was with the monks; in recent times (*kinsei* 近世), it is with the commoners (*jige* 地下). Things have changed from the past to the present. Those who seek to pursue scholarship consider the past, and try to return the present to it. One must be aware of this…. [People] think of *wagaku* as only the composition of verse…. [I]t is for this reason that people viewed the scholars of *wagaku* as doing nothing practical…. True scholars of *wagaku* regulate themselves and prepare their [own] households; there is no question [that they do these things] in accordance with the teachings of Confucius. Even my own efforts, if not for the power of Chinese books, would not proceed. Even the former learned men (*sentetsu* 先哲), Keichū, Agatai, and Suzunoya, how could they not have entered [*wagaku*] from *kangaku*?
>
> ("Daigen" in *Kogaku shōden*, 1b–2b)

While the association of Keichū and Mabuchi (Agatai) with *wagaku* was not an inaccurate one, linking Norinaga (Suzunoya) to it was somewhat controversial, given the fact that it was something from which he specifically dissociated himself. An even more controversial aspect of Hidekata's observations was his praise for Chinese learning as the basis for the views of *wagaku* scholars. While this may have been true of Murata Harumi and Oyamada Tomokiyo, Mabuchi and Norinaga heaped a great deal of scorn on the Chinese mind that ensnared those who studied Chinese books, and even those who did not. If Hidekata's views seem reminiscent of Harumi and Tomokiyo, that is to be expected, since he had studied with students of Tomokiyo and Kishimoto Yuzuru 岸本由豆流 (1788–1846), one of Tomokiyo's students, a prominent scholar in his own right.

By adhering to *wagaku*, not only was Hidekata showing his loyalty to Tomokiyo and Harumi, he was also perpetuating a non-exceptionalist approach to Japanese antiquity against the exceptionalism-friendly approach of Kokugaku. This non-exceptionalist approach was influential for the ways in which *wagaku* and Kokugaku were interpreted during the Meiji era.

In addition to Hidekata's legacy of *wagaku* and its non-exceptionalist ideology, another critical Tokugawa legacy was the view that *wagaku* and Kokugaku were synonymous terms. While Atsutane began to drop references to *wagaku* in his writings in favor of Kokugaku during the early decades of the nineteenth century, he did so because the perception had already been created in the eighteenth century that the two were the same thing. Norinaga made this observation at the end of the eighteenth century, an observation upon which Atsutane based his own views:

> Scholarship today defines the learning of the antiquity of the imperial realm, via the learning of Chinese texts, as *shingaku*, *wagaku*, Kokugaku, and such. [These terms] take China as the foundation and marginalize the august realm. This will not do. However, [people believe that] antiquity is found only in the learning of Chinese texts. As for the learning of the august realm, since there is no one who specialized in it, that was naturally the impulse [for this phenomenon]. However, recently, those who specialize in the imperial realm have become numerous, so that they refer to the learning of Chinese texts as *kangaku* and *jugaku* and can refer to that of the imperial realm as just scholarship. Even for *butsugaku* 仏学, from the outside, it is referred to as *butsugaku*, but for a Buddhist priest, it is simply scholarship; they do not call it *butsugaku* and this is as it should be. Speaking of Kokugaku, it can be of use to those who are reverential [of Japan], but it is because of the ideograph *koku* 国 that it is unacceptable. For the ways of speaking [about things] among people today, for all relevant words, people are unaware of the distinction between inner and outer, and there are many words that are used regularly that take outside [foreign] realms as inside [Japan]. (*Tamakatsuma*, NST 40: 25)

Norinaga addresses the same issue that Shinozaki Tōkai and Matsumiya Kanzan had a generation earlier, namely, that all attempts to signify the study of Japanese antiquity revealed a bias toward Chinese scholarship. Kanzan believed that Kokugaku resolved this dilemma as it was a term that did not denigrate Japan in the way that *wagaku* did. For Norinaga, Kokugaku is a better term, but it is still insufficient. Scholarship on Japan that is undertaken in Japan should be just scholarship, he argues. It is clear that *wagaku* and Kokugaku were synonymous in Norinaga's mind, and he advised his students to avoid using either of them when speaking about their study of Japanese antiquity. In 1880,

