

TOWARD THE LATE TOKUGAWA PUBLIC SPHERE:
DISSENT, REMONSTRATION, AND AGITATION IN THE SETTSU PROVINCE

by

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Abstract

This dissertation addresses the growth of the public sphere and its chief components through an examination of late eighteenth and nineteenth century cases of remonstrance in Settsu, one of early modern Japan's eighty provinces. Encompassing the city of Osaka and its twelve surrounding districts, Settsu served not only as the economic center of early modern Japan or the so-called "Country's Kitchen," but it also represented a hotbed of intellectual debate, social change, and most importantly for the purposes of this dissertation, discontent. These trends in social contention from Settsu further set the tone for dissent across early modern Japan in the 1800s.

I adapt Jürgen Habermas' model of a public sphere—a discursive arena between the official and domestic sphere where one may express him or herself on public matters—in formulating my own paradigm of the public sphere of late Tokugawa Japan. For late Tokugawa civil society, I define it as voluntary associations where those active in the public sphere may gather and formulate their thoughts. In addition to civil society, I include such elements as aesthetics, print literature, religious travel, the marketplace, entertainment, village affairs, and of course dissent within the public sphere.

Employing primary documents from compendiums of early modern Japanese peasant uprisings, local histories, and secondary literature, I follow a chronological progression in outlining the public sphere's development. Two chapters are devoted respectively to separate incidents in 1837, Ōshio Heihachirō's Osaka uprising and Yamadaya Daisuke's Nose riot, in order to account for individual interest as a contributor to the public sphere. The penultimate chapter departs from the chronological schema to analyze *kokuso* or inter-provincial mercantile protests from the 1740s through the 1850s, thereby discussing the role of the marketplace in civil society and the public sphere.

The dissertation's conclusion first summarizes the principal contributors to Settsu's public sphere. Then, it explores certain episodes of remonstrance outside of Settsu to demonstrate the impact of the province's social movements elsewhere in late Tokugawa Japan. Finally, it proposes that the Edo Bakufu had played a pivotal role in the public sphere's development by the end of the Shogun's rule.

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Introduction: Toward an Early Modern Sphere of Remonstrance

A vast fissure separated the normative expectations and the actual practices of Tokugawa Japanese society (1600-1868). In religion, the Bakufu required families to register their names in a local Buddhist temple, yet communities of hidden Christians and others who defied the state's religious policies persevered, pilgrimages to Shinto shrines were more popular than ever, and new religions like *tenrikyo* proliferated by the mid-nineteenth century. For travel, authorities prohibited journey outside of the country and across domains, and still residents from one territory to another found the means to circumvent the restrictions for both educational and recreational purposes. In the intellectual world, Neo-Confucianism legitimated institutional rule and served as the basis for public education, yet *kogaku* ancient studies, *kokugaku* nativism, *rangaku* Western learning, and *mitogaku* pro-Imperial/anti-foreign studies all flourished by the end of the Edo era. A rigid social hierarchy—the *mibunsei*—prescribed a vertical order of samurai-agriculturalists-artisans-merchants, but some merchants legally possessed swords, peasants occasionally received surnames, and artisans often earned higher income than warriors. Finally, scores of annual decrees and ordinances from *bakuhau* (shogunate and domain) authorities delineated the fines and punishments for protest; nevertheless, hundreds of incidents of unpunished dissent from the warriors to the outcasts spread throughout early modern Japan's provinces. In the space between these expected and actual social practices we find the public sphere of early modern Japan.

In this dissertation, I address the growth of the public sphere and its chief components through an examination of late eighteenth and nineteenth century cases of remonstrance in Settsu, one of early modern Japan's eighty provinces. Encompassing the city of Osaka and

its twelve surrounding districts, Settsu served not only as the economic center of early modern Japan or the so-called “Country’s Kitchen,” but it also represented a hotbed of intellectual debate, social change, and most importantly for the purposes of this dissertation, discontent. The prevailing economic, social, and intellectual trends in Osaka frequently shaped those in Edo and Kyoto to the extent that the Tokugawa Period might arguably be classified as an “Osaka Era” as opposed to the “Edo Era.”¹

Settsu presents an atypical case for dissent across nineteenth century Japan in the manner in which it engulfed multiple forms of contention within the public sphere. Other provinces and domains did encounter resistance and disobedience through the nineteenth century, yet Settsu’s array of intellectual, violent, litigious, and even aesthetic remonstrance isolated the region in the narrative of late Tokugawa discontent. With Settsu as its backdrop, the dissertation aspires to two goals: first, to contribute to the understanding of mass movements in Tokugawa Japan; and second, to identify which elements constituted and molded a growing public sphere in the final decades of the Bakufu rule. This introductory chapter will first provide a brief literature review of early modern protest with an emphasis on research pertaining to Settsu. It will then address civil society and public sphere theory and their relevance for nineteenth century Japan. Next, it will devise a working model for the public sphere of remonstrance. Lastly, it will outline the dissertation’s methodology and structure.

General Historiography on Tokugawa Protest and Early Modern Settsu

¹ James McClain and Wakita Osamu assert in their introduction to *Osaka: The Merchants’ Capital of Early Modern Japan*, that “to label the years from 1590 to 1868 the ‘Edo Period,’ as so often is done, tips the scales of historical attention too much in the favor of that one city...”¹ (20).

An abundance of sources in both English and Japanese addresses peasant uprisings, mass movements, and dissent in early modern Japan.² The frameworks used to analyze the phenomena naturally vary. In English, ideology (Vlastos 1986), political consciousness (Scheiner 1978 and Kelly 1985), cultural history (Walthall 1991), and a combination thereof (Ooms 1996) account for some of the more comprehensive analyses.³ Japanese historians offer even more variegated studies for the topic of protest. The most influential over the past three decades include Fukaya Katsumi's work on the thought (1973) and political consciousness (1986) of peasant protest, Aoki Kōji's chronologies (1971 and 1986), Hosaka Satoru's studies on propriety in rural dissent (2002) and *gimin* or men of public spirit (2006), and Suda Tsutomu's discussion of the institutionalization of violence in the nineteenth century (2002).⁴

English language research into cases of remonstrance in Settsu, however, remains largely confined to single episodes within urban Osaka. More precisely, scholarship has focused on: Ōshio Heihachirō and his 1837 riot as emblematic of a prototypical Japanese hero (Morris 1975) and the personification of the unification of idealism with action (Najita 1970); the depiction of violence in Osaka popular culture (Leupp 1999); and the overt practice of outlawed Inari shrine worship in the city (Nakagawa 1999). William Hauser's 1974 *Economic Institutional Change in Tokugawa Japan* addresses a 1,007-village protest over Osaka cotton house monopolies in 1823, yet he filters the case through the lens of the urban cotton lines.

² Each chapter of the dissertation's body contains a section that introduces the relevant historiography to that chapter's topic. Here, I am introducing some of the most substantial English and Japanese language works.

³ Other substantial works in the field include Borton 1968, Walthall 1986, and White 1995.

⁴ Japanese language sources on early modern movements number far beyond these, of course. For a comprehensive bibliography of scholarship from 1880 to 1996, see Hosaka Satoru's 471-page *Hyakushou ikki kenkyū bunken somokuroku* (Bibliography of Peasant Uprising Research).

In contrast, there is no dearth of Japanese language studies on single cases of discontent in Osaka and Settsu.⁵ Nevertheless, Japanese historians have only in the past decade begun to explore the city-village dynamics in early modern Settsu. Such studies focus on paradigms of early modernity for Osaka and its surrounding districts (Chihōshi Kenkyū Kyōgikai 2000), shared social and cultural identities between the city and villages (Yabuta 2005), and the relationship between the Osaka ward magistrates and their peripheral communities (Watanabe 2005 and 2006). Each of the authors accounts for some permutation of remonstrance in their texts; en masse, they view rural dissent as an offshoot of the villages' proximity to Osaka rather than a sign of interconnectivity for discontent in the center and periphery. In this dissertation, I aim to demonstrate that urban and rural trends in Settsu remonstrance represent inseparable components of the public sphere and that neither side accounts for changes in patterns of contention within the other.

Situating the Public Sphere and Civil Society in Early Modern Japan

I will employ in this study the language of critical theory, principally the concepts of a public sphere and civil society, to analyze the meaning of late Tokugawa Settsu remonstrance. To provide a succinct definition of these terms, first the public sphere represents the discursive arena where one may express him or herself on public matters.⁶ This arena did not materialize within coffee houses or public gathering places as it did in Western Europe. Instead, it emerged within works of literature, entertainment, village

⁵ One needs only to browse the indexes of the journals *Ōshio Kenkyū*, *Rekishi Hyōron*, or *Hisutoria* for a sample of articles, literature reviews, and conferences pertaining to late Tokugawa dissent in Osaka and its periphery.

⁶ It is important to note that for Tokugawa Japan, one engages in the public sphere primarily through a collective voice—appeals and action emanating from the village body or regional councils—and not an individual one, with the exception of Ōshio Heihachirō and similar individuals' choreographed uprisings in 1837.

affairs, and intellectual circles. Second, civil society consists of voluntary associations, notably Settsu's private academies and rural councils, where those active in the public sphere may gather and direct their thoughts pertaining to matters that concern themselves and their livelihoods.⁷ The remainder of this section will first discuss the applicability of the public sphere to early modern Japan and then detail the sphere's components, including voluntary civilizations or civil society, and their manifestations in late Tokugawa Settsu.

Public sphere and civil society theory are not absent from historiography on the Tokugawa period. Most studies that cite critical theory do, however, veer away from addressing or offering a concrete working model for how discontent may be incorporated into the early modern Japanese public sphere. Part of the dilemma revolves around the implicit connotations of terms used to describe European civilization. In other cases, the works' themes do not attend to protest, per se, but rather other features of the public realm in Tokugawa Japan. I propose that with only minor adjustments we may adapt and employ the public sphere and civil society to suit the discourse on nineteenth century Japanese remonstrance.

