

## Local Society and the Temple-Parishioner Relationship within the Bakufu's Governance Structure

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*The danka (temple parishioner) system was originally established as a component of the bakufu's policy of suppressing Christianity, but by 1700 it had become a government-instituted and temple-run system to monitor and control the populace as a whole. Through the issuance of certificates of temple registration, Buddhist temples participated in this system and benefited from having a stable parish membership and financial base. Once parishioners had become affiliated and registered through a particular temple, neither they nor their descendants were able to change sectarian affiliations, except through marriage. Ideally, for the clergy, this hereditary temple-parishioner relationship required both ritual and fiduciary responsibilities on the part of the danka. Danka were obligated to participate in and pay for funeral and memorial rites that became a standardized funerary ritual system during the Edo period. The danka were also required to financially contribute to temple fundraising campaigns for new construction or sectarian anniversaries. This essay examines the process of how the danka system developed within the bakufu's governance structure, the role of the Buddhist temples and priests in maintaining this structure, and how the danka system actually took form in local society. Using newly discovered local temple documents, this essay will also deal with cases in which parishioners tried to break their customary ties to their family temple.*

**Keywords:** *danka* system — *Shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō* — *kaimyō* — death registries (*kakochō*) — *ridan*

IN THE EDO PERIOD temples drew up certificates of temple registration for *danka* 檀家 (households that support a temple) and undertook the

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responsibility of recording them for government officials in registries of religious affiliation (*shūmon ninbetsu aratamechō* 宗門人別改帳). In 1638, the bakufu ordered that certificates of temple registration be issued for every Japanese. Local officials in each town and village then collected these certificates and put them together in a ledger. The temple registration began as a system to weed out Christians by forcing them to pledge loyalty to a Buddhist temple, and to monitor those suspected of being Christian. The few registries still extant that were made between 1638 and 1640 are not surprisingly from Kyoto, its environs, Kyushu, and other places where Christian influence was strong. Although there are practically no extant examples of registries from other areas until the latter half of the seventeenth century, we do have many earlier examples of individual, one-page certificates of registration that served the same purpose as registries from areas where Christianity was not widespread.

By around the late 1660s all domains were probably collecting registry certificates. As a part of the registry process, in 1664, the bakufu ordered daimyo to set up a domainal office of religion investigation known as *shūmon bugyō* 宗門奉行 (magistrate of religion) or *jisha bugyō* 寺社奉行 (magistrate of temples and shrines) whose purpose was to oversee the production of temple registries. As a result, in the following year, registries of religious affiliation began to be produced for all regions.

A few years later in 1671, the bakufu standardized the format for the registry. In the tenth month of the same year, the bakufu sent out “intendants (*daikan* 代官) for inquiring into religion,” and explained to them the procedure for producing the registries of religious affiliation:

Those of you in the office of intendant and office of inquiry into the Christian religion have been working carefully, but you need to be even more vigilant. Hereafter you should record the household of each peasant, tally the number of males and females for each village, district, and province, and promptly inform us of these matters. You should make and keep a registry and send us a one-page report. It goes without saying that the sex and age of each person under your jurisdiction who leaves the village for marriage or for service should also be recorded, as should people who come from elsewhere and reductions due to death. Priests should be deducted. Naturally, it is appropriate to investigate many things, and not only at the time of the inquiry into religion. We will contact you again during the spring or summer. Then you may send the report as you wish, either at the time of the harvest estimations in autumn or at the time of tribute collection.

Last day of the tenth month, year of the boar (1671)

Chief Treasurer

Toku (Tokuyama) Gohei (Shigemasa)

Sugi (Sugiura) Kura-n-in (Masaaki)

Matsu (Matsura) Iemon (Nobumasa)

(ISHII 1959, vol. 3, p. 1605)

This order states that, henceforth, the households of peasants must be recorded in the registry, and that the total number of men and women for each town unit, as well as the totals for each district and province should be reported. The intendant was instructed to keep the registry and send to the bakufu a one-page summary of the totals for each town unit. As for the contents of the inquiry, recorded in detail were the ages for each man and woman, along with marriages, departures for service elsewhere, deaths, births, and changes of residences. Information on priests was kept separately in the back of the registry and not calculated in the regional statistical totals. It is worth noting that the registries were used for many purposes, not just for investigating Christians.

Temples received unofficial notification about producing the registry in spring or summer, between the first and sixth months. They were obligated to submit the registry to the intendant either when harvest estimates were made for tax purposes in the eighth month or when tribute was collected in the tenth month. At that time, sample registries were distributed to the intendants. Intendants continued to produce registries in accordance with the format of the sample until 1870 (Meiji 3). The format and contents of an entry to the registry was to be as follows:

Group Head (*kumigashira* 組頭): Riemon

Age: 32

Ikkō Sect

Home: Sagami Province

Birthplace: Nishi District, Nishisuji Senzushima Village, Sagami Province

This certifies that the family temple is Zenpuku-ji, Nakasuji Mamashita Village, Nishi District, Sagami Province.

Wife

Age: 31

Ikkō Sect

Home: Sagami Province

Birthplace: Nishi District, Nishisuji Senzushima Village, Sagami Province

This certifies that the family temple is Zenpuku-ji, Nakasuji

Mamashita Village, Nishi District, Sagami Province.

Daughter: Katsu

Age: 6

Ikkō Sect

Home: Sagami Province

Birthplace: Nishi District, Nishisuji Senzushima Village, Sagami  
Province

This certifies that the family temple is Zenpuku-ji, Nakasuji  
Mamashita Village, Nishi District, Sagami Province.

Father: Chōzaemon

Age: 60

Ikkō Sect

Home: Sagami Province

Birthplace: Nishi District, Nishisuji Senzushima Village, Sagami  
Province

This certifies that the family temple is Zenpuku-ji, Nakasuji  
Mamashita Village, Nishi District, Sagami Province

Total: 4 people: 2 males, 2 females

Empō 6 (1678)

(Sagami no kuni Ashigarakamigun  
Senzushimamura shū mon aratamechō 1678)<sup>1</sup>

This is the portion for one household. Riemon was the group head (*kumigashira*) and his family consisted of his wife, daughter, and father. The record shows first the name of the sect, followed by “home” (location of household registry) and “birthplace” (name of place of birth), both of which for the members of this household are Senzushima 千津島 Village, Sagami Province. Next came the statement of certification, which included the name and address of the family temple (*danna-dera* 旦那寺 or *bodaiji* 菩提寺) where a family held funerals and memorial services. This statement also indicated whether or not the certificate of temple registration had been submitted to the village headman (*nanushi* 名主 or *shōya* 庄屋). The registry documented this sort of information for each person. Finally the totals and breakdown by sex for each household unit were recorded. At the time, the population of Senzushima Village was 367. Combining items akin to today’s household registry and certificate of residence, the registry of religious affiliation can be thought of as the “household registry” of the Edo period. What set it apart from present-day practice, however, was the obligation to specify the family temple name and to obtain a

<sup>1</sup> This document is held at Meiji University Keiji Hakubutsukan.

certificate of temple registration from that temple. From 1671 (Kanbun 3) until 1870 (Meiji 3) it was mandatory to produce the registry of religious affiliation under this format. Of course, registries varied by region: some would record in red each time a person had to be added or removed from an extant registry, while others would record only the total number of changes for the entire year.

As we have seen, the temple abbot would guarantee the identity of an individual and submit the certificate of temple registration to the headman who was the village official. In some regions this power was called *shūhanken* 宗判権, the right of a temple to certify orthodoxy. This right became an important source of Buddhist temple power as the establishment of the *danka* system progressed. For example, during the time the registry of religious affiliation was being produced many village officials and priests at family temples required households to pay a fee in exchange for temple certificates. Thus in the way described above, temples that received *shūhanken* to produce “household registries” gradually became powerful. To further strengthen the relationship between temple and *danka*, temples drew up “Rules Concerning Certification of Religion for *Danka*,” which I shall introduce next.