Konakamura Kiyonori 小中村清矩 (1821–1895) offered a similar assessment on this issue as Norinaga, but for opposing reasons:[9]

Around the time of Genroku, the two men, Kada no Azumamaro and the priest Keichū, appeared. Kada investigated our national history via the ancient matters of the age of the kami, while the teacher of the dharma [Keichū] entered the lush forest of Nara leaves [the *Man'yōshū*] and undertook the [reasons for the] abandonment of ancient words. Kamo no Mabuchi looked up to the shadow of Mount Inari, while Motoori Norinaga joined Kamo's school (*nagare* ながれ) and aroused every high intention; he waded through the clumsy and unsatisfactory explanations of the Shinto and poetry scholars and taught most of his disciples (*deshi* 弟子) about the careful [investigation of] our nation's ancient texts. So, those great men who are called scholars of Kokugaku, *wagaku*, and such, have emerged, one after another. Among those from whom this scholarship has arisen and who belonged to the schools (*monryū* 門流) of both men [include] Hirata Atsutane, who devoted himself to the divine classics. The circle of Murata Harumi, Katō Chikage 加藤千蔭 (1735–1808), Fujii Takanao 藤井高尚 (1764–1840), and Shimizu Hamaomi devoted themselves to the elegance (*miyabi* みやび) of letters (*kabun* 歌文). Oyamada Tomokiyo and Ban Nobutomo 伴 信友 (1773–1846) focused on the evidential investigation of events and words; they taught the disciples of every school (*mon* 門). Then, there are those who belong to no school, such as Ise Sadatake 伊勢貞丈 (1717–1784), Hanawa Hokiichi 塙 保己一 (1746–1821), Fujitani Nariakira 富士谷成章 (1738–1779), Kagawa Kageki 香川景樹 (1768–1843), and Tachibana Moribe 橘 守部 (1781–1849).

("Hashigaki" in *Kogaku shōden*, 1a–2a)

Konakamura viewed the various scholars whom he named individually as participants in the same overall scholarly movement, whether it was called Kokugaku, *wagaku*, or even something else; whatever one calls it, he says, the phenomenon is the same. Konakamura, however, dismisses the views of the scholars themselves on this issue. Some, like Atsutane, preferred to call scholarship on ancient Japan "Kokugaku," while others on Konakamura's list, such as Harumi and Tomokiyo, preferred *wagaku*; while Norinaga, who was also prominent on the list, preferred neither term. For Konakamura, *wagaku* and Kokugaku were interchangeable terms, giving his students and colleagues during the Meiji era free reign to choose either or both terms in their own scholarly work.

One of Konakamura's students, Haga Yaichi 芳賀矢一 (1867–1927), inherited this view that *wagaku* and Kokugaku were interchangeable terms. While he used both terms in his writings and in his lectures, he preferred Kokugaku, citing the fact that it was the older of the two terms (*Nihon bunkengaku*, 2). Such an asser-

9. For a short biography of Konakamura's life, see Wachutka (2013, 276–277).

tion likely strikes us as odd, given the fact that the argument to this point has been that the term arose in the eighteenth century as a replacement term for *wagaku*, which likely emerged by or during the early Heian period. Oyamada Tomokiyo's research is useful in helping us understand Haga's point. Tomokiyo, as we saw earlier, argued against the use of *kokugaku* as a signifier for the study of Japanese antiquity, since the term originally meant "learning in the provinces" in the Chinese sources and had nothing to do with Japan. For this reason, Tomokiyo identified himself with *wagaku*, a term with origins in ancient Japan, going so far as to use the original ideograph for *wa* 倭. Thus, Haga's observation about the signifier *kokugaku* was correct, so long as it was divorced of its Japanese eighteenth-century signified. Of course, Haga did not use the term "Kokugaku" in its ancient Chinese sense; he used it as a term for the study of Japanese antiquity.