A discussion of the public sphere naturally invokes Jürgen Habermas' political theories. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas takes Alexis de Tocqueville's political society (a community that is located between the government and home) and develops it into a discursive arena for citizens to engage in an uninhibited discussion of or debate on matters of public affairs. The public sphere thereby exists

⁷ Active participants in civil society include all members of the Tokugawa status hierarchy insofar as they represent themselves outside of their official or private duties. For instance, governmental officials may join civil society provided they are not serving their administrative roles in doing so. A private individual, then, may immerse him or herself in mercantile civil society not as a function of choosing a product to purchase for the home but rather as a means to voice approval or disapproval with the machinations of the marketplace. This interpretation of civil society and the marketplace adapts Larry Diamond's model of civil society where groups like managerial associations and labor unions belong to civil society and individual consumers and producers do not (Diamond 224).

between an official sphere of authority occupied by the State and aristocracy and a private sphere comprised of the market and household. Habermas notes that the public sphere itself features the “world of letters” and the “market of culture products or ‘town.’”⁸

Habermas’ public sphere materialized alongside increased leisure for eighteenth century European bourgeoisie society. As these wealthier private citizens partook in the cultural production and appreciation of art and literature in coffee houses, salons, and literary magazines, they generated new outlets to air their opinions on public matters. The public sphere fostered the expression of the individual within these venues for discussion, as Habermas writes, thereby opening dialog regarding the “problematization of areas that until then had not been questioned.”⁹ By the twentieth century, the institutions that developed and transformed the public sphere, Habermas argues, enervated the sphere vis-à-vis the official sphere. In other words, universal suffrage, spheres of journalism, and the modern welfare-state were instrumental in dampening the voice of the citizen while amplifying that of institutionalized bodies.¹⁰

In early modern Japan, the public sphere has a more inclusive character than its counterpart in Western Europe. By the end of the Bakufu rule, nearly every social stratum—recognized in the official hierarchy or not—partook in the realm of remonstrance. Historiography has furthermore accounted for this broad nature in discussions of a thriving Tokugawa public sphere. Mary Elizabeth Berry, for instance, proposes the following components for the Tokugawa public sphere in her 1998 article “Public Life in Authoritarian Japan.” First, she situates village politics within the sphere, for rural peasants often protested

⁸ Habermas 1989, 27-30.

⁹ Ibid., 36.

¹⁰ Habermas addresses each issue in detail in the chapter on “The Transformation of the Public Sphere’s Political Function” (181-235).

what they perceived as unfair taxes and corrupt practices of officials. Secondly, she pinpoints discussion within the private academies as another feature of the public sphere with samurai, commoners, and merchants partaking in intellectual and social debate. Next, Berry turns to print literature as a form of information dissemination in the public realm. Finally, she suggests that “dangerous subjects” or the airing of dissent from the private into the open represented an integral portion of the public sphere.¹¹

Then, Niki Hiroshi’s 1997 *Kūkan/ōyake/kyōdōtai-chūsei toshi kara kinsei toshi he* (Space, Public, and Community: From the Medieval City to the Early Modern City) details the transition in urban Japan during the turn of the seventeenth century. Public space and the community, he argues, were integral to the formation of early modern urban centers and the legitimization of both a limited government and regional control.¹² Niki provides three reasons for why public space and communities were central facets of the centralized state for Tokugawa Japan. He first ascribes it as a reaction by the populace to intense urbanization. As *nichō* (Edo Japan’s equivalent of day laborers) flocked to cities like Kyoto and Edo, unease increased and the public community served to limit recognition of such groups within the urban borders. Secondly, he cites a progressive unified government, for the Edo Bakufu accommodated the will of the masses in such a way that was impossible during the Sengoku period (1480-1580). Thirdly, he refers to the Bakufu’s “absorption” of the public: even in castle towns the daimyo houses were not the sole possessors of authority, as protective institutions like provincial governments allowed the castle-towns to take on a public character.¹³ Thus, to Niki, the unifiers of early modern Japan opened the public sphere for

¹¹ Berry 144-55.

¹² Niki 21.

¹³ Ibid., 237-8.

public participation somewhat paradoxically through urbanization and a limited centralized authority.

Lastly, chapters from the 2001 *Kinsei Osaka no toshi kūkan to shakai kōzō* (Early Modern Osaka's Urban Space and Social Structure) explore the relationship between Daimyo store houses, commoner residences, merchant guilds, and entertainment centers with urban space in Osaka. While not referring directly to the language of Western critical theory, the book nevertheless draws a similar portrait to Habermas' public sphere. Collectively, the pieces use spatial metaphors to contend that a multi-layered social order of the public, market, and government comprise the foundation of urban space for the city. As Yoshida Nobuyuki writes, underlying each layer of society is an interlocking network of differing social strata occupying the same urban space and interacting with the authorities.¹⁴ In other words, one of the central features of urban social space is a thriving public sphere.

Unlike the public sphere, civil society, through its historical incarnations from Plato's *koinonia politike* to political philosophy of the twenty-first century, eludes strict definition. Literally, the concept denotes a fraternity of citizens that freely come together—a voluntary association that exists outside of government control. Yet, the term has acquired such malleability that it fits in the theoretical discourse on democracy (De Tocqueville), socialist markets (Marx), individualism (Kant), and consumerism (Gramsci). As Ernest Gellner argues in *Conditions of Liberty*, these ideological approaches may be fused together to reason that civil society necessitates historicism, for it thrives equally well in an oppressive state as it does in a utopian society of egalitarianism.¹⁵

¹⁴ Tsukada, ed. 319-20.

¹⁵ Gellner 211-3.

If civil society may materialize in any era of history, then may its features demonstrate any level of consistency? Once more we find that the components for civil society adapt to their temporal and ideological contexts. In the religious realm, for example, Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation essentially propelled the separation of religion and government, thereby drawing Christianity into civil society of the sixteenth century. Less than a century later, however, Thomas Hobbes argued in the *Leviathan* that civility requires state interaction.¹⁶ For the marketplace, Karl Marx asserted that the market was the backbone for civil society in a socialist state. Yet, Antonio Gramsci excluded consumerism from civil society in communism and replaced it with cultural arenas.¹⁷ Even in the late twentieth century, sociologists like Robert Putnam argued that civil society has waned since the 1950s with a decline in civic organization membership.¹⁸ At the same time, international non-governmental organizations have supplanted local volunteer associations, effectively creating a global civil society.

Perhaps the optimal approach to interpret civil society is a modular one. That is, as Michael Walzer asserts in his 1992 essay "The Civil Society Argument," no single entity can completely define the concept since even the actors within it are "necessarily pluralized as they are incorporated."¹⁹ In recent scholarship, these multiple associations generally include a limited government, the market economy, and voluntary associations.²⁰ Civil society therefore hinges on what elements comprise volunteer associations at a particular time and place. To grasp the meaning of civil society in the late Tokugawa period, we must determine

¹⁶ Ehrenberg 70-1.

¹⁷ Schwartz 31-2.

¹⁸ Putnam challenges the strength of contemporary civil society through an exploration of bowling leagues in *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of the American Community*.

¹⁹ Walzer 107.

²⁰ Victor Perez-Diaz in particular advocates this view in his 1995 "The Possibility of Civil Society: Traditions, Character, and Challenges" (81).

which modules are represented as fraternal organizations contemporary with nineteenth century Japan.

To begin, Peter Nosco assembles a model for civil society in his 2002 article “Confucian Perspectives on Civil Society and Government.” Nosco writes that Tokugawa civil society is to be found in the emergence and proliferation of private academies. Moreover, he pinpoints education in Tokugawa Confucianism as crucial to fostering a space that allows dissent. For Confucians, the subjects rely on their officials to administer rule with benevolence. When the government fails to meet public expectations, Nosco writes, the subjects “are entitled to remonstrate with their state.”²¹ Nosco refrains from including religious and secretive political associations in his framework.²²

Membership in Tokugawa civil society, like the public sphere, does not exclude any single group. In fact, as Tsukada Takashi writes in his 1992 work *Mibunsei shakai to shimin shakai* (Hierarchical Society and Civil Society), participatory volunteer associations included members within each of the strata of the official social hierarchy as well as participants from without. Tsukada takes into account the Western underpinnings of such language, as he notes the Marxist theories that address the separation of public and private and the bourgeoisie/proletariat divisions within civil society. His book investigates to what degree marginalized classes like the *hinin* (the non-human outcastes) or *nichō* (the early modern equivalent of day laborers) occupied space in civil society. He concludes that beginning in the late 1700s, new Bakufu censuses that account for outcastes who fell through the cracks of earlier registers in addition to the dissemination of *hinin-fuda* (an outcaste identification card) transformed civil society in early modern Japan from an old model that excluded unofficial

²¹ Nosco 350.

²² Ibid., 334

citoyen into one that allowed participation from each living individual. Tsukada notes that the new civil society did not achieve any measure of equality among the classes; rather, it simply opened venues for the peripheral peoples of Japan to be participants in public associations.²³

Despite the cleft that divides the public sphere and civil society in English language historiography on Japan and critical theory overall, recent scholarship on *modern* or post-Tokugawa Japan has fused together the two concepts.²⁴ For example, in the 2003 *State of Civil Society in Japan*, Frank Schwartz outlines the various interpretations of civil society as an introduction to the pieces in the volume. Still, he writes, the contributors to the text share a basic definition for civil society in Japan as a “sphere intermediate between family and state in which social actors pursue neither profit within the market nor power within the state.”²⁵ Schwartz and his colleagues hence align civil society with the public sphere and thereby limit the components through the same caveats for what does *not* constitute civil society as Gramsci and Nosco did respectively for the West and Tokugawa Japan.