### *The Ideal Danka*

A document written as if it were a bakufu law appeared in the mid-Edo period, around 1735 (Kyōhō 20). Dated the fifth month, 1613 (Keichō 18), the document entitled *Gojōmoku shūmon danna ukeai no okite* 御条目宗門檀那請合之掟 (Individual rules concerning the certification of religion affiliation for *danka* [hereafter, *Gojōmoku*]) or *Tōshōgū jūgokajō* 東照宮十五カ条 was a skillful forgery. It was included in the *Tokugawa kinreikō* 徳川禁令考, which meant that even most Meiji-legislative historians mistook it for a bakufu legal document (ISHII 1959, p. 2670). But we can infer that this document is a forgery because it cites not only Christians, but also the Fujū-fuse 不受不施 and Hiden 悲田 sub-schools of the Nichiren sect, as heterodox religions prohibited by the bakufu. In fact, the comprehensive ban on Christianity was issued in 1638 (Kanei 15), on the Fujū-fuse sub-school in 1669 (Kanbun 9), and on the Hiden sub-school in 1691 (Genroku 4). The *Gojōmoku* must have been written after not only the prohibition of the Hiden sub-school in 1691, but also after the 1729 (Kyōhō 14) prohibition of *ridan* 離檀, the practice in which a *danka* could break ties with a family temple. So the document must date from no earlier than around 1735 (Kyōhō 20).

The pretext for choosing the 1613 date relates to the Order to

Expel Christian Priests (*Bateren tsuihōrei* 伴天連追放令), which Tokugawa Ieyasu issued in the twelfth month of 1613. During the second and third months of the 1614, Christians in Kaga, Kyoto, Buzen, and Bungo were forcibly converted and then called “fallen Christians” (*korobi Kirishitan* 転びキリシタン). At that time, as mentioned above, abbots had to produce certificates of temple registration only for “fallen Christians,” as evidence of their conversion. The author of the *Gojōmoku* intended to make it appear as if Ieyasu had specified a way for determining Christians and the terms of certificates of temple registration before having issued the Order to Expel Christian Priests, but he erred in incorporating the prohibitions on *danka* breaking ties with their temple and the Fujufuse and Hiden sub-schools. Therefore, I want to establish the years around 1735 (Kyōhō 20) as the probable date of this document. Many copies survive in temples and regional collections. Because the contents resemble the aforementioned family codes, many copies bear the date 1687 (Jōkyō 4). Subsequently, registries of religious affiliation quote the *Gojōmoku* on occasion and when *danka* did not meet the conditions laid out in the *Gojōmoku*, temples refused to issue certificates of temple registration. I will later explain how this became the seed of quarrels between temples and *danka*. Here I shall extract only the portions that concern strict observance of ancestor memorial services and temple authority.

There were four articles concerning the strict observance of ancestor memorial services.

First:

A *danka*—even the head *danka* [*danka* representative]—who fails to attend services for the death anniversary of the sect’s founder, for the death anniversary of the Buddha, for *bon* 盆, during equinoctial week, or for the death anniversary of his ancestors, will have his name removed from the registry; the office for religious affairs will be notified and the *danka* shall certainly be investigated.

In other words, the *danka* had a duty to visit the temple on the following days: the death anniversary of the sect’s founder, the death anniversary of the Buddha (*bukki* 仏忌, the fifteenth day of the second month), *bon* (or *urabon*, the three days starting on the thirteenth day of the seventh month), equinoctial week services (seven days preceding and following the vernal and autumnal equinox), the death anniversary for ancestors and others. The ideal *danka* must not neglect his ancestor memorial services, must actively participate in the memorial services held by the temple, and always be careful to make

the appropriate offering. If even a powerful *danka* like the *danka* representative failed to make visits, the names of his family members as well as the family name itself might be stricken from the registry of religious affiliation. The temple would report the incident to the shogunal administrator who would then subject the family to a harsh inquiry. Thus a temple abbot who exercised *shūhanken* to its fullest extent could, in effect, remove the status “*danka*” from a household.

Second:

Christians and members of Fujū-fuse on the death anniversary of their ancestors do not receive the mourning of the priest. On that day, they say one thing to the temple, but then they gather together with laypeople. When the officiating priest arrives they receive him with disinterest. In such cases investigations should be made.

This condition specifies that two services were obligatory on the day of the ancestor memorial service. If a *danka* failed to provide appropriate entertainment for the temple priests at each service, the *danka* would be branded a Christian or a member of the Fujū-fuse sub-school.

Third:

Taking memorial services or death services to another temple are strictly forbidden, excepting cases of death in another province.

Excepting cases of death outside the province, the family temple alone could perform memorial services. This condition essentially prohibits a family from changing its temple affiliation. Failure to obey this condition naturally meant that a *danka* would be labeled a member of a heterodox religion.

Fourth:

One healthy enough to walk who does not perform memorial services for ancestors or who is negligent about religious devotions should be investigated, and the donations that person makes to the main hall should thoroughly be investigated.

This remarkably detailed instruction warns that one healthy enough to walk but who fails to attend the ancestor memorial services or treats such matters carelessly will be subject to a harsh investigation, as will the offerings the individual made in the temple hall.

Above, we see the temple’s intention to use ancestral memorial

services as leverage for establishing the *danka* system. I think it is important to note that if a *danka* were negligent, the temple had the prerogative of removing it from the registry of religious affiliation, in effect branding the household a member of a heterodox religion.

Next are five obligations of the *danka*. First:

A *danka* that does not attend to his obligations but instead takes a selfish attitude, one that does not have the inquiry into religious affiliation performed by the temple priests, and one that does not perform his share of the temple's business, will be regarded as one who holds the beliefs of the heterodox Fuji-fuse sect.

Here, a *danka* is obligated to fulfill his obligations, an economic and labor burden undertaken for the family temple. A *danka* who did not use temple priests for the *shūmon ukeai* 宗門請合 (an inquiry in which the temple guaranteed a *danka* did not belong to a heterodox religion) and who did not perform the assigned economic or labor obligation was equated with one who held the beliefs of the outlawed Fuji-fuse sect.

Second:

A heterodox sect is one in which people do not receive the teachings of the family temple, do not give money for the priests and central projects of the temple, or do not accept and give money to people of other religions. People ought to give money to the world in order to gain the blessing of heaven, and to priests in order to gain the blessing of the Buddha. This is the true Dharma; therefore, [these *danka*] should be investigated.

This condition describes the logic of Fuji-fuse as "not to give or receive from those who do not believe in the Lotus Sutra." The statement in itself is not necessarily problematic, but the latter half of the condition requires a logical leap. "People ought to give money to... priests in order to gain the blessing of the Buddha. This is the true Dharma." This statement serves the selfish interests of the temple; for, the temple could regard a *danka* that failed to perform in a certain way as a member of the Fuji-fuse sub-school, thereby subjecting the *danka* to harsh investigation.

Third:

Although a *danka* may have belonged to a temple for many generations, and affiliation with one of the many sects may be

obvious, a descendant may somehow harbor the beliefs of a heterodox religion and should be investigated by the temple.

Even if many generations of a household were the *danka* of a certain temple, the temple ought to thoroughly investigate even such a household because descendants may have been drawn to a heterodox religion. Temples should, as a matter of course, not trust their *danka* and should subject them to surveillance.

Fourth:

After death when the abbot shaves the scalp and grants a *kaimyō* 戒名 [precept name] he may determine whether the deceased belonged to a heterodox sect on the basis of the appearance of the corpse, and for the *shūmon ukeai* he should perform a service and conduct a thorough investigation.

This rule means once one dies, the temple's abbot, when looking at the corpse, was free to determine religious affiliation.

Fifth:

In the end, the *danka* should in all matters follow the directions of the temple and perform religious devotions.

These conditions describe in all seriousness the broad rights the temple had in relation to the *danka* as if it were natural that the *danka* would gladly undertake the obligations demanded by the temple, which included making large offerings to the priest in order to show appreciation to the Buddha, and doing everything in accordance with the dictates of the priest at the time of death. Breaking ties with the family temple was also forbidden. Next I shall consider funerals, death registries, and *hōmyō* 法名 (dharma names), which were occasionally problematic.

### *The Production of Death Registries*

It is difficult to determine the point during the Edo period when temples began to produce death registries (*kakochō* 過去帳). Necessity, rather than bakufu edict, led temples to make them, a circumstance that makes accurately dating the standardization of death registries impossible.