Haga's preference for Kokugaku over *wagaku* was motivated by an impulse not unlike Kanzan's in his definition of Kokugaku as scholarship that was loyal to Japan. For Kanzan, scholars who studied Japanese antiquity should undertake their work with a reverence and respect for Japan as a cultural and ethnic nation. For Haga, who made his observation about the provenance of Kokugaku after his return from a two-year sojourn in Germany (1899–1901),[10] Kokugaku signified scholarship of and for the nation-state. After studying the ways in which literary studies and philology were important aspects of the still relatively new state of Germany, Haga sought to establish literary studies as an academic discipline in Japan, and the Tokugawa legacy was important to him in this effort. German philology made an especially deep impression on Haga, as it was the means by which the Germans were able to recover from the past, and subsequently articulate in the present, their characteristics as a people and their national identity. As a scholar with both intellectual and personal connections to Kokugaku scholars of the Tokugawa period, Haga believed that the insights afforded by philology were already familiar to the Japanese in the form of Kokugaku. He became convinced that Kokugaku was Japan's answer to philology (*Nihon bunkengaku*, 1; WACHUTKA 2013, 231). The Kokugaku scholars of the Tokugawa period, he argued, were engaged in the investigation of Japan's national identity, what he referred to as "the truth of Japan" (*Nihon no shinsō* 日本の真相) (*Nihon bunkengaku*, 6). Haga lauded certain Kokugaku scholars for maintaining "the notion that the state was foremost" (*kokka o dai ichi to suru kangae* 国家を第一とする考)

---

10. The intellectual similarity between the German idealist philosopher Johann Gotteib Fichte (1762–1814) and Norinaga was perhaps an indication of the general cultural affinity between Germany and Japan that, not surprisingly, was something that members of both societies began to notice during the end of the Edo period. It was during the Meiji era that this relationship blossomed even more, culminating in the military alliances of the 1930s and 1940s, with a brief interruption in the decades immediately before and after the World War I (MALTARICH 2005). My thanks to Klaus Antoni for suggesting this book to me.

as they undertook their research (*Nihon bunkengaku*, 66). Kokugaku not only shared with "nation-state" (*kokka* 国家) the ideograph for nation (*kuni/koku* 国), it also shared with philology the goal of identifying the national character, and was likely another reason for his preference for it over *wagaku*.

In the course of Haga's side-by-side comparison between German *philologie* and Kokugaku, he was confronted by the fact that some scholars were scrupulously vigilant in their efforts to maintain objectivity in their work, while others were not. He admired the work of Atsutane and Norinaga as foundational for Kokugaku, but he admitted that their enthusiasm for their work caused them to develop "a research attitude that diverged from detachment" (*reisei na kenkyūteki taido o hanareta* 冷静な研究的態度を離れた)—in other words, they were prone to subjective claims (*Nihon bunkengaku*, 56). As the German case of *philologie* demonstrated for Haga, true philology was an "academic" (*gakujutsuteki* 学術的) endeavor (*Nihon bunkengaku*, 8). Scholars like Atsutane and Norinaga, as well as their thousands of students and disciples, were, at times, decidedly "unscientific" (*hikagakuteki* 非科学的) in their scholarship (*Nihon bunkengaku*, 6). For Haga, those Kokugaku scholars who were able to keep their emotions under control and maintain their commitment to academic research were scientific, while those who could not, were unacademic and ultimately unscientific, their canonical status notwithstanding.