In the same volume, Sheldon Garon adapts Berry’s thesis to bridge civil society across the Bakumatsu (1853-1868) and Meiji periods (1868-1912) in his chapter “From Meiji to Heisei: The State and Civil Society in Japan.” According to Garon, the public sphere developed from the fifteenth century to the seventeenth century through agencies similar to those outlined by Habermas. Yet, in late Tokugawa society, he locates a burgeoning public sphere in the countryside as opposed to urban centers. By the mid 1800s, rich farmers and artisans had developed inter-regional networks that served as proponents of agricultural and

²³ Tsukada 1992 15-21.

²⁴ Granted, Habermas himself never clearly delineated civil society or separated it from the public sphere, although he seems to lean toward the view that civil society is found within the individual realm (30).

²⁵ Schwartz 23.

political discourse. Change did not stem from these associations; rather, Garon argues, the ruling authorities disseminated it from a top-down schema.²⁶

Along a similar vein, the editors of and contributors to the 2005 *Public Spheres, Private Lives in Modern Japan, 1600-1950*, do not offer a concrete definition for modern Japanese public spheres as much as civil society, which they refer to familiarly as the “activities occurring in the space between the family and the state.” Whether or not self-government and the marketplace fit in with civil society, they maintain, remains undetermined.²⁷

Addressing this porous boundary between the public sphere and civil society, Eiko Ikegami champions the formation of new critical terminology to describe early modern Japan. It is Habermas’ restriction of the public sphere to the bourgeoisie that Ikegami deems in her 2005 *Bonds of Civility: Aesthetic Networks and the Political Origins of Japanese Culture* to be problematic for a discussion on both public spheres and civil society in the Edo era. As she accurately points out, Tokugawa Japan did not maintain proletariat/bourgeois social divisions. Further, those who participated in early modern Japanese aesthetic circles were not relegated to one class or another. In lieu of such “loaded” terminology, Ikegami suggests “publics” and “civility” in place of public spheres and civil society, respectively, where publics refer to “spheres of interactions where cultural activities take place”²⁸ and civility denotes a “grammar of sociability that is most suitable for less committed social relationships...interactions mediated by weak ties.”²⁹ Ikegami additionally offers “counter

²⁶ Garon 45-6.

²⁷ Bernstein, Gordon, Nakai 3.

²⁸ Ikegami 7.

²⁹ Ibid., 14-5.

publics” to describe activities that vent discontent with the official realm along with “aesthetic” and “enclave” spheres.³⁰

Still, as we have seen, Japanese historians do embrace to an extent the language of critical theory. After all, while they refer to *shimin shakai* as a translation for civil society, they have yet to arrive at a consensus for how to address the public sphere.³¹ Instead, concepts like an *ōyake kūkan* (official/public space) or *shakai kūkan* (social space) represent similar ideas that the public sphere embodies. The end analysis, however, should not instigate a debate on how to label the terms of these phenomena so much as to locate them and ascertain their development across the timeline under consideration.

My dissertation will synthesize the aforementioned public sphere theory to create a theoretical framework for a public sphere of remonstrance in late Tokugawa Settsu. With respect to Ikegami’s scholarship, I will retain the language of critical theory to conceptualize this space.³² When I henceforth address civil society, I am referring to voluntary associations that are accessible to multiple social strata within early modern Japan. Although such associations largely attend to activities within academies, I am reluctant to disassociate the market from civil society. Specifically for Settsu, inter-district and inter-provincial *kokuso* protest symbolize a qualified voluntary association where inter-district and inter-provincial councils representing village merchants, artisans, farmers, and fishermen devoted their own time and resources into devising petitions to improve their conditions.

³⁰ Ibid., 43.

³¹ The literal translation of the public sphere is *kōteki ryōiki* 公の領域 or *kōkyō ryōiki* 公共領域 but there is no consensus for a translation for the public sphere as there is for civil society or *shimin shakai* 市民社会.

³² One may align the sphere of remonstrance with her idea of “counter publics,” but as we shall see in the conclusion, the early modern sphere of remonstrance doesn’t necessarily restrict itself to movements that express dissatisfaction with the official sphere. If anything, the sphere of remonstrance would find a counterpart among her “enclave spheres.”

I refer to the public sphere as a discursive arena that exists between the private (domestic) and official spheres. Moreover, civil society and the public sphere will not be employed as interchangeable concepts; instead, I contend that civil society constitutes an integral contributor to the public sphere but not the sole one. To understand the relationship between the public sphere and civil society and what both entail for remonstrance in nineteenth century, we must therefore identify the actors in and contributors to the private, official, and public spheres.

Building a Working Model for the Sphere of Remonstrance

To begin, the private sphere envelops the domestic scene, the market, religion, and education. Such activities facilitate the kind of autonomy found within individual choice as prescribed by the Tokugawa authorities. Some of these features require further elaboration, however. The market in the private sphere pertains to consumer choice when accounting for both sustenance and predilection. Religion concerns on the one hand state-recognized Buddhist temples and rituals and on the other hand covert practices. For example the “underground Christians” operated with a certain degree of autonomy in the private sphere not only because of their illicit nature but also because the Bakufu silently allowed their communities to exist as long as they abided by social norms.³³ The fact that practitioners of covert religions refrained from engaging in the sphere of remonstrance for much of the Tokugawa Period enabled them to cross the threshold into modern Japan. Finally, for education, I am including within the private arena *terakoya* (temple schools), *hankō* (domain schools), and apprenticeship training for governmental and artisan professions.

³³ Nosco 1993.

The official sphere contains the Bakufu government from the shogunate to the foot soldiers who manned the domains' guard posts. Less conspicuous but nevertheless integral to the same space is the Imperial Court. Whereas the Bakufu often served as the focal point for economic, social, and intellectual strife, the Emperor and court nobles became the embodiment of an idealized past among the same dissenters. Nineteenth century intellectuals in particular wrote manifestos and summons of protest that aspired to restore the realm to an idyllic order under the Emperor's auspices.³⁴

In the public sphere, the peasants—primarily agriculturalists, fishermen, and sericulturalists—have the largest roles.³⁵ Although silk production did not thrive in Settsu, villagers in Osaka's outlying districts earned their livelihoods from cotton, oil, rapeseed, dried sardine, night-soil, and rice. The oil and cotton industries in particular formed the backbone for the peasant economy in the Kinai region. In Settsu, village petitions, struggles, and violence hence occupied the majority of the space in the realm of discontent.

Settsu remonstrance by the nineteenth century had expanded to subsume other social strata of the early modern Japan. In the early 1800s, *kokuso* represented not only the peasants but also rural artisans and merchants in a struggle against the machinations of Osaka's official trade guilds. Then, in 1837 during the peak of the Tempō famine (1832-42), it was not the rural peasantry that instigated one of the largest incidents of revolt in Tokugawa Japan; it was Ōshio Heihachirō, a samurai who had once served as an inspector for the Osaka ward magistrates. This incident sparked similar riots led by warriors both within Settsu and elsewhere, such as Tatebayashi in 1837 and Iwate in 1848 and 1853.

³⁴ The chapters on Ōshio Heihachirō and Yamadaya Daisuke will address this point in further detail.

³⁵ This is in itself self-evident with vast quantity of research into peasant protest in Tokugawa Japan, a point that will be explored more in Chapter 2.

Eventually, both men and women from the *hinin*, *eta*, and *nichō* outcaste classes found representation in Settsu dissent.

Village officials also served as central figures within the public sphere, but we must distinguish the rural administrators from those the Bakufu dispatched to the countryside. Rural authorities—wealthier, respected peasants chosen by daimyo and Bakufu representatives—served an integral role *within* the public sphere. Bakufu agents planted within the countryside, however, remained external to it. Studies throughout this dissertation will demonstrate that magistrates, city inspectors, and *jinya* officers embodied the strife to which the participants in the public sphere reacted.

Having delineated the actors in the public sphere, we must address the topics that contribute to it. To reiterate from the previous section, early modern Japanese civil society or volunteer associations are not interchangeable with the public sphere; they serve as an integral proponent of it. Additionally, I propose that for nineteenth century Settsu, civil society expands beyond private academies to include part of the marketplace. Inter-district and inter-provincial meetings of rural producers from Settsu and other Kinai provinces epitomize this intersection between the marketplace and volunteer associations.

Still, multiple factors operating outside of voluntary associations contribute to the public sphere. Such agencies include print literature, entertainment, village politics, and visual aesthetics. I also include, to a degree, religious practice within the public sphere, for practitioners of the Fuji cult flaunted numerous restrictions from the Bakufu to make pilgrimages to Mount Fuji despite. Meanwhile, communities of underground Christians and other practitioners of proscribed creeds survived the Tokugawa period precisely because they avoided participating in the public sphere. In contrast, one would locate Tokugawa