Death registries from the medieval period can be found in, for example, the *Gunsho ruijū* 群書類従 (HANAWA 1932), which includes the following four volumes of death registries.

1. The one-volume death registry for Hokke-ji (Bambashuku,

- Omi Province) includes the dead from the Genkō Uprising in 1333 and 1334. (*Gunsho ruijū* vol. 29, pp. 243–52)
2. The one-volume death registry from Matsuoka Kamakura, Sagami Province is that of Tōkei-ji. It includes deaths starting with the founder, the nun Kakuzan Shidō, up through the twenty-first head, the nun Eizan (died 1707). In no particular order it also features *kaimyō* for military commanders such as the shogun and the regents who served under Minamoto Yoritomo up through Toyotomi Hideyori. Additionally it lists the *kaimyō* for Eisai, the founder of Jōfuku-ji, the Kantō and the Furukawa kubō, and the Kirekawa family, which was closely related to the temple. (*Gunsho ruijū* vol. 29, pp. 245–56)
  3. The one-volume death registry for Rokutanda Rokujizō-ji (Ibaraki District, Hitachi Province) contains a large number of two character *kaimyō*, including many of the ranks *zenjōmon*, *zenjōni*, *zenmon*, and *zen'ni*. Years are appended to names from 1508 through 1594. (*Gunsho ruijū* vol. 29, pp. 257–67)
  4. The one-volume death registry for Dentōzan Wakō-in (Tajima Village, Hitachi Province) contains a large number of two character *kaimyō*. The entries dated are between the years 1563 and 1631. (*Gunsho ruijū* vol. 29, pp. 268–69)

Another death registry thought to be old is one for priests that remains at Seijōkō-ji, the head temple for the Ji sect, located in Fujisawa City, Kanagawa Prefecture. Compiled by the temple's abbots, it begins in 1279 and ends in 1562 at the time of the twenty-ninth abbot, Taikō. This death registry is of the folding-book type and is divided into two parts, one for priests and one for nuns. It is referred to as the "Ancient Death Registry" to distinguish it from the death registry that the Ji sect had continued to maintain up until the present day. Originally the "Ancient Death Registry" was for the priests and nuns who followed the Ji sect's Yūgyō Shōnin, but later it was expanded to include lay families as well.

Though technically not a death registry, what is called the *Geppaichō* 月牌帳 remains at Mount Kōya. This document lists the *kaimyō* of the close relatives of people who made offerings at subtemples in the mountains around the country. Believers made offerings so that the dead would be remembered in monthly memorial services. This recently-discovered document reveals that by the early sixteenth century, laypeople's *kaimyō* began to be recorded in registries akin to *kakochō* (the earliest entry for *Geppaichō* of Takamuro-in 高室院 on

Mount Kōya dates to 1536).

At what point during the early modern period did family temples begin producing death registries that recorded the *kaimyō* of commoners more broadly? Such death registries are naturally thought to follow the establishment of certificates of temple registration and the temple-*danka* relationship. Though there are examples of death registries compiled in part from information copied from temple grave-stones and from the mortuary tablets of founding patrons, full-fledged death registries date at the earliest from 1635, and become more common between the years 1700 and 1720.

There were three types of death registries. One type was the “annual death registry” (*nenji shokei* 年次書繼) that was organized chronologically by year, month, and day of death. The head priest recorded the name of each person for whom a funeral was performed in the order of year, month and day. More common was a type known as the calendrical death registry (*kuridashi* 繰出し), for which deaths were recorded for every day of the month, from the first to the thirtieth, and put in chronological order starting with the earliest year, month, and day. This sort of death registry was based on information extracted from the annual one described above. Abbots, who would conduct morning services on the death anniversary, often used this monthly version, so it was kept in the main hall. Its form was divided into two or three sections; the first section showed the sect’s founder and its high priests, as well as the shogun and the founding patron, while the latter section(s) featured the names of the deceased. A third form of death registry was made for individual *danka*. In it death dates were rewritten in the order of earliest death first. This type of death registry, known as the “death registry by household” (*iebetsu* 家別), was convenient for performing the annual memorial services. However, the calendrical death registry was most common. At any rate, all three types were being produced at temples around the year 1720.

### *Hōmyō and Kaimyō*

Here I will draw on the *Zenshū ingō dōgō kaimyō jiten*, which contains detailed information about the format for assigning *hōmyō* (dharma names) and *kaimyō* (precept names), especially in the Zen schools (EGAKU 1989, pp. 11–13). The format for *hōmyō* is as follows (age is in *kazoedoshi*, or Japanese-style counting).

When conferring an *ingō* 院号:

XX in (*ingō*) YY (*dōgō* 道号) ZZ (*hōmyō/kaimyō*) koji 居士 (*daishi* 大姉)

When not conferring an *ingō*:

YY (*dōgō*) ZZ (*hōmyō/kaimyō*) *koji* (*daishi*)

*Ingō* (cloister name): An honorific used to express respect for a person's worldly achievements. Names such as *ken* 軒, *an* 庵, *sha* 舍, *sai* 齋, *dō* 堂, *en* 園 count as *ingō*. Of even higher rank was the name *inden daikoji* 院殿大居士, but this was limited to shogun and daimyo during the Edo period.

*Dōgō* 道号 (way name): Usually two characters under the *ingō* and above the *hōmyō*.

*Hōmyō* 法名 (*kaimyō*): Two characters.

*Igō* 位号 (rank title): received depending on the depth of the devotion and piety of the deceased.

*Daizenjōmon* 大禪定門/*Daizenjōni* 大禪定尼: Given to family founders and shogun.

*Daikoji* 大居士/*Shōdaishi* 清大姉: Corresponds to *indengō*. In some cases used as *ingō*.

*Koji* 居士/*Daishi* 大姉: Given to adult men and women of high social position and those who rendered distinguished service to the sect or temple.

*Shinji* 信士/*Shinnyo* 信女: Given to men and women over the age of fifteen who perform religious study without formally entering the order and to those who take precepts while still alive.

*Zenjōmon* 禪定門/*Zenjōni* 禪定尼: Originally given to men and women who formally entered an order, but later given to those over the age of thirty situated below *shinji* and *shinnyo*. For individuals under the age of twenty, the titles were *zenmon* and *zenni*.

In addition to the above, special *hōmyō* were given to children depending on their age.

*Dōji* 童子/*Dōjo* 童女: Given to boys and girls between four and fourteen years old.

*Gaiji* 孩兒(子)/*Gaijo* 孩女: Given to boys and girls between two and three years of age.

*Eiji* 嬰子/*Eijo* 嬰女: Given to boys and girls who died in the year of their birth; children under one year old.

*Mizuko* 水子: Given to miscarried and stillborn infants.

The above are *hōmyō* used even today. While the *hōmyō* for children are not differentiated, many sorts of discriminations are made when

assigning *hōmyō* to adult men and women. The abbot makes the selection on the basis of several ambiguous criteria, including lineage, wealth, social position, and donations made to the temple or sect. This indeed is a problematic procedure.

Next I shall consider the actual situation concerning *kaimyō* in the Edo period. Along with the preparation of the death registry, the rank of the *kaimyō* posed difficulties. The following correspondence, to and from the magistrate of temples and shrines, concerns the Sōtō sect (YOKOZAKI 1938, p. 261):

#### Response to a Request

There is no official precedent for granting *danka hōmyō* of the rank *koji* and *daishi* in the Sōtō sect. Even within the school, there are no religious principles for differentiating rank on the basis of esteem or derision, but great *danka* like daimyo and manorial lords have customarily received *inden koji* (males) and *inden daishi* (females). Founding patrons or devout *danka* that made special contributions received *koji* and *daishi*. These names were not limited to those of warrior status. Occasionally *koji* and *daishi* are granted to *danka* of long lineage, but one cannot easily receive one of these just for the asking. If a *danka* submitted one of the above reasons, made a request, and made donations to attain Buddhahood, the name may be granted if it were unavoidable. Even then, the reputation of the *danka*'s lineage must be up to par. Then, [the name desired] may be granted. Those of the status peasant and below receive *zenjōmon* and *zenjōni*; *koji* and *daishi* are strictly not permitted. Regardless of rank all children are given the *hōgō* (death name) of *dōji* or *dōjo*.