Haga's evaluation of Kokugaku in the context of German *philologie* is revealing when analyzed alongside his terminological preference for Kokugaku over *wagaku*. A scientific approach to Japan's national identity was assumed in Haga's mind, since the word "science" was inherent in the name Kokugaku, which Haga translated into German as *Nationale Wissenschaft* or "national science." Thus, those scholars who could not maintain the proper scholarly attitude toward their research had, in a way, failed to uphold the rigorous standard that was implicit in the term "Kokugaku." The same is true of *wagaku* (translated as "the science of Japan"), except that its orientation was not inclined toward the nation-state. Haga's interest in the connection between philology and nationalism is clear; demarcating the contours of the Japanese identity was an absolutely legitimate goal for the Kokugaku scholars to pursue. His mildly critical stance with regard to Norinaga and Atsutane, whom he evaluated as unscientific, was an indication of his disdain for their claims of Japan's superiority. It is not the case that Haga thought that Norinaga and Atsutane were wrong and that he disagreed with their claims, but that such claims could not be substantiated scientifically. In other words, Haga felt, on the eve of the Russo-Japanese War, the same sentiment that Seymour Martin Lipset (1996, 26) did in the 1980s with regard to American exceptionalism, namely, that difference was provable but superiority was not. If this is the case, then Haga's observation of Norinaga and Atsutane, two of the most important exceptionalist thinkers in Kokugaku history, was an indictment

of exceptionalism and support for non-exceptionalist Kokugaku scholars, chiefly those who identified themselves with *wagaku*, since they were skeptical of superiority claims for Japan. Rather than refer to them as scholars of *wagaku* versus those who either disclaimed the term and/or embraced Kokugaku, Haga chose to refer to all of these intellectuals as adherents of Kokugaku. By doing so, he further suppressed the usage and memory of *wagaku*, as well as indicating a clear difference between scientific philology with its links to nationalism, and unscientific philology with its links to what I have been calling exceptionalism in this article. While seeking to downplay the exceptionalist side of the study of Japanese antiquity, Haga did not adhere, as one might expect, to the usage of *wagaku*. Believing that it was a term more amenable to the goals of *philologie*, Haga chose to use Kokugaku, despite the fact that it was the exceptionalist's term of choice. Whether or not Haga was aware of the ideological implications of this choice, the fact is that he used "Kokugaku" in an etic way (*kokugaku*), even though its original Edo usage had been as an emic (Kokugaku).

The emergence and rising popularity of the term "Kokugaku" during the eighteenth century notwithstanding, the Tokugawa Bakufu established an office in Edo dedicated to the study of Japanese antiquity in 1793, which they named the Wagaku Academy (Wagaku Kōdansho 和学講談所). Shortly after the Meiji Restoration, this office changed its name and came under the control of the Meiji government. After a series of further name changes and rotating institutional affiliations, officials settled on the name Historiographical Institute (Shiryō Hensanjo 史料編纂所) in 1929, a name it still bears to this day as part of the University of Tokyo. Although the Historiographical Institute exists today, the Wagaku Academy ceased to exist once the discredited Tokugawa Bakufu had been overthrown. Although the office "lived" on, it could only do so under a different name. In a sense, *wagaku* also ceased to exist once this name change took place. In 1882, the Bureau of Research on the Imperial Classics (Kōten Kōkyūsho 皇典講究所) was founded in Tokyo. In 1919, its name was changed to the Kokugaku Institution (Kokugakuin 国学院), and the following year its institutional status was raised from a vocational school to that of a university, a status it retains to this day. Thus, Kokugaku, although a cultural artifact of the Tokugawa period, continues to endure. While some scholars in Japan may still cling to the usage of *wagaku*, whether aware of what Murata Harumi and Oyamada Tomokiyo had written or not, the trend outside of Japan has been overwhelmingly in favor of Kokugaku. Unfortunately, the ideological agenda that Matsumiya Kanzan had identified in the middle of the eighteenth century that caused Kokugaku to emerge from *wagaku*, eventually overtaking and eclipsing it, was retroactively

superimposed onto the history of *wagaku*. Thus, the triumph of Kokugaku over *wagaku* signified the triumph of exceptionalism over mere nationalism.[11]