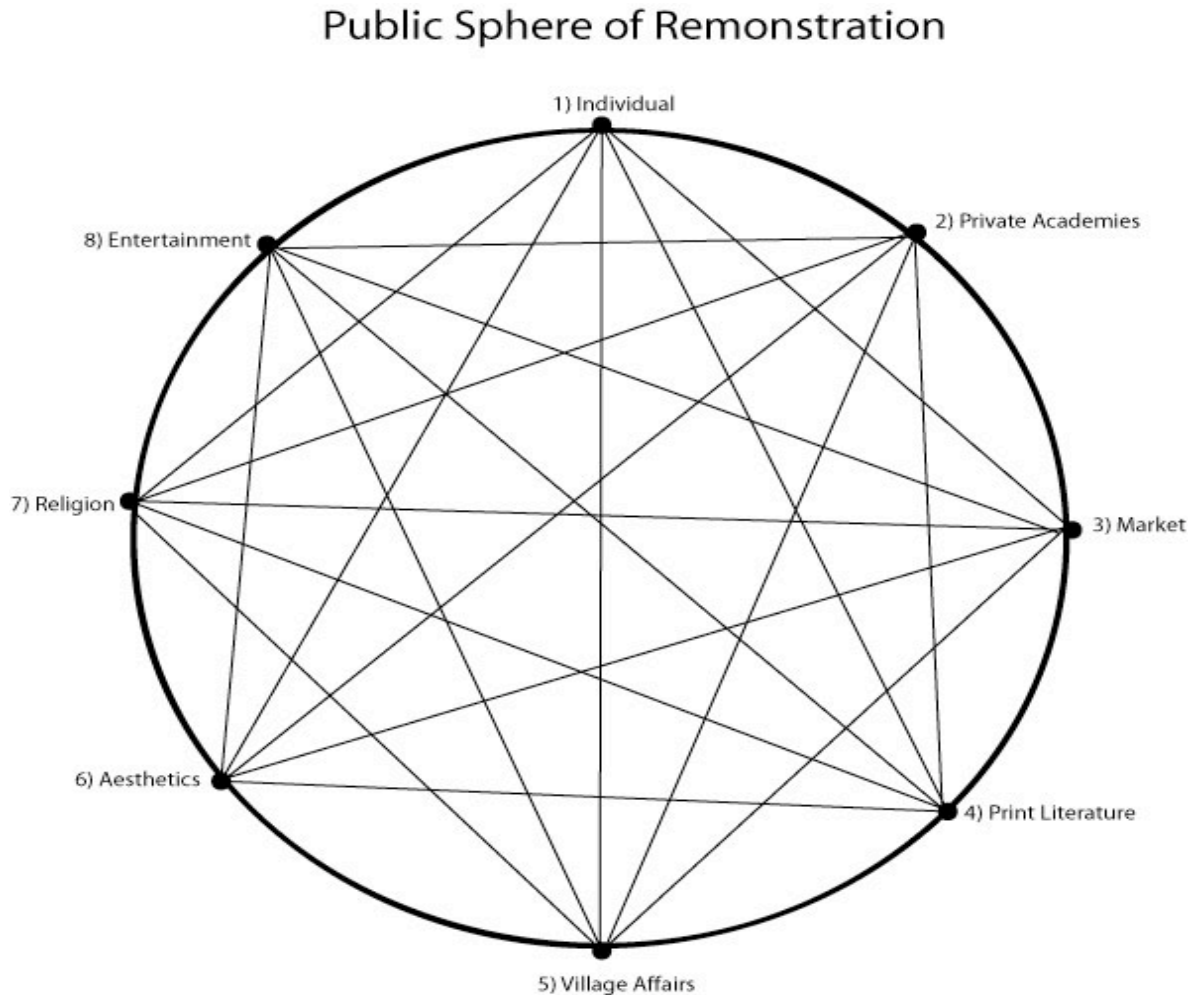
Buddhism outside of the public sphere, as the Bakufu requisitioned that each family register with a local temple. Moreover, pilgrimages ordained by authorities as legitimate would fall within the bounds of the official realm and not the public sphere. Illicit journeys that continued through late Tokugawa Japan—movements like pilgrimages to Sengoku daimyo graves and ascents on Mount Fuji—do belong to the public sphere.

The final contributor to the early modern public sphere is the individual. With Ōshio Heihachirō's 1837 riot, the public sphere and its components embraced or incorporated individual interest and sympathies. Yamadaya Daisuke's violent uprising in northwest Settsu later that year echoed Ōshio's movement of individualistic action. Osaka and Bakufu authorities reined in violent acts through a meticulous inspection and trial of thousands of people from both incidents. Still, one can detect hints of individual agency—sympathy for plights of afflicted families, distrust in particular merchant families—in the cases of village litigation from the late 1830s to the early 1850s.

Remonstrance (or Berry's "dangerous subjects") does not manifest itself as a single element within the public sphere. It instead represents a portion of the sphere that is formed from overlapping elements among the other constituents. The sphere of remonstrance therefore materializes within the public sphere and attends to cases of dissent among the arena's different contributors.

In Settsu, some of the participants are more active than others elsewhere in early modern Japan. For instance, visual aesthetics of discontent did not flourish in daily life in Osaka or its peripheral villages as it did in Kyoto or Edo and their vicinities. Likewise, the marketplace did not serve as an active participant for the Nara or Nagoya public sphere as it did for Settsu.

To visualize the sphere of remonstrance, I propose the following schema, a locus of points or contributors form the public sphere:



The intersection of loci represents specific examples of activity in the public sphere. In Settsu, the Ōshio Heihachirō's school of Wang Yang-ming Neo-Confucianism connects the individual with private academy. Individual villagers and Osaka merchant conglomerates involved in *kokuso* protests form the link between the individual and the marketplace. Osaka's Kaitokudō merchant academy naturally symbolizes the unification of the marketplace and private academies. Stories of popular protest in Osaka Puppet Theater unite entertainment and print literature. Nineteenth century pilgrimages to the graves of Toyotomi

Hideyori and his generals from the 1615 Osaka castle campaign bond religion and village affairs, as villagers ceased agricultural production to partake in these journeys

Private academies, the producer market, print literature, and village affairs are the most active contributors to the sphere of remonstrance in Settsu. Although aesthetics and religion did exist in the Tokugawa public sphere—even in Osaka, remonstrative incidents in popular culture, inari worship, and art materialized throughout the Edo period³⁶—the physical and litigious acts of remonstrance occurred with more consistency and frequency during the late Tokugawa era in *both* Osaka and the countryside. We will moreover determine that the individual became an integral agent within these acts of discontent and the sphere of remonstrance itself at the peak of nineteenth century contention.

Methodology

The core of my study depicts the arc of remonstrance through incidents of direct dissent in both Osaka and Settsu's rural districts. The data derive from primary sources including petitions, lawsuits, manifestos, summons, and nineteenth century official records. For village affairs and inter-provincial protest, I cull material from Aoki Kōji's 19-volume *Hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* (Chronological Compendium of Peasant Uprising Sources) and local histories from towns and cities in the Osaka and Kobe Prefectures. With Ōshio Heihachirō's 1837 riot, I employ firsthand material from newly published volumes of documents pertaining to the samurai and his riot and recent secondary Japanese language research and in order to determine his value for the late Tokugawa sphere of remonstrance.

³⁶ For further study, see McClain and Wakita's 1999 *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital of Early Modern Japan* about popular culture and religious incidents intersecting with remonstrance.

In addition to recounting single episodes, the dissertation explores the language of Settsu discontent. The following chapter in particular will outline the terminology of protest for late Tokugawa Japan, and each successive chapter will provide at least one translation of a petition, summons, or letter of protest. The pieces will convey how Settsu villagers and Osaka commoners incorporate a cornucopia of supplications, honorifics, and standard phrases both to communicate their demands to and open dialog with magistrate or Bakufu officials. Formal phrases of dissent remained fixed throughout the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, yet cases after Ōshio's 1837 riot indicate a decrease in the number of such decorum. In an increasing reliance on village compliance for maintaining order in the province, Settsu officials themselves began incorporating elements of the lexicon of rural protest within their own texts and decrees.

Within this analysis of late Settsu remonstrance, I also analyze the political and intellectual thought underlying the stated reasons for dissent. Ōshio's case presents a straightforward opportunity to analyze the actions of his riot through the lens of *Yōmeigaku*. Yamadaya's movement highlights an amalgamation of late Tokugawa thought bound together through individual choice and idealism. The currents underlining other incidents are not as clear, however. For *kokuso*, a combination of increased political consciousness and vested interest explain the need for villages to unite and submit demands to the Osaka magistrates, yet other village petitions and protests reflect a yearning for the rectification of perceived wrongs and at the same time the preservation of the Bakufu order.

In the height of the Tempō famine in the mid-1830s, remonstrance in Settsu came to embrace individual agency in order to direct angst toward the official sphere. By the final decades of the Tokugawa period, the interjection of the individual into the sphere of

remonstration and then a heightened political consciousness in the countryside had caused the arena to grow to the extent that it began to displace the official sphere from the political space it had occupied for most of early modern Japan. The expanded public sphere and contracted official sphere of late Tokugawa Japan did not subvert or level the dialog between the masses and the ruling powers or heighten a sense of village autonomy. What emerged was a newfound symbolic power in the countryside, as Pierre Bourdieu writes in *Language & Symbolic Power* “what creates the power of words and slogans, a power capable of maintaining or subverting the social order, is the belief in the legitimacy of words and those who utter them.”³⁷ The symbolic power derived from the incidents, individual agency, language, and thought within the sphere of remonstration ultimately foreshadowed new, slightly tilted, relationships between the central and peripheral bodies in modern Japan.

Outline of the Dissertation

The body of the dissertation generally follows a chronological order from the late eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century in order to demonstrate the evolving nature of the sphere of remonstration. Before turning to the events themselves, I will provide in the second chapter the historical background for late eighteenth century Settsu and address governmental reforms as well as the revitalization of Settsu economic and social conditions following the famine of the 1780s. The chapter next introduces the terminology of early modern unrest through a survey of both secondary Japanese language sources and *machibure* (laws promulgated around the city wards and surrounding villages) that delineate illicit and legitimate forms of protest. Then, I will provide a breakdown of the frequency and variety of protest in Settsu from around 1780 to 1850 to reveal that: 1) protests on the whole peaked

³⁷ Bourdieu 170.

during the Tempō famine and tapered off until the 1850s; 2) village disturbances demonstrated a much more even distribution over the same span; and 3) incidents of *kokuso* (protests against Osaka monopolies) broke out in the first two decades of the nineteenth century with only scattered episodes in other times.

Chapter three surveys urban and rural patterns of contention between 1800 and the late 1820s. During the early part of the nineteenth century, Osaka remonstrance materializes in cultural modes of production like popular literature, pilgrimages, and prostitution. Villagers meanwhile immersed themselves in litigation and protest over issues like tax payments and village elder succession that affected their livelihoods. As famine beset the Kinai villages and penetrated Osaka's walls, urban forms of remonstrance would mirror those that emanated from the countryside.