Second month of Hōreki 9, year of the rabbit (1759)

This document, which is one part of *Jisha saikyo mondō* 寺社裁許問答, says in essence that there were no bakufu prescriptions for *kaimyō* and that clerical law certainly made no distinctions based on rank for the Sōtō sect. However, the practice had been to give the likes of daimyo and patrons the names *inden koji* and *inden daishi*. Great patrons (powerful sponsors) and sincere believers not limited to the warrior class received the names *koji* and *daishi*. In addition, families of long lineage occasionally received these names. Clearly, one could not simply ask for a name and expect the request to be immediately granted, but if one submitted a reason of the sort mentioned above and made a donation to ensure salvation, the request would have to be considered, provided that one's birth and character were impeccable. Those

belonging to the peasant class and below were granted with the names *zenjōmon* and *zenjōni*; the names *koji* and *daishi* were not permitted. Regardless of status, children received the names *dōji* and *dōjo*.

Next I would like to consider the contents of this document. First, the names *inden koji* and *inden daishi* were meant for powerful patrons like daimyo, as can be seen by looking at gravestones and extant death registries. However, what I want to problematize is the excessive issue of the next rank of names, *koji* and *daishi*. To receive a name of this rank this passage mentions four conditions: 1) family founder; 2) sincere believer; 3) long family lineage; 4) money donated for salvation. Of these, conditions two and four are difficult to fathom. Condition two does not specify what constitutes “sincerity,” or, in other words, a “good deed.” For example, it is not explicitly stated whether or not donating a bell, statue or altar equipment, or making a contribution for the construction or repair of temple buildings, or even donating land would constitute an act of sincerity. Likewise, 4) does not specify a monetary amount. It may be thought that 2) and 4) concern the size of the contribution one makes to the temple. Or, they may include considerations of the lineage of the *danka*. Another problem concerns the ascription of the names of *zenjōmon* and *zenjōni* to those of the peasant class and below. From a different angle, one ought to ask why the magistrate of temples and shrines inquired into these matters. Judging from gravestones and death registries, there are quite a few peasants who received names of the ranks *koji* and *daishi* or *shinji* and *shinnyo*, not just *zenjōmon* and *zenjōni*. We should not overlook the fact that one could buy *kaimyō* of certain rank depending on how much money one spent.

A prohibition the bakufu issued slightly later in 1831 concerned the excessive issue of the *hōmyō*, *ingō*, and *kojigō*, and the erection of large gravestones.

Recently one hears that peasants and townspeople put on funerals of a large scale unsuited to their status, that they erect large gravestones at the gravesite, and that they receive *kaimyō* of the ranks *ingō* and *kojigō*. Henceforth, peasants and townspeople, even those of wealth and distinction, may not have funerals conducted by more than ten priests. They must also make offerings in proportion to the size of their land holdings. The height and base of their gravestones are limited to four *shaku* and they may not receive *kaimyō* of the ranks *ingō* and *kojigō*. Existing gravestones may be left as they are, but when they go under repair, *kaimyō* like *ingō* and *kojigō* must be removed. Gravestones must be regulated in this way.

Chart 1. *Hōmyō* (*Kaimyō*) Prices for the Ji sect

<i>Hōmyō</i>	Price	Converted to <i>koku</i>
<i>Goagō</i> 其阿号	Gold 7 <i>ryō</i> 両 2 <i>bu</i> 步	4.97
<i>Daichigō</i> 大式号	Gold 7 <i>ryō</i> 2 <i>bu</i>	4.97
<i>Ingō</i> 院号	2 <i>bu</i>	.33
<i>Kakuagō</i> 觉阿号	Silver 3 pieces	1.42
<i>Kojigō</i> 居士号	Silver 3 pieces	1.42
<i>Daishigō</i> 大姉号	Silver 3 pieces	1.42
<i>Tōichigō</i> 東式号	Silver 2 pieces	.95

Next I would like to consider the actual situation concerning the pricing of *kaimyō*.

#### *The Price of Kaimyō*

There is a document called “The Fees for Laypeople’s Names” (*Zaike no hōgō gomen hōsharyō* 在家之法号御免報謝料) written by the Ji sect abbot Ippō 一法 from Shōgan-ji 称願寺 (a temple of the Ji sect Yūgyō sub-school in Kurokoma, Kai Province) in 1712. This document shows the ranks and prices for names the Yūgyō Shōnin granted to laypeople when he made a pilgrimage around the country (see Chart 1).

According to the chart, the names *Goagō* (for males) and *Daichigō* (for females) were the most expensive at 7 *ryō* 2 *bu*, or 4 *koku*, 9 *to* 斗, 7 *shō* 升 (745.5 kilograms). Incidentally, the names common to all sects, *koji* for males and *daishi* for females, cost 3 silver pieces or 1 *koku* 4 *to* 2 *shō* (213 kilograms). *Ingō kaimyō* cost 2 *bu* or .33 *koku*, but in practice *koji* or *daishi* would be attached, so the price was actually 1 *koku* 7 *to* 5 *shō*.

On the fourth day of the tenth month, 1712, the chief priest of Hōzō-ji 法蔵寺 (Miharu Village, Tamura District, Fukushima Prefecture) went to Saikō-ji 西光寺 (Nakamura, today Soma City) where Ippō Shōnin was staying. There he offered “*koji* to one person and *daishi* to two people for the price of 6 *ryō* 3 *bu* (TAMAMURO 1977, vol. 1). *Koji* and *daishi* each cost 2 *ryō* 2 *bu* per person. Converted to the price of rice for that year, that amounts to roughly 1 *koku* 5 *to*, slightly more expensive than the 1 *koku* 4 *to* 2 *shō* listed in Chart 1. Even at that price, the names were apparently marketable.

Further, looking at the case of the Sōtō sect in the Kantō, a document from 1831 shows that *ingō*, *kengō*, and *angō* cost between 3 and 5 *ryō* (roughly between 2 *koku* 4 *to* and 4 *koku* 4 *to*); *koji* and *daishi* cost 1

*ryō* (8 to 8 *shō*); *shinji* and *shinnyo* cost 2 *kanmon* (4 to 4 *shō*); and a two character *kaimyō* added to *zenjōmon* or *zenjōni* cost 1 *kanmon* (2 to 2 *shō*). None of these was cheap. From this we can conclude that as far as *hōmyō* were concerned, the names of *goagō* and *daiichigō* were cheaper in the Sōtō sect than in the Ji sect. However, these *kaimyō* for the Ji sect were comparable to *kaimyō* known as *indengō* in other sects. Looking at the *ingō kaimyō* granted by both sects, at 2 *koku* 4 to to 4 *koku*, the Sōtō sect was relatively expensive, compared to 1 *koku* 7 to 5 *shō* in the Ji sect. *Koji* and *daishi* ranged from 1 *koku* 4 to 2 *shō* to 1 *koku* 5 to in the Ji sect, compared with 8 to 8 *shō* in the Sōtō sect; thus these ranks were more expensive in the Ji sect.

Change over time in *kaimyō* (*hōmyō*) and fluctuations in the price of rice make it difficult to compare *kaimyō* prices. The real problem, however, lies with the fact that the rank of a *kaimyō* (*hōmyō*) depended on the extent of one's wealth. In other words, a *danka's* economic contribution correlates with the rank of a buddha in the afterlife. *Kaimyō* show us that religious discrimination based on social position, lineage, and status lived on in the world after death. At any rate, if nothing else is certain, we can be sure that by assigning ranks to the *danka*, the priests of branch temples carried out their own schemes for economic exploitation, even as the head temple sought to exploit them. This sort of *kaimyō* ranking became prominent around 1735, the time when the *danka* system was established.

Next, I want to consider whether *danka* could change temple affiliation. The bakufu's temple codes of 1665 features wording that suggests, albeit passively, *danka* could change temple affiliation of their own volition. But was that really the case?