Conclusion

In the postwar period, studies of Japanese intellectual history claimed that *wagaku* was synonymous with Kokugaku, and then proceeded to use the latter exclusively, a usage that has spread outside of Japan as well. The privileging of one term over another, of course, represents a conscious choice that was made at some point in time for particular ideological reasons, so that succeeding generations simply reproduced this choice as an inherited teaching. *Wagaku* was an older term than Kokugaku, in the sense that they both signified studies of Japanese antiquity, yet the latter eventually came to supplant the former. The story of this terminological swapping is rather complex, related as it was to the political contexts of the late Tokugawa and early and middle Meiji periods. If *wagaku* was the term of choice throughout the Tokugawa period and up until its very end, only to be switched with Kokugaku during the Meiji era, this narrative would make sense, given the prioritization of civic nationalism by the Meiji government. Unfortunately, this was not the case, as our study of the *Santetsu shōden* and the writings of late Tokugawa scholars, like Hirata Atsutane, demonstrates. The usage of Kokugaku in place of *wagaku* began in the middle of the eighteenth century, becoming more ubiquitous and widespread by the early decades of the nineteenth century. It would be a mistake to attribute the interest in civic nationalism during the Meiji era to the scholars and intellectuals of the middle and late Tokugawa period. Clearly, there was at least some overlap in ideological interests between the two, an overlap that was nationalistic in character. Kokugaku scholars were clearly ethnocentric in attitude, so that a connection between this attitude and ethnic nationalism makes more sense than a connection with civic nationalism. As ethnic nationalism does not require the political context of an established state or even the potential creation of one, as is the case with civic nationalism, it is a category of analysis that helps us understand the appeal of Kokugaku as a term over *wagaku*. The *koku* of Kokugaku likely did signify a nation, not in the sense of a nation-state, but in the sense of an ethnic nation.

Matsumiya Kanzan was one of the earliest intellectuals, if not the first, to voice concern over the usage of the term *wagaku* among his scholarly contemporaries. What bothered him was the fact that the word seemed as if it was coined by those outside of Japan to distinguish their own native scholarly forms

---

11. Scholars observe how nationalism manifests itself in two main varieties, ethnic and civic. At the level of individuals, nationalism signifies the recognition of belonging to a group, whether a culture or ethnicity (in the case of the former) or a political state (for the latter). Exceptionalism may arise from within either context, but not in every case (McNally 2016).

from those of the Japanese. Instead, Japanese scholars created and perpetuated the term *wagaku* to distinguish the study of Japanese matters from those of foreign scholarly traditions already entrenched in Japan, especially Confucianism, as the chief signified for the signifiers of *tōgaku* and *kangaku*. Kanzan used the binary of internal/external to conceptualize this intellectual dilemma, so that *wagaku* fell on the internal side of that divide, despite the fact that it was created in response to the internalization of external forms. For Kanzan, there was confusion between the internal and the external, between what was authentically Japanese and what was foreign, where there should have been clarity. Motoori Norinaga famously made the same observation many years later, likely following Kanzan's lead, and the same is true of Atsutane, who said essentially the same thing, following Norinaga's lead.

Interestingly, Murata Harumi admitted that Japanese Confucian scholars had traditionally viewed Japanese scholarly matters as external even within their own country, but he did not bemoan this attitude as an insult to his homeland. Although he was critical of the view that Japanese matters were beneath the efforts of any self-respecting Confucian, a sentiment with which he did not concur, he did not go so far as to suggest that Japan was therefore comparable to China, as Kanzan had suggested, or even superior to China, as Norinaga had argued. For Harumi, the Way of the Sages was a cultural legacy of the Chinese, and there was nothing comparable to it in Japan. Consequently, China did take precedence over Japan; Harumi fundamentally upheld a belief in Sinocentrism, and therefore, Chinese exceptionalism. It was the doxa of yielding to Chinese exceptionalism that troubled Kanzan, Norinaga, and Atsutane.