Chapter four focuses on Ōshio Heihachirō's 1837 Osaka riot through the perspective of Osaka's periphery. That is, the section primarily analyzes the years preceding the incident, the riot, and the urban-rural relationships through accounts and documents written by villages and regions involved in the outbreak. Through this vantage, I hope to shed new light on the samurai-turned rebel and the individual or self-interest belying Ōshio's stated *Yomeigaku* principle of uniting thought and action.

After reviewing contemporary research on Ōshio, the chapter recounts the samurai's life as a city official and Neo-Confucian scholar. It then uses an 1835 missive from nine villages to Osaka administrators in order to portray the relationship between Ōshio and Settsu's countryside two years before his riot's commencement. Then, I examine Ōshio's *gekibun* or summons and give a brief narrative of the uprising. Here I argue that by directing his *gekibun* to the villages of Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima, Ōshio maintained a strong

grasp of his influence on Kinai's peasantry. Finally, the chapter incorporates post-riot documents from Osaka's peripheral villages to underscore a sympathetic sentiment that contrasts with the legal reaction from more distant locales like Mito and Edo.

Chapter five details a subsequent 1837 incident in Nose, Settsu's northernmost district. It removes the episode's leader, Yamadaya Daisuke, from under Ōshio Heihachirō's shadow and portrays him as key actor in the nineteenth century public sphere of remonstrance. The chapter first provides a literature review of studies into the episode, and then delves into the incident. It next examines the impact of the Tempō famine on the Nose district and later introduces the movement's ringleaders before providing a narrative of the incident, from the onset to culmination with the death of the instigators. After discussing its immediate impact on participating villages, it addresses the thought of the movement through Daisuke's circular and the *sahō* (propriety) of dissent. The section concludes with a discussion on the incident's effect on the community and sphere of remonstrance by demonstrating how fictive elements seep into official accounts of the incident and by emphasizing how the determination of the individual overtook that of the masses in the realm of dissent.

Chapter six focuses on elements of rural unrest from the late 1830s to the early 1850s. The style and content of the documents of dissent from these decades, on the surface, reflect those from earlier in the century; yet individual cases indicate the transformation of village politics. No longer were villagers satisfied with a passive role in village government; they had begun to carve out a role where they could actively participate in rural affairs. In response to magistrates' strict control of violent acts and writings, villagers embarked on their original paths to protest for a new and expanded role in rural society.

Among the incidents in the late nineteenth century, the chapter details an 1838 complaint that accuses regional *jinya* officials in Kurisu village of misappropriating funds and levying unfair taxes on the village. The following year, villagers in Okamachi engaged district officials from Toyoshima in a dispute over the failure of the local *kumigashira* (village master) to manage the village ledger, subsequently demanding to have three businessmen replace the official. I next turn to an incident from Sakuraidani in 1841 when villagers channel their frustration toward individual *daikan* and *jinya* employees, and I finally summarize scattered protests from the late 1840s to the early 1850s.

The dissertation's penultimate chapter departs from the chronological schema in order to explore *kokuso* and demonstrate how these petitions drew the marketplace into civil society and the public sphere. *Kokuso* protest thrived throughout all of Kinai Japan, and villages from Settsu partook in nearly every incident. After examining historiography related to the inter-provincial petitions, I look at the initial *kokuso* of 1740s and their effect on the industry for dried sardine fertilizers. The chapter proceeds to *kokuso* of the late eighteenth century and their peak in 1805. It then addresses the 1823 *kokuso* where 1,007 villages from Settsu and Kawachi petitioned for new rights to sell their cotton products directly to distant domains and provinces as well as to have access to the shipping lanes. Although the Tempō reforms of the early 1840s eliminated the Osaka wholesaler conglomerates, the *kokuso* reappeared in Settsu in the 1850s concurrent with the rise of new urban trade guilds.

The conclusion seeks not to elaborate on how or explain why the public sphere of remonstrance grew through the nineteenth century. It instead aims to resolve what enabled the arena to expand as it did. That is to say, I hypothesize about what agencies enabled this sphere to develop into an outlet that eventually proved conducive for the overthrow of the

Bakufu in the Meiji Restoration. In order to expand on this point, I first examine Ikuta Yorozu's 1837 attack on a Bakufu guardpost in Kashiwazaki, an incident that echoed Ōshio's riot in Osaka earlier that year. I then survey an 1837 movement in the Kai domain, where residents engaged in both the arena of dissent as well as a hitherto unexplored contributor to the public sphere—assent. It then introduces the role of the Bakufu in the public sphere by examining its impact on *Fuji-ko* pilgrimages in the nineteenth century. The dissertation's conclusion ultimately demonstrates that the leaders and contributors to early modern dissent did not solely restructure the public sphere. Rather, Bakufu agencies like city magistrates, *daikan*, and *jinya* had an equally instrumental role in shaping the sphere of remonstrance into one that would be adaptable for the *bakumatsu* and Meiji periods.

Setting the Scene for Late Tokugawa Settsu:

A Delineation of Geography, Terminology, and Time

Toyotomi Hideyoshi's eight-story castle symbolized Osaka's role as a strategic center at the onset of the Tokugawa period. In 1615, Tokugawa Ieyasu's forces lay waste to the castle, but within four decades Osaka had transformed itself into Japan's economic capital—the so-called *Tenka no daidokoro* or Realm's Kitchen. The city reached its status by serving as a trade port, housing numerous warehouses for grain, converting rice into cash, and forming an interlocking network with its surrounding rural communities in Settsu. It is this last facet, as Wakita Osamu writes in *Kinsei Ōsaka no keizai to bunka* (Early Modern Osaka's Economy and Culture), that contributed most to Osaka's resurgence in the seventeenth century.³⁸

Osaka's ties to villages in Settsu facilitated the diffusion of economic, social, and cultural elements from the urban center to the periphery for most of the eighteenth century. To name a few examples, Nakai Chikuzan's Kaitokudō merchant academy generated interest in mercantile thought across the province, producing other schools like the Tekijuku at the turn of the century.³⁹ Culturally, Takemoto Gidayū's puppet theater attracted audiences over the region to view his performances and study from his treatises.⁴⁰ Then, socially, the Kyōho famine in 1732 spurred on frequent dissent, which as Uchida Kusuo notes in "Protest and the

³⁸ Wakita 38-9.

³⁹ See Tetsuo Najita's *Visions of Virtue in Tokugawa Japan* provides for a detailed analysis of Kaitokudō's foundation and influence.

⁴⁰ C. Andrew Gerstle's "Takemoto Gidayū and the Individualistic Spirit of Osaka Theater" offers an excellent analysis of Takemoto's influence and role in early modern Japan.

Tactics of Direct Remonstrance: Osaka's Merchants Make Their Voices Heard," produced new means for the masses to voice their frustration with their officials.⁴¹

Another famine in the 1780s spurred on subsequent movements in Settsu. Thousands of farmers, townsmen, and samurai joined masses from Kawachi, Harima, and Izumi on *okage-mairi* pilgrimages to Ise shrines where they would seek fortune and express gratitude for their past prosperity. Moreover, merchants in Osaka profited by selling clothing, amulets, and food to pilgrims passing through the city.⁴² In the countryside, villagers struggled to subsist on limited harvests, and when Osaka business conglomerates proceeded to drive up the price of limited stocks of fertilizer, oil, and rapeseeds—items crucial for Settsu's cotton industry—villagers embarked on a series of protests to improve their livelihoods. In response, Osaka officials issued a series of decrees designed to aid the villagers and curtail the activities of the merchant wholesalers.⁴³

As the province recovered from the famine and its economic strife, it began to attract tourists from around the country. In 1798, Akisato Ritō, an editor of travel guides for various regions in Japan, published six volumes of the *Settsu meisho zue*, an illustrated guide to famous areas in Settsu. Following the guidebook, visitors traveled to hot springs in western Settsu, joined Boar festivals in the north, and shopped along the Dotonbori Avenue in Osaka.⁴⁴

Settsu's culture of unrest continued to manifest itself, even amid the economic and social growth in the early 1800s. Villages in the west battled neighboring districts for river and forest use. Osaka merchants tested the water for resuming monopolistic practices in the

⁴¹ Uchida 103.

⁴² Okamoto and Watanabe 116-9.

⁴³ These include the *kokuso* appeals that at this time stemmed primarily from Settsu districts (Kawanishi shi-shi Volume 2, 318).

⁴⁴ Hondo 9-11.

city's periphery. Even reports from Edo regarding sightings of Russian ships in Japan's northern coasts contributed to a growing climate of unease in Settsu.