### *Danka and Family Temples*

Here I want to consider how the relationship between family temples and *danka*, which had formed gradually during the Edo period, changed in the late years of the early modern period. In particular, I want to focus on power relations, beginning with the problem of temples refusing to produce certificates of temple registration for certain *danka*.

The establishment of the *danka* system gave temples power vis-à-vis *danka*. Temples started to use this power to take firm measures against *danka* who failed to make donations and to remove delinquent *danka* from the registry of religious affiliation. Temples, by virtue of *shūhanken*, would simply refuse to draw up a certificate of temple registration, thereby refusing to guarantee that a *danka* was not Christian. When this was done, none of the family members of the *danka* could prove that he or she was a not Christian. Such a *danka*, called "registry

blank” (*chōhazure* 帳外丸) or “off the log” (*chōgai* 帳外), was entered into the household registry for *hinin* 非人 (nonpersons), and became the victim of discrimination. In ten years time, the *danka* could return to his former status, but to do so the *danka* would need to get from the temple abbot a certificate of temple registration guaranteeing his status. Therefore, the *danka* would have to give presents to the temple to curry favor, submit a written apology, promise not to go against the temples wishes again, establish a guarantor, and submit a request to be re-entered into the registry of religious affiliation. I want to introduce an example of someone who had started that process. The peasant Sajirō 佐治郎 from Iiyama Village (Aikō District, Sagami Province) submitted the following apology to Seiren-ji 青蓮寺 (Sanka Village, Aikō District) of the Ikkō sect, Nishi Hongan-ji sub-school.

#### Respectfully Submitting an Apology to Seiren-ji

Recently it was ordered that I be removed from the registry of religious affiliation because of my indiscretions. I understand this to be an appropriate measure. Until now I have not participated in the death anniversary of the Buddha or the memorial services for my parents and ancestors. I went against the orders issued by my temple, and since the year of the dragon (1844), I have not paid my allotted taxes. Many times you have visited me at my home, but I have greeted you rudely. In like manner, I did not make any contribution whatsoever for repairs to the main hall that were planned recently. Even *danka* from another temple contributed, but I did not. No words can adequately convey my apology for causing you anger. Due to all of my indiscretions up to this point, I offer this apology on behalf of my group [*goningumi* 五人組]. I hope that somehow you will accept it. If you do, I will be most grateful. From now on I will uphold the laws of my temple and province, and I will not disobey orders issued by my temple. If you would mercifully add me to the registry of religious affiliation, it would be an extremely great blessing, far more than I deserve. When differences arise, I will arrange matters as the temple wishes, and I never will say anything hateful. This is my apology for the days ahead.

(Day unknown), last month of Kōka 3 (1846), year of the horse, Iiyama Village Sajirō

Since there are no discrepancies in the above document, the group attaches its seal.

Group Representative Yasaburō

(ATSUGISHI HISHOBU SHISHI HENSANSHITSU 1986, p. 907)

From this document we know Sajirō had been warned that he would be removed from the registry because he had never made an economic contribution to the temple. Even though the temple pressed him for payment, he failed to make contributions for the death anniversaries of the Buddha (*bukki*), for the annual memorial services for his parents and ancestors, for the annual amount each *danka* was assigned to pay (he did not pay for the previous three years), and for repairs to the main temple hall. In other words, he had completely neglected his duties as a *danka*. These complaints pertain to the temple's efforts to run its affairs smoothly; they were fundamentally irrelevant to whether or not the temple removed Sajirō from the registry of religious affiliation. However, *shūhanken* gave the temple the right to check on whether Sajirō was a Christian; it was for the temple to decide whether to include or remove someone from the registry. In short, the nature of the early modern *danka* system was that the temple used *shūhanken* to make the *danka* the basis of its organization. Moreover, the family temple held powers tantamount to life or death over all family members of the *danka*. Surviving documents provide evidence for this. If Sajirō had not written an apology, he could not have continued living; such was the actual situation of the *danka* system. Next I would like to introduce a case concerning a samurai.

*A Samurai Who was Refused the Right  
to Break Ties with a Family Temple (ridan)*

The *danka* system of the Edo period made it virtually impossible not only for peasants but also for samurai to go against the wishes of a family temple and break with it. I want to consider the example of Tanaka Sahei 田中左兵衛, a high-ranking vassal of Kumamoto Domain (he received a stipend of 4,000 *koku*). His family temple was Zenjō-ji 禪定寺 of the Sōtō sect in the castle town, but he tried to break with it to change his affiliation to Honmyō-ji 本妙寺 of the Nichiren sect. First let me describe these two temples.

Zenjō-ji was located outside the Kōrai Gate of the Kumamoto castle grounds. Its founding patron is unknown, but its founding monk was Shunden 春伝. Though originally located in Furumachi, the temple requested permission to move and occupied its present location when Katō Kiyomasa 加藤清正 was the feudal lord. At that time it changed its mountain name to Gyokuryūsan 玉龍山 and 5 *tan* 3 *se* 9 *bu* 五反三畝九步 (5,277 square meters) of its land were exempt from taxes (see *Higo, Bungo Goryōnai Zenjū-in Honmatsuchō*<sup>2</sup>). This temple's sub-head temple

<sup>2</sup> This document is held at Eisei Bunko of the Kumamoto University Library.

(*chūhonji* 中本寺) was Tainei-ji 太寧寺 (Nagato Province) and its head temple was the sub-temple Myōkō-an 妙高庵 at Kushihi Sōji-ji (Fugeshi District, Noto Province).

The other temple, Honmyō-ji of the Nichiren sect, was the top sub-head temple in the domain. Katō Kiyomasa founded the temple in 1588, and in 1614 his grave was moved from the castle grounds to the temple, where it remains today. During Kiyomasa's time, the temple had holdings of 700 *koku*, but after Hosokawa Tadatoshi 細川忠利 became lord, its holdings shrank to 400 *koku*. The temple is in Nakao Village, Akita District, and within its grounds are twelve residences for priests. Its head is Honkoku-ji 本圀寺 in Kyoto.

Both temples, powerful ones established in the late medieval period, were involved in a major incident concerning the domainal authorities. Tanaka Sahei announced his intention to break with Zenjō-ji on the twenty-third day of the sixth month, 1737. In response, Zenjō-ji denied that request:

It is difficult to know how to deal with Tanaka Sahei's request to change affiliation. He told us that he intends to go against a 100 year contract between the temple and his *danka* and change his temple affiliation because a one-time illness was cured. Such a request is not permissible.

(SHIN KUMAMOTO SHISHI HENSAN IINKAI 1996, pp. 861–70)

Tanaka Sahei was a long-term invalid who could not fully perform his duties. He prayed to various places, but no medicine worked. At the point when he had exhausted all possible medical treatments, he met a priest named Myōnbō 妙音房 from Honmyō-ji. Upon receiving treatment from the priest, Sahei recovered, and wanted to change his temple affiliation from Zenjō-ji to Honmyō-ji. He made clear, however, that his adopted son would remain with the Sōtō Zen temple, Zenjō-ji, and would continue fulfilling the *danka*'s duty to the temple as before. Zenjō-ji, on the other hand, refused to recognize Sahei's request to break from the temple. Below is the explanation offered by Zenjō-ji:

In regards to the request to change sect and temple affiliation, given that our temple did nothing wrong, it is not clear whether the problem lies in our sect's teachings, the temple, or its abbot. There has been no special reason given for leaving our temple. Though it may seem fine to the individual to simply change his sect or temple, if this individual leaves during my tenure as the abbot of the temple, it will be a great problem for me because this individual's family has had a long and distinguished connection to our temple as parishioners....

The meaning of being a temple parishioner involves not only receiving a funeral and incense-offerings [memorial services] at the temple, but to receive the temple certificate showing that one is not a member of an evil sect. Therefore, it should not be possible for one to change sect affiliation with such impunity.