Just as Kanzan's binary of internal/external lends itself to the corollary binary of native/foreign, it resonates with emics and etics as well. At the core of Kanzan's complaint, therefore, was the fact that *wagaku* functioned as an etic in Japan when it should have been an emic. Etics are useful precisely because they have transcultural meaning; their meanings are not confined to any one particular cultural context. As Shinozaki Tōkai pointed out in 1758, *wagaku* could function as a signifier of scholarship on Japanese matters just as easily in China as it could in Japan, which is why the Chinese and Koreans eschewed analogous terms to signify scholarship in their own countries. Tōkai believed that without any thought to usages outside of one's own culture, terms that only make sense within one's own culture (emics) make more epistemological sense than those that have meaning both within and without (etics). The problem for Tōkai (and Kanzan, Norinaga, and Atsutane) was that the natives produced etics to describe native phenomena, rather than emics.

What made the term "Kokugaku" so conceptually alluring for Kanzan was the fact that it only made sense within the context of mid-Tokugawa Japan. This external incomprehensibility and cultural exclusivity were at the heart

of Oyamada Tomokiyo's complaint that *kokugaku* really meant nothing more than the "learning of the provinces," so that the conceptual gap between what he thought was its "real" meaning and the one claimed by Kanzan and others earned from Tomokiyo both his ridicule and derision. Tomokiyo's contemptuous evaluation of *kokugaku* was proof, ironically, that what Kanzan and others had said actually had merit; the more philological frustration felt by Tomokiyo, as well as others claiming the mantle of *wagaku*, the more effective Kokugaku became as an emic. If scholars in other places, such as China and Korea, had seen a reference to Japan and *kokugaku*, they likely would not have known that it signified scholarship of Japanese antiquity, and also for its glorification, and this would have suited Kanzan just fine.

As appealing as Kokugaku was as an emic, it had an etic potential as well, not within the context of a China-dominated East Asia, but within the context of Tokugawa Japan. Rather than serve as the name of a particular ideological approach to the study of Japanese antiquity, it could serve, just as well, as a signifier for the study of Japanese antiquity in general. Once intellectuals realized this dual conceptual functionality for Kokugaku, the days of *wagaku*'s dominance were numbered. Not only was the supplanting of *wagaku* by Kokugaku a terminological transition, it was also the completion of a conceptual circle: the etic of *wagaku* gave way to the emic of Kokugaku, only to have Kokugaku assume *wagaku*'s etic role as well. In the end, Kokugaku became both an emic and an etic.

One of the key figures in this transition, if not its most pivotal figure, was Hirata Atsutane. In his narrative on the history of scholarship in Japan, he exclusively used the term "Kokugaku" to signify the study of Japanese antiquity, but he included the scholars of the Edo faction in his narrative, even though its leading figures, like Murata Harumi and Oyamada Tomokiyo, identified their scholarship as *wagaku* and not Kokugaku. For Atsutane, anyone who studied Japanese antiquity was a follower of Kokugaku, a view that was clearly at odds with Kanzan's observation of more than two generations earlier that only those among the scholars of *wagaku* who were loyal to Japan qualified as adherents of Kokugaku. However, Atsutane's point was not that *wagaku* was an illegitimate term; instead, he wanted to illustrate how Kokugaku had both orthodoxy and heterodoxy within it. Not surprisingly, the scholars of the Edo faction failed to live up to this orthodoxy, according to Atsutane, an interpretation that allowed him to preserve the ideological divide noticed by Kanzan but under the common terminological umbrella of Kokugaku. It was the issue of orthodoxy, therefore, as conceptualized by Atsutane, that transformed Kokugaku from an emic into a kind of "super signifier"; an emic that was also an etic.

The emergence of such super signifiers gives us a vital clue that exceptionalism is also at hand. When Lipset coined the term "exceptionalism," he realized that he had created a term that had obvious applications outside of the American

context, that his emic could also function as an etic. Lipset's critics made this realization as well, and they subsequently applied exceptionalism to contexts as varied as Brazil, Germany, and even Japan. The etic application of exceptionalism was the key for these scholars and researchers to undermining not only its emic exclusivity but also its exceptionality. In an effort to preserve this exceptionality, Lipset insisted that, while exceptionalism represented an analytical category unto itself (as an etic), it had only one legitimate case study, America, so that the etic potential of exceptionalism collapsed back into that of an emic.