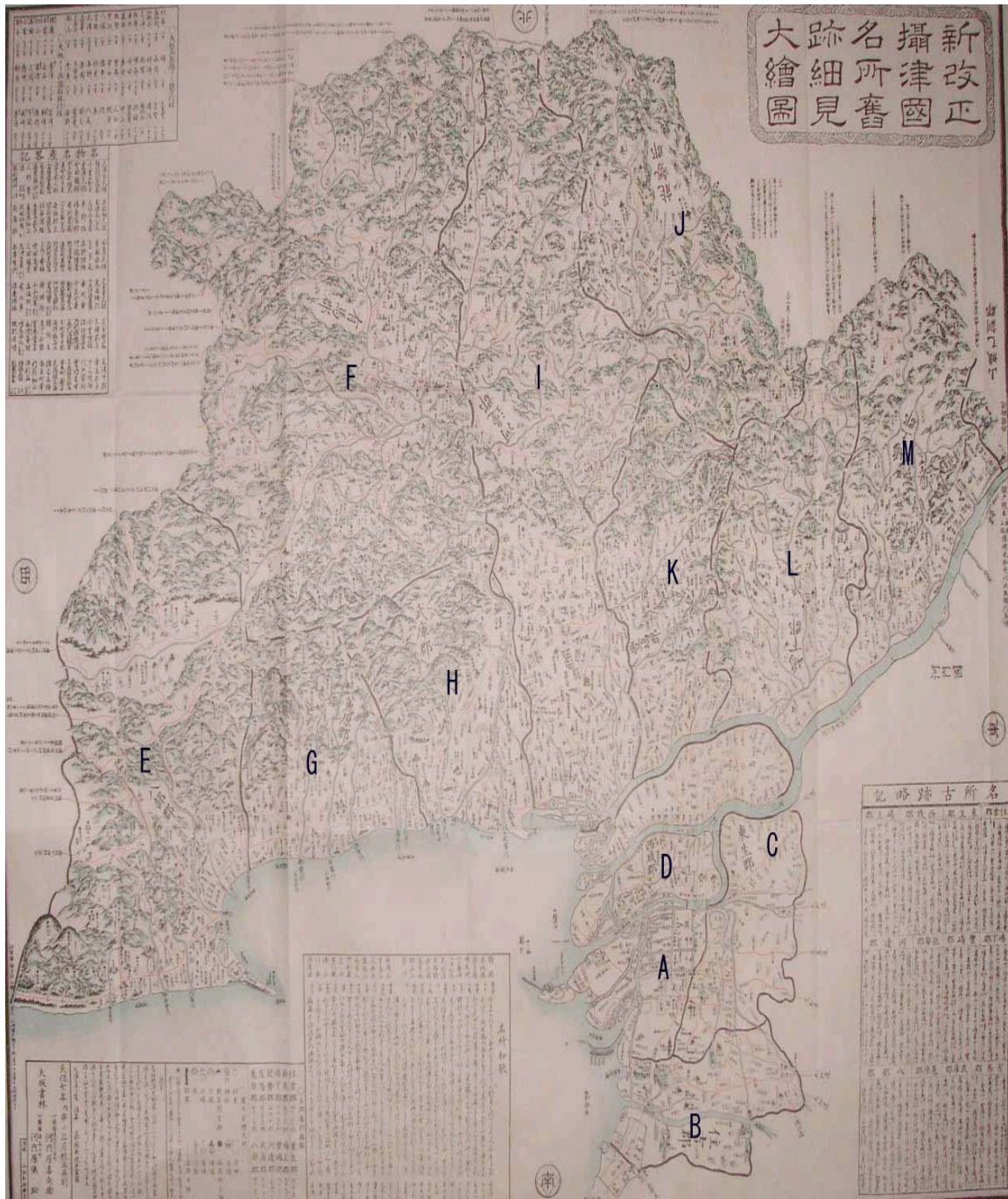
The incidents and movements that constitute nineteenth century Settsu's public sphere of remonstrance interrelate with the province's geography and its political structure. In order to set the scene for the dissertation's body, this chapter addresses Settsu's natural and administrative boundaries first. Then, it focuses on the lexicon of protest, as devised by the Bakufu and its domains through *machibure* (町触) or ward decrees. Finally, it charts the contours of remonstrance in late Tokugawa Japan to discern the frequency of both illicit and legal forms of dissent.

Geography

Settsu was situated in the Kinai plain between the Harima province to its east and Kawachi to its west. To Settsu's northeast was Yamashiro, Kyoto's province, and to the south were a number of offings and river mouths, all of which now comprise or flow into Osaka Bay. Osaka City, the northern Osaka prefecture, and most of the Hyogo prefecture today occupy the area where the province once was.

The following picture, a reproduction of an 1836 visual guide to famed areas around Settsu, maps the layout of the province and its districts:⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Two cartographers named Kawachiya Kibei and Kawachiya Gisuke who worked for the Osaka Shorin Bookstore drew the map.



Osaka (A) lies in the southeast corner of Settsu, with Sumiyoshi (B) to its south, Higashinari (C) to its east, and Nishinari (D) to its north. Settsu's other districts include Yatabe (E), Arima (F), Ubara (G), Muko (H), Kawabe (I), Nose (J), Teshima (K), Shimashimo (L), and Shimakami (M).

Multiple rivers flowing out of Osaka Bay provided irrigation for fields in the southern districts. By the early eighteenth century, cotton fields covered the central and southern parts of Teshima and Kawabe. Fields of rapeseed strew across the Muko and Ubara districts. Waterways also provided fishing stock for peasants in districts like Shimakami and Yatabe that contained less arable land than others. In the north, mountainous terrain occupied much of Arima and Nose, forcing farmers to tend to fertile soil in the districts' lowlands.

Settsu's geographical features dictated the livelihoods of the peasants in the province's countryside. As with all provinces in early modern Japan, agricultural output affected the means by which peasants could contribute to the village *nengu* (年貢), a tax that the Bakufu imposed on the villages and that was contingent on land productivity. Each village maintained ledgers that detailed the monthly rice yield. From the ledgers, the regional controlling bodies—the magistrates, daimyo, or *daikan* (代官 deputies working for a daimyo)—computed the *kokudaka* (石高), an estimate of taxable land based on the produce in years unencumbered by drought, famine, or any other substantial natural calamity.⁴⁶

Villages that yielded crops or staples other than rice would calculate the equivalent production in terms of *koku* (石) or the amount of rice needed to provide for one adult male in a year. Regions active in the cotton industry—districts neighboring Osaka and the Osaka Bay in other words—would measure their taxable outcome in terms of oil, cottonseed, rapeseed, or fertilizers. In Settsu's northern districts, however, the calculations became more complex, especially toward the nineteenth century. In Nose, for instance, annual village ledgers note that the few fields reserved for cotton and rape seeds had become infertile due to

⁴⁶ Thomas C. Smith outlines and tests the perceived unjust nature of Tokugawa *nengu* and *kokudaka* in his 1967 article "The Land Tax in the Tokugawa Period" and his introduction to the 1959 book *The Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*.

earthquakes and droughts. Furthermore, fields of grain failed to produce quantities comparable to other regions in Settsu. For these reasons, Bakufu authorities instigated a fixed land tax called a *jōmen* (定免), which would require villagers to pay an annual tax calculated from average yields in the past and which also could be suspended in years of natural disaster.⁴⁷

Agricultural production from Osaka's periphery sustained mercantile activity in the city. Moreover, Osaka's proximity to the sea and rivers like the Yodogawa facilitated trade with Kanto and other regions of early modern Japan. Nowhere is this interplay more apparent than in Osaka's cotton industry in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Businesses from Osaka's Dōjima wards stationed *tonya* (問屋) or shippers and merchants in the city's surrounding villages to sell cotton seeds to village or city ginners. Then, artisans would process the ginned cotton into textiles and sell them to city wholesalers or *kabunakama* (株仲間). Finally, the wholesalers shipped the cotton goods across Japan via the major waterways to and from Osaka.⁴⁸ Along similar lines, merchants in Osaka established oil, tobacco, mullet, and fertilizer trades between the Kinai and Kanto plains.

Settsu's geographical features thus helped the province establish its villages and metropole as the leading trade center in early modern Japan. On a greater scale, Osaka housed the grain from western provinces and converted the bales into cash for the rest of Japan. It even played an instrumental role in facilitating international trade between the Kinai provinces and Nagasaki in the early Tokugawa period, for Osaka officials allowed missionaries and traders from Portugal and Holland to market medicine and silk through the

⁴⁷ *Nose chōshi* Volume 1, 579-83.

⁴⁸ The chapter on *kokuso* will address the details of this process. For more historical background on the Osaka cotton market, see Hauser *Economic Institutional Change in Tokugawa Japan* 17-22 and Wakita 1994 118-9.

city. By the middle of the seventeenth century, the province acted as an intermediary for copper by exporting Nagasaki copper to other regions of Japan.⁴⁹ In the end, the relationship between the Settsu villages and Osaka stimulated economic growth in the province and subsequently throughout the rest of early modern Japan. It was this same geographical and economic interdependency that exacerbated social conditions and strife between Settsu's periphery and center by the late eighteenth century.

Settsu's Political Machinery

Juxtaposed with the interrelationship between the villagers and their daimyo, magistrates, or Bakufu regents is the notion of village autonomy.⁵⁰ In his seminal 1959 book *The Agrarian Origins of Modern Japan*, Thomas C. Smith notes that throughout the first two centuries of the Tokugawa period villages consisted of interdependent agriculturalist components. Consensus and compromise, he writes, maneuvered the social and political networks among the farmers.⁵¹ Smith argues that in the nineteenth century, class interest, poor harvests, and economic strife led to the fall of village unity, yet the village polity itself remained unaltered. That is, the aforementioned factors did little to change the procedures by which village headmen and peasant delegates were selected.⁵²

Harumi Befu expands on Smith's thesis in his 1965 "Village Autonomy and Articulation with the State" to assert that the Bakufu and its daimyos relied on the villages to abide by its laws. The central authorities further realized that the village had to operate with

⁴⁹ Wakita 1994 53-64.

⁵⁰ In addition to scholarship listed below, Dan Fenno Henderson's texts on Tokugawa law (1965 *Conciliation and Japanese Law* and 1975 *Village "Contracts" in Tokugawa Japan*) offer transliterations and translations of Tokugawa laws to emphasize the manner by which compromises and agreements underscored village law.

⁵¹ Smith 50-64.

⁵² Ibid., 180-5.

substantial latitude in order for the villagers to adapt to changes in their economic and social climates.⁵³ Finally, Herman Ooms differentiates village laws from village codes to account for village autonomy in his 1996 book *Tokugawa Village Practice*. According to Ooms, villages supplemented Bakufu or central decrees with their own set of codes that attended to their specific needs. On the one hand, central authorities rarely recognized the legitimacy of village codes in extra-village lawsuits or affairs. On the other hand, the Bakufu permitted the villages to devise and exact their own punishments, with the exception of the death penalty, on those who break the codes.⁵⁴

Settsu villages did not operate any differently than villages in other provinces. The land, like all provinces in early modern Japan, belonged either to *ryōkoku* (領国 territories possessed by major daimyo) or to *hiryōkoku* (非領国 lands under direct control of the Bakufu, *hatamoto* foot soldiers, city magistrates, or governmental outposts). By the mid-nineteenth century, the former generated approximately thirty-five percent of the province's value in *oku*, and the latter a little more than forty-three percent. The remaining twenty percent belonged to shrines and temples, wealthy merchants, and public servants. Generally the daimyo maintained strict jurisprudence over their fiefs, whereas the Bakufu and its regional representatives could not control their possessions with equal rigidity. Nevertheless, social and economic conditions remained interconnected with both governing bodies, and when the villages fell into financial disarray it was on their governing lords and institutions that they relied.⁵⁵

⁵³ Befu 302.