Zenjō-ji took the position that since it was not at fault in any way, it would not permit Sahei to change his temple affiliation, which had stood in his family for one hundred years. The temple also emphasized its role as the investigator of religious affiliation. In response, Honmyō-ji put forth the following counterargument:

The statement that long term connections between a cleric and the laity are beneficial to the laity in both this world and the next, [I must say] if I am not to tell falsehoods, is not [a reflection of] my true feelings. Furthermore, [Zenjō-ji's priest says that cutting long held *danka* ties] will nullify powers of the buddhas and kami to save beings, but since I doubt this stance, I have ardently put forward my thoughts [that the *danka* should be based on present faith, and not simply a tradition of lay relations with a particular temple or cleric]. [In response to your advocacy of precedents over present faith], I state that [such a position] will make it very difficult for people to worship the buddhas and kami that offer salvation. If you are saying that [cutting *danka* ties is unreasonable, I retort by saying that you are forcing upon people the crime of not revering the buddhas and kami and imposing upon them.

Honmyō-ji criticized Zenjō-ji by asserting that the essence of a household's relation to a temple was based on faith, rather than on a *danka's* obligation to his family temple. Honmyō-ji made the following argument:

Since the [bakufu] codes [state that] religious affiliation depends upon the [*danka's* own] preferences, priests are not to impose upon the laity; thus, [isn't your stance in this matter] in contravention to those codes?

As grounds for this argument, Honmyō-ji offered an article from *Shoshū jūin hatto* 諸宗寺院法度, a 1665 law issued by the bakufu: "Danka families should entrust themselves to the temple, regardless of what temple it is, and priests should not compete for lay followers." From this combative position, Honmyō-ji emphasized that under bakufu law, breaking ties with a temple was possible. This argument was surely

true, but circumstances did not allow such a conclusion to the affair. In the end, the Kumamoto Domain could not settle the matter itself and appealed to the magistrate for temples and shrines. Sahei's duties were taken away from him and he was placed under house arrest. "The circumstances of the conversion [request] are thought improper, so in accordance, Sahei is removed from his duties and ordered under house arrest." Even for someone of Sahei's stature the barriers to breaking from a temple were great; freedom of religion was not recognized. One could say that the power of family temples was something to be feared.

As the two examples above make clear, in the relationship between temple and *danka*, the temple had overwhelming power. Furthermore, the philosophy at work in the above-mentioned *Gojōmoku* inspired fear. As one of the highest ranking samurai, Sahei was a powerful functionary in the Kumamoto Domain in control of temples, yet the opposition of his family temple deprived him of both status and social position. Although it defies social logic, the family temples seemed to have had the power to prevent even the magistrate of religion from being permitted to change his family temple. Countless surviving documents attest that the attitude the family temple took toward the peasant Sajirō mentioned above was typical. And it was in this very attitude that the harmful conditions of the *danka* system lie.

#### *Priests and Their Lovers: The Towa Case*

An article of the temple code issued in the seventh month of 1665, featured a law concerning the clandestine lovers of priests (*nyobon* 女犯): "Female relatives and of course females who are not relatives, should not be allowed to stay in the temple residences." Excepting the Ikkō sect, which permitted marriage, relations with women were prohibited for priests. Here, I shall consider adultery incidents involving priests of Sōtō sect temples.

On the seventh day of the eighth month of 1786, Towa とわ, wife of the peasant Matabei 又兵衛 from Hayakawa Village (Sagami Province), charged Tetsumei 哲明, the abbot of her family temple, Chōsen-ji 長泉寺, with adultery. The complaint was made to the head temple Seigen-in 清源院, a Sōtō sect temple in Sanda Village of the same district. What follows is a condensed version of her complaint (all documents below related to Chōsen-ji are from *Chōsenji Monjo* held at Seigan-in):

Thirteen years ago I [Towa] came to Hayakawa Village from Onba Village [Kōza District, Sagami Province] to marry

Matabei. However, seven years ago, Matabei lost his business and ever since has been working in the neighboring village. Recently, Matabei's mother has also moved out to work in a nearby village. I have therefore been living together with my son, supporting myself doing needlework. Tetsumei, the abbot of my family temple, Chōsen-ji, had been coming by from time to time asking me to fix his robes. It was on these occasions that he made advances to me, but I rejected them because he is a monk.

Towa describes how Tetsumei became friendly with Towa in the course of visiting her home several times. The turning point in their relationship came at the time when the temple was producing its registry of religious affiliation:

As time went on, the temple had to put together its registry of religious affiliation. Tetsumei visited my house and told me that if I didn't have sexual relations with him, he would not place his seal on our family's name in the registry of religious affiliation [which would be tantamount to branding the family Christian]. He pointed out that this would cause a lot of trouble for Matabei and making various other threats, he pressed me to be intimate with him. Without a choice, as a thoughtless woman, I had relations with him on numerous occasions for roughly three years ago.

Using *shūhanken* as a weapon, the abbot of the family temple pressed for Towa to commit adultery. In the small village their relationship was soon known. Although her husband and mother-in-law were working out of the village, she never knew when they would hear of the affair. She told Tetsumei that she wanted to end the affair, but

Since Tetsumei promised me that if the villagers learned about the affair, he would either take me in as his mistress or escape the village with me, this relationship dragged on.

However, one day Matabei heard about the affair:

Since Matabei worked in the neighboring village I was usually concerned about strangers coming by during the night. However, one evening when Tetsumei and I were secretly having an affair, the two of us were blissfully unaware of someone coughing at the front door. To our surprise, it was Matabei. I greeted my husband as if nothing had happened and sent Tetsumei on his way.

Matabei, who caught Towa in the act, said to her:

Having witnessed this affair between me and Tetsumei, Matabei declared that he wanted to see both of us severely punished. However, since Tetsumei was the head of our family temple, Matabei decided not to report the monk since that would not only be looked down upon in the community, but also insult our ancestors. Instead, Matabei slapped me shouting, "I will divorce you" among other things. Someone who heard this commotion came into the house and calmed Matabei down. Later that evening, he returned to his workplace.

Matabei took a strong position towards his wife's adultery and was visibly angry at her. However, he refrained from showing aggression towards Tetsumei, having considered appearances and the fact that his ancestors' graves were at Tetsumei's temple. He could not, however, calm Towa down and the next evening she ran off to Chōsen-ji.

Once night had fallen, I went to the temple and quietly slipped into Tetsumei's sleeping quarters to discuss the situation. I asked him to separate once again, but Tetsumei replied that despite Matabei's discovery of the affair and even if the affair came out into the open, he would continue to love me. Tetsumei then promised that we would be forever together even if we had to commit double suicide. Given this, the affair continued. However, one evening when Tetsumei was over at my house, my husband Matabei caught us again. When he realized he was discovered, Tetsumei ran out of the house.

Matabei again confirmed his wife's adultery and immediately began the procedure for divorce:

Not able to overlook the affair this time, Matabei went to the temple and told Tetsumei about his intentions to divorce me. He then went to the village's five-household mutual responsibility group (*goningumi*) and handed over divorce papers. But this being a divorce based on allegations of infidelity, the matchmaker refused to accept the divorce papers until the affair was verified.

Towa secretly went to Chōsen-ji to meet Tetsumei to verify his feelings. Tetsumei, however, had had a change of heart. Berating only Matabei, Tetsumei completely disregarded the promise he had made to Towa, that even if they had to commit double suicide with each other, they would stay together. Towa described her state of mind at this point:

Now that Tetsumei's true intentions were clear, I couldn't believe what was happening and returned home. Though I may be a woman, I began to think about what options lay ahead. Having been abandoned by my husband [though the matchmaker had not accepted the divorce papers yet] and not being able to return to my own parents' home, the only option I could see was to go through with the promise Tetsumei had made about us committing double suicide. On the third of the eighth month, I took a knife from my house and headed to the village official's house to report what I was about to do, before heading off to Chōsen-ji. I confronted Tetsumei and reminded him of his promise, edging closer to him with the knife. He ran off toward the garden. Right at that time, two villagers—Katsuemon and Yōsuke—surrounded me and told me that they would relate my feelings to Tetsumei, so I handed them the knife and returned home. Later they contacted me with the news that my demands could not be honored.