Likely without the awareness of emics and etics, Lipset tried to ride the wave of conceptual tension between the two in his usage of exceptionalism. This was something we do not see in the work of either Kanzan or Atsutane: the former wanted to advance the emic functionality of Kokugaku, while the latter wanted to replace it with an etic functionality. The emic/etic tension within the history of Kokugaku was the product of the terminological confusion that Atsutane and his supporters created at the end of the Edo period. Any such confusion was perhaps more easily dismissed in the American case, in which advocates of exceptionalism cling to the emic while its critics cling to the etic, but there was no such clarity in the Japanese case until the late Meiji era. Analyzing the history of *wagaku* will muddy the waters once again, just as they were in Atsutane's day.

REFERENCES

ABBREVIATIONS

KD   *Kentetsu den* 賢哲伝. 2 vols. Arima Sukemasa 有馬祐政 and Torino Kōji 鳥野幸次, eds. Shūyō Bunko Kankōkai, 1919.

M   *Misonoya* 三十輻. 4 vols. Ed. Hayakawa Junzaburō 早川純三郎. Kokusho Kankōkai, 1917.

MKS   *Matsumiya Kanzan shū* 松宮観山集. 4 vols. Kokumin Seishin Bunka Kenkyūjo, 1935–1941.

NST   *Nihon shisō taikei* 日本思想大系. 67 vols. Iwanami, 1970–1982.

SHAZ   *Shinshū Hirata Atsutane zenshū* 新修平田篤胤全集. 21 vols. Meichō Shuppan, 1976–.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Gakutō benron 学統弁論. Ōkuni Takamasa 大国隆正 (1792–1871). NST 50.

Hirata Atsutane, Ban Nobutomo, Ōkuni Takamasa 平田篤胤, 伴 信友, 大国隆正. Haga Noboru 芳賀 登, Saeki Arikiyo 佐伯有清, Seki Akira 関 晃, and Tahara Tsuguo 田原嗣郎, eds. NST 50.

Kogaku shōden 古学小伝. Konakamura Kiyonori 小中村清矩 and Seimiya Hidekata 清宮秀堅, eds. Tamayamadō, 1886.

Kokugaku seigi 国学正義. Matsumiya Kanzan 松宮観山 (1686–1780). MKS 2.

Matsunoya hikki 松屋筆記. 3 vols. Oyamada Tomokiyo 小山田与清 (1782–1847). Kokusho Kankōkai, 1908.

Meidōsho 明道書. Izumi Makuni 和泉真国 (ca. 1765–1805). NST 51.

Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長. Yoshikawa Kōjirō 吉川幸次郎, ed. NST 40.

Nihon bunkengaku 日本文献学. Haga Yaichi 芳賀矢一 (1867–1927). In *Haga Yaichi icho* 芳賀矢一遺著. Toyamabō, 1928.

Nyūgaku mondō 入学問答. Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤 (1776–1843). SHAZ 15.

Santetsu shōden 三哲小伝. Ryūkō 立綱 (1763–1824) and Ezawa Tokinaga 江沢講修 (1781–1860). KD 2.

Tamadasuki 玉襷. Hirata Atsutane. SHAZ 6.

Tamakatsuma 玉勝間. Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730–1801). NST 40.

Wagakuben 和学弁. Shinozaki Tōkai 篠崎東海 (1687–1740). M 4.

Wagakuron 和学論. Matsumiya Kanzan. MKS 2.

Wagaku taigai 和学大概. Murata Harumi 村田春海 (1746–1811). NST 39.

SECONDARY SOURCES

BURNS, Susan
2003   *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Tokugawa Japan*. Duke University Press.

CARTER, Steven
1996   *Regent Redux: A Life of the Statesman-Scholar Ichijō Kaneyoshi*. Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan.

FLUECKIGER, Peter
2011   *Imagining Harmony: Poetry, Empathy, and Community in Mid-Tokugawa Confucianism and Nativism*. Stanford University Press.