⁵⁴ Ooms 192-5.

⁵⁵ *Shinshū Toyonaka shi-shi shakai keizai* (Toyonaka City History, Revised Edition: Society and Economy), 10-2.

Local authorities drafted procedures for administering village affairs, selecting district representatives, and dispersing relief funds to farmers in times of crises. In fact, this dissertation will later discuss how Settsu villages took proactive measures to counteract any unlawful or unjust actions by village elites or extra-village authorities toward the end of the Tokugawa era. Still, neither heightened village autonomy nor proactive penal codes reflect a growing sense of equality between the periphery and center. Vertical relationships, rather, defined the makeup of the political scene both within the village and without.

Village political hierarchy in nineteenth century Settsu consisted, in order, of a *shōya* (庄屋 or headman), *toshiyori* (年寄 or elders), *hyakushōdai* (百姓代 or peasant delegates), and *kumiai* (組合 the equivalent of a neighborhood representing peasant families). In most villages, a *kumigashira* (組頭) served as the leader of the *kumiai* and reported to the elders. Peasants could elect their *shōya*—often a member of a wealthy family—pending final approval from an Osaka *daikan* (代官 or magistrate deputy). The *toshiyori* generally numbered fewer than five, and they functioned as intermediaries between the *kumigashira* and the *shōya*. Villages falling under the jurisdiction of daimyo differed with the preceding list in that the *shōya* would report to authorities in the regional *jinya* (陣屋) a local outpost manned by high-ranking retainers to the daimyo and by *hatamoto* samurai.⁵⁶

A variety of resources help shed light on each village's political framework. These include ledgers like *kenchi-chō* (検地帳 or cadastral survey), *nengu-chō* (年貢帳 or *nengu* payments), *goningumi-chō* (五人組帳 lists of neighborhood families), temple registries, and population censuses. An additional source, the *murameisaichō* (村明細帳), also known as

⁵⁶ Befu 302-4; *Edo jijō dai san maki: Seiji shakai hen* (Information on Edo, Volume 3: Government and Society) 108.

the “village mirror,” was compiled for a new damiyo or *daikan*. It provided the new governor with a detailed overview of taxable land, *nengu* payments, populations, households, and animals, thereby offering both a snapshot of village life and a chart for village development.⁵⁷

The number of village officials differed according to the size and location of each locale. In smaller villages, the *shōya* and *toshiyori* belonged to the same wealthy family, and naturally in larger ones one finds more diverse representation. For example, we learn from the Uchida Village *murameisaichō* that in 1832, a single *shōya* and *toshiyori* comprised the village political unit. The document informed the Okabe *han* damiyo about the valuation of Uchida’s land: 162 *koku*, produced from forty households with approximately five people in each home.⁵⁸ In Hattori Village a *shōya*, *toshiyori*, *kumigashira*, and *hyakushōdai* represented the village administration and reported to domain authorities in 1832 that its thirty-four households had an estimated land value of 536 *koku*.⁵⁹ For Settsu villages, the amount of arable land correlated with the number of officials: the more *koku* a village was valued, the higher number of village elders and peasant representatives it contained.

Osaka’s political machinery covered a vast territory by the nineteenth century. The Osaka *machibugyō* (大坂町奉行 or Osaka city magistrates) served as the central authority for not only the city itself, but also for regions in Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima that were not under the direct control of daimyo. The city contained two *machibugyō* offices in the eastern and western sections of the city, alternately presiding over Osaka’s *kumi* (組 or administrative districts). The Bakufu’s *rōjū* or senior councilor selected the chief

⁵⁷ *Shinshū Toyonaka shi-shi shakai keizai* 28-30.

⁵⁸ *Toyonaka-shi shi shiryōshū* 3: *murameisaichō ue* (Toyonaka City History Data Collection Part 3: *murameisaichō* upper volume) 7-11.

⁵⁹ *Toyonaka-shi shi shiryōshū* 4: *murameisaichō shita* (Toyonaka City History Data Collection Part 4: *murameisaichō* lower volume) 62-6.

magistrates, who in turn hired administrators and subordinates for their offices. Additionally, the magistrates contracted *yoriki* and *dōshin* inspectors from the samurai ranks to police the city and its surrounding provinces. By 1839, the *machibugyō* contained 150 officials with 3,000 affiliated inspectors.⁶⁰

Each Osaka ward or *machi* (町) divided into residential neighborhoods that housed the city's *chōnin* (町人). The *chōnin* represented Osaka property owners, primarily from the merchant and artisan classes, and in each *machi*, they elected local representatives who served as liaisons between the magistrates and their wards. The townsmen who did not hold property could not participate in local governance as was prescribed by Osaka law.⁶¹ Thus, in a city populated by the *chōnin*, the wards were ultimately the samurai's domain.⁶²

An additional urban locale in Settsu that bears mentioning is Teshima district's Okamachi. In the middle of the seventeenth century, Okamachi served as a political center for the district, with eighteen surrounding villages' *shōya* serving as the town's elders. By 1682, the town attracted *chōnin* from Osaka and grew to the extent that Okamachi's residents nominated their own elder. Two years later, Osaka magistrates designated Okamachi as a *machiba* (町場 an area predominantly populated by merchants and artisans) and brought it under their direct control, while still allowing the surrounding villages to elect two officials to alternate in the role of *shōya*.⁶³ Okamachi had nearly tripled in size from the late seventeenth century to the early nineteenth, yet its administrative representatives or town

⁶⁰ Yabuta 2005 323-4.

⁶¹ Hauser 10-1.

⁶² Yabuta Yutaka coins the term "The Samurai Town" to describe Osaka based on the warrior constituency in the magistrates' offices in his book *Kinsei Osaka chiiki no shiteki kenkyū* or Historical Studies in the Early Modern Osaka Region (317).

⁶³ *Shinshū Toyonaka shi-shi shūroku/toshi* (Toyonaka City History, Revised Edition: Villages and Cities) 94.

governance did not expand.⁶⁴ Thus, since the town bordered Hirata-jinja—one of Settsu's oldest shrines—as well as the Okabe domain, friction among the surrounding villages, religious affairs, domain representatives, and Osaka authorities increased concomitantly with the population.⁶⁵

Each village, town, and city in Settsu thus maintained a political or administrative framework that suited the needs of those residents and locales under its jurisdiction. As the following chapters will demonstrate, when one of the political bodies failed to administer governance through just or proper means, residents appealed to higher authorities for assistance. In villages, residents sent petitions to either Osaka magistrates or daimyo representatives in order to allay their concerns pertaining to perceived corruption or impediments to their livelihoods. Towns like Okamachi and Ikeda petitioned a number of authorities ranging from religious bodies to the Edo Bakufu in order to address their local grievances. Then, individuals like Ōshio Heihachirō and Yamadaya Daisuke, who detached themselves from their communities to lead hundreds into protests, elicited the help and name of greater powers—the heavens and the Emperor respectively—in their causes.

Accordingly, the magistrates' jurisdiction laid the groundwork for center-periphery relations in Settsu, for villages turned to the Osaka officials with unresolved village disputes, appeals, and lawsuits. Such episodes in Settsu, apart from violent riots like Ōshio's, ultimately aimed to educe a governmental edict on behalf of the protestors or petitioners. These came in the form of written responses to the village petitions or in provincial laws written in the form of *machibure* or *ofure*.⁶⁶ While the Bakufu or Osaka magistrates issued decrees to appease the villages—material that will be examined in more detail in the

⁶⁴ Ibid., 97.

⁶⁵ Muko's Ikeda also was another *machiba* in Settsu.

⁶⁶ Watanabe 2005 24-6.

following chapters—they also circulated *machibure* to define and prevent illicit forms of protest. It is with the help from these documents that we may begin to outline the vocabulary of late Tokugawa unrest.

Terminology of Protest

Japanese language historiography employs *hyakushō ikki* (百姓一揆) as a convenient term to denote unrest during the early modern period.⁶⁷ Its closest English translation, peasant uprisings, connotes an unlawful and violent sense that differs from the meaning of the word *ikki*. *Ikki* originally meant unity, with its first appearance in Mencius: 先聖後聖、其揆一也. Mencius cites this phrase in an example of two sage kings who were born far apart in time and distance, but who ruled using identical principle; hence, “the first sage and the later sage, their principle is the same.”⁶⁸

In Japanese texts, one locates the term first in the *Taiheiki* as a synonym for group consciousness or unity and later finds it ascribed to groups of landed samurai who resisted their lords in the medieval period. Through the sixteenth century, *ikki* became aligned with religious movements like the *ikkō ikki*, yet after Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s sword hunt in 1588, the term fell from use among the samurai class, moving into the peasant realm.⁶⁹

Early modern Japanese peasants were not, however, the sole proprietors of remonstrance; after all, Settsu samurai, merchants, and artisans all partook in activities of protest. Moreover, the majority of unrest in nineteenth century Settsu was not unlawful. To

⁶⁷ Obviously the references are far too numerous to list here, but one needs only to glance through Hosaka Satoru’s 470-page bibliography *Hyakushō ikki kenkyū bunkei somoku roku* to grasp the pervasiveness of the term.

⁶⁸ Legge *Chinese Classics* Volume 1 and 2 Mencius (Li Lou II Chapter 1.4) 317.