Then an angry Towa went off again to Chōsen-ji but Tetsumei had already left. Below is a condensed version of the letter:

Tetsumei had gone off to Edo to file a counterclaim. Although I had lost him, thinking back on the three years that he fooled around with me, I couldn't believe the gall he had to file a suit. In total despair, thinking not only about myself, but my husband's standing, I thought of committing suicide by drowning myself. However the matchmaker Shichiroemon turned up and told me to write this letter to you, the head temple, Seigen-in.... I have had the matchmaker sign his name and place his seal along with mine to the end of this letter. Please bring in Tetsumei for questioning and upon finding out the truth, I would be grateful if you would restore my good name.

Originally in the Edo period adultery was a capital crime. But here all we have is Towa's word; an acknowledgment of the affair by Tetsumei would also have been necessary. Putting the issue of crime aside, I want to use here Towa's complaint to illustrate several problematic aspects of the *danka* system.

The first problem is that the abbot of the family temple used *shūhanken* to press Towa to commit adultery with him, and that she complied. It was on these sorts of occasions that the discretion of the priest determined the use of *shūhanken*, that is, the authority to affix the seal to the temple certificate. Furthermore, it is important to note

that Towa is made to think that not only she but also her husband Matabei would be affected.

The husband's attitude towards the family temple poses another problem. Matabei avoided confronting the abbot because he could not act in a way that showed disrespect for the Buddhahood of his ancestors. Factors such as the services the family temple performed for the village, particularly ancestor memorial services, might have weakened his resolve to pursue the abbot. For example, if this had been a case of adultery between two villagers, the husband would have confronted the man involved.

The plaintiff Towa, however, was not an innocent victim. That the adultery had continued for three years in itself is a problem. It would have been possible to find a solution to the problem much sooner; her complicity cannot be explained simply with the excuse that she was "a thoughtless woman." Anyway, in response to the complaint sent to Seigen-in by Towa and the matchmaker Yamamoto Senji 山本戦治, Tetsumei submitted the following document to the officials of Seigen-in.

Matabei of the manor of our humble temple, fief of Matsudaira Sodayū, declared that his wife and I have acted immorally. I have no memory whatsoever [of what is accused]. Unavoidably, due to this unreasonable demand, I lodged a complaint with the office of the fief, and by way of precaution I am sending it to you as well. Eighth month, Tenmei 6 (1786).

Though the date of this document is unknown, Tetsumei probably sent it right after Towa submitted her complaint. Here, Tetsumei reported to Seigen-in that he had not committed adultery and that he had filed suit with the office of Matsudaira Sodayū in order to establish his innocence. Then, seeing these developments, the fourteen related temples of Chōsen-ji sent the following written statement to Seigen-in.

Presently the elder priest Tetsumei of Chōsen-ji has been ordered to leave for elsewhere; what further punishment must he endure? We humble temples think him unfathomably pitiful. We ask you to kindly protect his standing from further harm, and to throw out this claim. Together, we, the neighboring temples, group temples, the *nehan* confraternity, temples of the same head branch system, and closely affiliated temples humbly ask this of you.

These fourteen temples submitted this petition out of concern for their colleague Tetsumei. Furthermore, according to a document dated only "the ninth month" of the same year, the retired priest of

Chōsen-ji and the two supervising temples of the fourteen sent the following to Seigen-in:

To the officials of Seigen-in:

Concerning the letter recently sent by Yamamoto Senji and a woman named Towa from Hayakawa Village to the elder priest Tetsumei of Chōsen-ji of the same village, we think the humble priest unfathomably pitiful; therefore, we would be most grateful if you would order the affiliated temples to handle the matter with a conciliation and forgo an investigation of both sides. Ninth month, Tenmei 6 (1786).

Kongō-ji, Iiyama Village

Sōkei-ji, Kawaraguchi Village

Chōsen-ji, Daiju (The Retired Abbot)

Rather than demanding an investigation by the head temple, the temples asked to have the closely affiliated temples conduct a conciliation (*naisai* 内濟) between the parties involved. As in the previous document, Tetsumei is depicted as “unfathomably pitiful.” We can infer that the temples were scheming for conciliation sympathetic to Tetsumei. In other words, the three priests who signed this letter were at the center of efforts to find a settlement. What happened with the settlement? We do not know the details, but approximately two months later on the thirteenth day of the tenth (intercalary) month, documents were submitted to Seigen-in bearing the seals of the plaintiff Towa, guarantor Yamamoto Senji, the agent Gennosuke from Kokubu Village, and Tsuemon from Kozono Village, who acted as an agent in place of Yamamoto Senji. Kongō-ji, Sōkei-ji, and Daiju, the retired abbot of Chōsen-ji, also affixed their seals. The document is as follows:

Respectfully Informing You that We are Handling This Matter

Previously submitted was a letter from the wife of Matabei in which the elder priest Tetsumei of Hayakawa Village is named as the other party, along with a postscript by her guarantor, Yamamoto Senji. We humble temples, along with both mediators, received it and affixed our seals to it. However, Towa and Yamamoto Senji agreed to the conciliation the mediators thought should be done. Therefore we ask to withdraw the letter from Towa. If withdrawn, not only will the sender and her guarantor, but the various agents will all be extremely grateful and moreover, we humble temples will make no further requests from the elder priest Tetsumei in regards to this incident. We collectively sign this, in recognition of the above.

First, this document says that five in all—three temples and two mediators—received the authority to deal with the conciliation, and that, as a result, conciliation had been agreed upon. In this document they declare that they want to withdraw the documents Towa submitted to Seigen-in in the past. They also state that they will not make any more problems about this incident. Unfortunately, the documents containing the concrete details of the settlement have not survived. We do not know whether the contents of this document were advantageous or not for Towa. However we do have another document featuring the same information, thought to have been produced at the same time. This document bears the signatures and seals for four temples and twenty village officials and *danka*. From this document we know that the incident had still not died down. At a meeting Tetsumei let slip that if he paid the officials of the head temple, he could get away with a simple charge of “negligence” (probably meaning guiltless self-indulgence). In response Seigen-in rebuked Tetsumei and he wrote an apology. Thus there were *danka* who did not approve of how Tetsumei behaved during the course of the conciliation, and dissatisfaction even grew to the point that some *danka* wanted to break ties with Chōsen-ji over the “Towa Incident.”

On the seventeenth day of the eleventh month, 1786, the Hayakawa Village headman called the *danka* of Chōsen-ji to his house to propose that they return to Chōsen-ji, but because the *danka* had already decided together “not to return” (*ridan*), the meeting did not go anywhere. The headman offered several reasons for returning to the temple as *danka*: the impoverished village could not afford any more lawsuits; it had been the authority of Seigen-in that had finally been able to bring about a conciliation; the village would appear undignified in the eyes of neighboring villages; pressing the matter further would involve matters of the status of priest; and their requests for the Buddhahood of their ancestors would be uncertain. In addition, the headman recommended that the *danka* ask to have Tetsumei removed in exchange for their return. As a result on the seventeenth day of the eleventh month, sixty-three *danka* decided to return. This was followed by three returning on the eighteenth and eight returning on the twentieth. In total, seventy-four *danka* returned to Chōsen-ji, yet four decided not to—Denbei, Tazaemon, Shinzō, and Kakunai. Matabei’s name does not appear on either the “returning” or “not returning” certificate. Shinzō’s reasons for “not returning” were as follows:

Tetsumei’s character is just as it is expressed in Towa’s letter to the head temple. The head temple kindly allowed conciliation. Though I know not whether it is true, everyone has heard

that [the priests tried to resolve the problem with money], and with that kind of attitude, it is difficult to honor [Tetsumei] as a cleric who has a different status from the laity, and as abbot of the family temple. We are uneasy with asking him to perform the memorial services for our ancestors and parents. It is quite out of the ordinary for us to accept that he burns incense and leads services [for our ancestors], and since the [whole affair] is extremely lamentable, we have lost face. . . .

Shinzō roundly criticizes the abbot's character. He cites the accusations made in Towa's letter, the fact that Tetsumei had given money to the matchmaker Yamamoto Senji to settle the conciliation, the fact that he could not be respected as the head of the family temple, his bad reputation, and that due to that reputation, Shinzō could not mourn with confidence that his father's Buddhahood was assured.