GOODENOUGH, Ward E.
1970   *Description and Comparison in Cultural Anthropology*. Aldine.

GREENE, Jack P.
1993   *The Intellectual Construction of America: Exceptionalism and Identity from 1492 to 1800*. The University of North Carolina Press.

HANSEN, Wilburn
2008   *When Tengu Talk: Hirata Atsutane's Ethnography of the Other World*. University of Hawai'i Press.

HAROOTUNIAN, Harry
1988   *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism*. The University of Chicago Press.

HARRIS, Marvin
1979   *Cultural Materialism: The Struggle for a Science of Culture*. Vintage.
1999   *Theories of Culture in Postmodern Times*. Altamira Press.

HODGSON, Godfrey

    2009   *The Myth of American Exceptionalism*. Yale University Press.

KUROZUMI Makoto 黒住 真

    2003   *Kinsei Nihon shakai to jukyō* 近世日本社会と儒教. Perikansha.

LIPSET, Seymour Martin

    1963   *The First New Nation: The United States in Historical and Comparative Perspective*. Basic Books.

    1996   *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword*. W. W. Norton.

LOCKHART, Charles

    2003   *The Roots of American Exceptionalism: Institutions, Culture, and Policies*. Palgrave.

MADSEN, Deborah

    1998   *American Exceptionalism*. University of Mississippi Press.

MALTARICH, Bill

    2005   *Samurai and Supermen: National Socialist Views of Japan*. Peter Lang.

MARUYAMA, Masao

    1974   *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan*. Trans. Mikiso Hane. Princeton University Press.

MCNALLY, Mark

    2005   *Proving the Way: Conflict and Practice in the History of Japanese Nativism*. Harvard University Asia Center.

    2016   *Like No Other: Exceptionalism and Nativism in Early Modern Japan*. University of Hawai'i Press.

    2018   Hostile natives: Violence in the histories of American and Japanese nativism. *MDPI Religions* 9/5, no. 164. doi.org/10.3390/rel9050164

    2022   Analogous exceptionalisms in Japan and the United States: Kokugaku and transcendentalism. *MDPI Religions* 13/5, no. 409. doi.org/10.3390/rel13050409

MIYAKE Kiyoshi 三宅 清

    1932   *Kada no Azumamaro* 荷田春満. Unebi Shobō.

    1981   *Kada no Azumamaro no kotengaku* 荷田春満の古典学. 2 vols. Unebi Shobō.

NOSCO, Peter

    1990   *Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century Japan*. Council of East Asian Studies, Harvard University.

ŌKAWA Shigeo 大川茂雄

    1904   *Kokugakusha denki shūsei* 国学者伝記集成. Dai Nihon Tosho.

SOMBART, Werner

    1976   *Why is There No Socialism in the United States?* Trans. Patricia M. Hocking and C. T. Husbands. International Arts and Sciences Press, Inc.

TEEUWEN, Mark

2013   The Buddhist roots of Japanese nativism. In *Challenging Paradigms: Buddhism and Nativism*, Henk Blezer and Mark Teeuwen, eds., 51–75. Brill.

TERADA Yasumasa 寺田泰政

1979   *Kamo no Mabuchi: Shōgai to gyōseki* 賀茂真淵—生涯と業績. Hamamatsu Shiseki Chōsa Kenshōkai.

TOTMAN, Conrad

1982   Ethnicity in the Meiji Restoration: An interpretive essay. *Monumenta Nipponica* 37: 269–287. doi.org/10.2307/2384386

TURNER, Frederick Jackson

1996   *The Frontier in American History*. Dover.

VARLEY, Paul

1990   Cultural life in medieval Japan. In *Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 3, ed. Kozo Yamamura, 447–499. Cambridge University Press.

WACHUTKA, Michael

2013   Kokugaku *in Meiji-Period Japan: The Modern Transformation of 'National Learning' and the Formation of Scholarly Societies*. Global Oriental.

YANASE Kazuo 簗瀬一雄

1942   *Kokugaku nyūmon* 國學入門. Katō Chūdōkan.