On the twenty-fourth of the eleventh month, Tetsumei submitted to Seigen-in a certificate with the signatures and seals of four *danka* and three closely affiliated temples. This apology included the admission that his actions as an abbot had been outrageous, and that as he had been ordered to retire he would do so, that he would not offer any excuses, and so on. On the same date Tetsumei promised Seigen-in to hand over to the investigating priest the official red seal of the temple, the account book for temple holdings, land gifts that had been made to the temple, and money received for the mortuary hall, fields, temple furnishings, and everything else.

With that, the "Towa Incident" subsided. The death penalty was the usual penalty for adultery, but here, a settlement was reached through conciliation arranged by the affiliated temples and the village headman. It seems that Towa, at first unyielding, consented to conciliation when the condition of the death penalty was dropped and the matter settled with money. Tetsumei too was able to escape the death penalty, and although he was expelled from Chōsen-ji, he was able to save his reputation by going into retirement. It is fortunate for both that they were able to avoid the death penalty, but we can see several problems with the *danka* system of the Edo period surface in this incident. We ought to note that even adultery was possible for priests who used *shūhanken* as leverage. However, even in this kind of situation, *danka* were not permitted to break ties with the family temple.

Next is another incident at Chōsen-ji concerning *danka* who wished to break away from the temple. It is not that this temple had a particularly large number of priests who had lovers, but I have chosen this temple simply because the documents survive.

*An Incident of Breaking Away from Chōsen-ji*

In 1819, about thirty years after the “Towa Incident,” there was more trouble at Chōsen-ji with *danka* who wanted to break away from the temple. I want to begin with the reason the *danka* gave for wanting to break away from the temple:

## Respectfully Making a Written Request

ITEM: Chōsen-ji, which is under your control, has great power and causes difficulties for all of its *danka*. However, we would defend and honor it because it is our family temple if its behavior were respectable and if the temple’s officials did their work well. However, because the temple has caused us difficulties and due to its immoral conduct, we *danka* in unison break from the temple. Unavoidably, we request that you [Seigen-in] allow this. If you would kindly take up our request all of the *danka* would be most grateful. Due to the above difficulties caused for the *danka* and due to immoral conduct we announce our breaking with the temple.

(*Chōsenji Monjo*, 1819)

The *danka* of Chōsen-ji submitted the “Request to Break from the Temple” to the head temple, Seigen-in. They raised two points, the temples attitude towards the *danka* and the immoral conduct of the abbot. The concrete reasons were as follows:

1. When someone dies and needs a funeral, the abbot demands exorbitant fees.
2. For memorial services at someone’s home, he comes to even a poor house with both a young attendant priest and another attendant because he wants to be extravagant.
3. For memorial services at the temple, even if most arrangements are made by the relatives, if the donations are low, he gets angry and orders them out.
4. When we have to make offerings, he insists on 200 *mon* cash, 2 *shō* of rice, and vegetables.
5. In cases of aborted or miscarried children or children that died in childbirth, he charges 1 *ryō* 2 *bu*, which is far too expensive for poor households.
6. For the memorial services [from the first to the thirty-third year], he demands that we pay the prices that he writes on a signboard hung at the temple.
7. For infants who die before their seventh night, the temple performs a full-scale funeral and after that, demands that the

- family perform yearly memorial services.
8. The *danka* Hikoemon was beaten badly so that his bones and body experienced much pain and hardship.
  9. The temple hires actors and entertainers and has ballad drama practice. The abbot leaves the temple open at night and goes out to the homes of laymen for amusement.
  10. The abbot has a young woman live with him, calling her an “old laundry woman.”
  11. The abbot smuggles fish in the temple’s food containers.
  12. He coaxes offerings (gold and goods) out of *danka* and then uses them for courtesans at Yoi [a brothel at Hiratsuka station].
  13. He calls shadowy figures to the temple, gathers young women together, and has banquets.
  14. He is obsessed with women in the village; he cannot give them up and insults young men.

In sum, the behavior of the abbot plays out as a terrible story. Thus while the abbot was absent from the temple, the *danka* assembled there to confer about expelling the abbot and forcing him to resign. Angered by this meeting, the abbot then falsely accused the *danka* of stomping on the mortuary tablets of the emperor and the shogun, and took a combative stance towards them. These circumstances are recorded in detail.

In the ensuing confrontation, the abbot Gyokutan 玉潭 continued to deny everything, so there was no progress at all. On the twenty-fifth day of the sixth month, the *danka* drew up a *karakasarenbanjō* 牽連判状, a document on which signatures are written in a circle to conceal the identity of the ringleader. This was sent to Seigen-in. The gist of this document was that the *danka* wanted to break ties with the temple Chōsen-ji due to Gyokutan’s faithlessness, but, if Gyokutan were replaced with an upright priest, the *danka* would return to the temple. Thus, they wanted Seigen-in to arrange the removal of Gyokutan. On the following day, the twenty-sixth, the *danka* once again sent a letter concerning Gyokutan’s misconduct:

#### Respectfully Making a Written Request

As the *danka* representative for the *danka* of Chōsen-ji, Hayakawa Village, I declare that the abbot of the above temple is immoral in conduct and unfair. We have repeatedly made requests to you concerning our abbot. In addition to the items we have submitted to your temple thus far, there are many others that we have omitted; so now, due to the abbots stub-

bornness, we write the remaining items and ask you to look at them.

ITEM: As previously stated, the abbot had illicit relations with the daughter of the villager Gorōemon. She got pregnant and around the twentieth of last month [the fifth month] she miscarried.

ITEM: The person who took care of the daughter was the wife of the villager Bun'emon. This woman previously had illicit relations with the abbot and was repeatedly given money in secret for taking care of the daughter of Gorōemon, and for providing lodgings so that the abbot could repeatedly spend the night. At dawn he would leave by a back door and return to the temple by way of mountain paths. Since the grass was trampled upon, we knew he had been there. Due to these circumstances gradually the villagers caused an uproar and the wife was divorced. As a result the wife recently forced her way into Chōsen-ji, where, it is rumored, she asked over and over to meet with the abbot. She wanted him to take her in, or to give her money, or to enter conciliation talks, so it was difficult for the abbot to return to the temple. Therefore, he went to Jōun-ji in Tomuro Village where he hid himself and then secretly entered Ryūdō-in. Around the twentieth [of the sixth month], the wife finally left Chōsen-ji. Relieved, the abbot finally returned to the temple....

Of the abbot's immoral behavior, his clandestine lover is once again mentioned in detail. The abbot had illicit intercourse with two women, one of whom, Tomi, the daughter of the villager Gorōemon, became pregnant and had a miscarriage. The wife of another villager, Bun'emon, introduced Tomi to Gyokutan, a service for which the wife received money. Tomi's and Gyokutan's affair took place in Bun'emon's house. The other woman with whom the abbot had had an affair was Bun'emon's wife herself; when that affair came to light, Bun'emon divorced his wife. We know that the wife, angered by the course of events, pressed Gyokutan either to take care of her or to settle the matter with money through conciliation. Gyokutan left Chōsen-ji and took refuge at a neighboring temple because of this dispute. He settled matters with Bun'emon's wife for 3 ryō 3 bu of gold.

Seigen-in had, in the course of negotiations with various *danka*, been able to determine that Gyokutan was at fault, so they expelled him from Chōsen-ji and made him retire. The *danka* were busy with agricultural work and could not continue this long-term process of

petitioning. In the seventh month of the same year, they exchanged conciliation certificates and the incident died down. A new abbot eventually was brought in; so the *danka* did not succeed in breaking ties with the temple, even though they were able to have Gyokutan removed. Despite the exposure of Gyokutan's adultery, the *danka* could not break away on this pretext.

The two incidents at Chōsen-ji illustrate the shifting relations between the temple and its *danka*, in which the *danka* increasingly have a say in the workings of their Buddhist temples. However, as the end results in both cases suggest, the power of the temple over its *danka* ultimately was affirmed by the bakufu. Any shifts could only happen within the parameters of the power relations as defined by the bakufu and the head temples. The Tanaka Sahei case demonstrates that even high ranking vassals could not overturn this hierarchical dynamic. Although the *danka* system was a product of an attempt to control Christians, both the bakufu and the Buddhist temples found it a convenient means to monitor the populace and maintain a stable temple membership.

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