⁶⁹ Saitō 1.

a certain degree, Japanese language scholarship has accounted for this discrepancy by moving the arena of dissent into the rubric of *minshū undō* (民衆運動 or mass movements).⁷⁰ Nevertheless, both *hyakushō ikki* and *minshū undō* over-simplify the diverse nature of Tokugawa dissent. Through an analysis of late eighteenth century Bakufu edicts, we can begin to identify the appropriate sub-categories within the late Tokugawa lexicon for dissent.

To begin, the two means by which a peasant or commoner could legally submit a formal appeal or petition were *soshō* (訴訟) or *sogan* (訴願). *Soshō* represented a complaint from a village and required the seal of the *shōya* in order to be legitimated. Such complaints involved disputes that could not be settled within the village itself and thus necessitated a decision from provincial or domainal authorities. In cases where the petition came from the village body or district and not an individual, the letter also bore the seals of the village elders and peasant delegates. The village officials would then deliver the document to the provincial authorities and await a decision.⁷¹ *Sogan* were reserved for occasions in which obstacles like local corruption, unfair business practices, or natural disasters may preclude an individual or community from processing their grievance through the standard procedures. In late Tokugawa Settsu, *kokuso* and letters of protest from the countryside against unjust *shōya* typified *sogan*. *Sogan*, like *soshō*, aimed to produce a decree or edict to rule on behalf of the litigator.⁷²

Edo authorities categorized types of illegal protest within written bans that they circulated around Japan's provinces. From 1770 to 1800, the Bakufu issued eleven decrees that outlined illicit forms of protest and their associated punishments and rewards. The

⁷⁰ The five-volume 2000 series, *Minshū undō shi* (History of Mass Movements), for example, covers *ikki*, riots, appeals, *kokuso*, and more to address protests in Tokugawa Japan.

⁷¹ Ōbira 51-2.

⁷² Ibid., 53-4.

shogunate had promulgated similar decrees throughout the Tokugawa period, but in the middle of the eighteenth century officials witnessed an increase in petitions on public signboards. Moreover, both the daimyo's domains and Bakufu territories demonstrated inconsistency in responding to or censuring remonstrations.⁷³ Thus, on the fourth month of 1770, the Bakufu issued the following *machibure*:

An Edict

Disregarding everything we have issued in the past, large groups of peasants gather in *totō* (徒党 or gangs) to engage in wrongdoings. These *totō* attempt to devise written appeals we call *gōso* (強訴). Then, they convene in order to flee from their villages in actions we call *chōsan* (逃散). Long ago, we issued laws with clauses regarding these actions. The following list shall be issued to all related officials regardless if they have direct control over a village, district, or otherwise. The awards for reporting such crimes are the following:

Totō Informers: One Hundred Sheets of Silver

Gōso Informers: The Same as Above

Chōsan Informers: The Same as Above

It shall be promulgated thusly. Along with the aforementioned rewards, in informing us of major transgressions, we shall also give you permits for bearing swords and bestow upon you surnames...

There is nothing further for the informers who report on these affairs to attend to. When there are cases of contention in the villages, we will apprehend those responsible in the villages. Therefore, the *totō* will not be able to devise their schemes. There may be villages that are reluctant to inform us of even one transgression. Yet, be it a village official or even a peasant, anyone who makes a serious effort to suppress the wrongdoers will be allotted an award in silver. Again, we will distribute permits for swords and bestow surnames, especially for those who make continued efforts to suppress the movements. Each person will receive a reward.

Signed by the Edo Magistrates in the fourth month of the seventh year of Meiwa.

Addendum

As said the before, the *daikan* are responsible for Bakufu lands, and the daimyo and land stewards are responsible for the domains. For those villages that have

⁷³ Andō 102-3.

established *kōsatsu* (高札 or records of fines) we will recognize your records. That is all.⁷⁴

The 1770 ban on illegal gangs accomplishes three tasks. First, it defines two modes of illicit protests committed by *totō*. Secondly, it provides a financial and social incentive for those in villages and city wards to report the unlawful activities of their fellow residents. Lastly, the decree informs the recipients that the administrators shall tend to the criminals, while it allows enough latitude in the end for rural authorities to appropriate fines as they see fit.

On the twenty-ninth day of the fifth month of 1771, the Bakufu issued another *machibure* in response to the frequency in which groups of peasants broke into the gates of their daimyo to leave *gōso*. The new decree promises that “there will be heavy punishments for the leaders. The peasants...even if not all of them had not joined in thrusting the petitions into the gates, they will be punished.” It further ensures a thorough investigation into subsequent illicit activities by poring over temple registries to identify the *kumigashira* and household heads and levy fines on them and their village officials.⁷⁵

Six years later Edo authorities conceived of a new term, *osso* (越訴), to describe activities that overstepped non-violent acts of remonstrance and that verged on *uchikowashi* (打ちこわし) or the smashing of property. Those found responsible for leading *totō* into damaging property or inflicting bodily harm would be subject to *haritsuke* (磔 or crucifixion). As precedent, the document cites an episode similar to *osso* in Shinano where provincial officials executed one leader, arrested two more, and exiled six of the participants.

⁷⁴ *Edo machibure shūsei* (Compendium of Edo Decrees) Volume 7: Meiwa 4 to Anei 7, 196-7

⁷⁵ *Edo machibure shūsei* Volume 7, 231.

In contrast with the 1770 *machibure*, the 1777 one also outlines lawful procedures by which a peasant or village may air a grievance. Officials write that often money is distributed from the *daikan* to estate managers, according to their inspectors' calculations. They continue that the provincial authorities might, as they have in the past, misallocate funds or even keep cash and grain for themselves. The decree instructs villagers to send appeals through their regional administrators in order for the petitions to reach the magistrates through the proper channels. Those who do not follow the legal procedures, the edict warns, will face the appropriate punishment. The *machibure* concludes with a promise to reward villagers and townsmen who suppress *osso* and other forms of illegal protest as well as a vow to censure those who partake in illicit gatherings.⁷⁶

Additional *machibure* banned *totō* and their unlawful acts in the same fashion as the earlier ones had. Edo authorities flexed their judicial muscles through threats of fines and promises of rewards that mirrored those of the documents from the early 1770s. Moreover, the Bakufu expected urban magistrates like those in Osaka to incorporate the wording of their decrees within regional *machibure*. City magistrates complied with the Bakufu, for 1771 and 1777 *machibure* from Osaka contain the same wording of Edo's respective 1770 and 1777 edicts, differing only with the preface, "Peasants across the provinces are forming *totō* and committing wrongdoings."⁷⁷ Unlike domains elsewhere in Japan, Osaka magistrates refrained from expanding on the activities of *totō* until 1837 when it issued the following *machibure* in response to Oshio Heihachirō's riot:

⁷⁶ Ibid., 442.

⁷⁷ *Osaka-Shi shi*. Volume 3, 760.

On the twenty-seventh day of the third month of this year, Ōshio Heihachirō and his son Kakunosuke committed suicide. All merchants now should be able to continue their business without fear.

This past month, Ōshio Heihachirō and his son Kakunosuke instigated violence and lit fires throughout the city. There were rumors in Aburakake-chō that Miyoshiya Gorōbei had concealed the men. It was ordered for them to come out and face the magistrates. That is why both men committed suicide. Eventually, others who were part of their *totō* were arrested. Now, because participants have been committing suicide or fleeing the area, we are circulating this *machibure*. Again, all merchants should be able to conduct business without fear. This document shall be passed through all villages and towns under our jurisdiction.

The third month of 1837⁷⁸

Even in Settsu, one still finds a variety of illegal petitions subcategorized under *osso* and *gōso*. Our investigation into rural remonstrance of the late Tokugawa period tends to *jikiso* (直訴), *kagoso* (駕籠訴), and *suteso* (捨訴). *Jikiso* refer to appeals or petitions sent directly to officials with the *daikan*, *jinya*, or *machibugyō* offices.⁷⁹ *Kagoso* constitute a type of petition in which a letter is lodged into a palanquin carrying a high ranking official like a senior Bakufu retainer or magistrate. *Suteso* resemble *gōso*, for the action denotes the process by which a written appeal is posted on or forcefully left in between the gates of magistrates or *daikan* or thrown into their homes. Bakufu regulations directed the provinces to destroy the *sutebumi* (捨文 or the letter itself) without breaking the document's seal since the government's *meyasu-hako* (目安箱) functioned as a box for individuals to submit their grievances lawfully.⁸⁰

Incidents that embraced physical acts of violence belonged to a narrower lexicon.

The aforementioned *uchikowashi* entailed the destruction of estates or property of those

⁷⁸ Ibid., 1284

⁷⁹ Saitō 25

⁸⁰ Ibid., 41

targeted by bands of protestors. *Ran* (亂) commonly represented urban riots or wide scale disturbances that were accompanied with violence. Ōshio Heihachirō himself distinguished his movement in his summons where he wrote that “the plans for this event will indeed be different from *ikki* and uprisings of that sort.”⁸¹ Still, official reports initially branded the movements as *uchikowashi* led by gangs of *totō*, as the 1837 Osaka *machibure* attests. It was only after the Tempō famine (1834-1838) that accounts from Osaka and its surrounding districts labeled episodes like Ōshio’s as *ran*.⁸²

Remonstrance in the late Tokugawa Period clearly had a more complex nature than a phrase like *hyakushō ikki* conveys. Laws issued by the Bakufu defined legal and illegal forms of protest, offered compensation for those who served as informants on or suppressors of unlawful gangs, and detailed the sanctions for those who were found responsible in illicit activities. Furthermore, domains and provinces adhered to the Bakufu’s framework in issuing Edo’s ordinances, while the villages and townships chose the outlets through which they aired their dissent. Even when the peasants and commoners turned toward *uchikowashi* or forms of violent protest, they did abide by *sahō* or propriety that became commonplace in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁸³

Chronology of Dissent

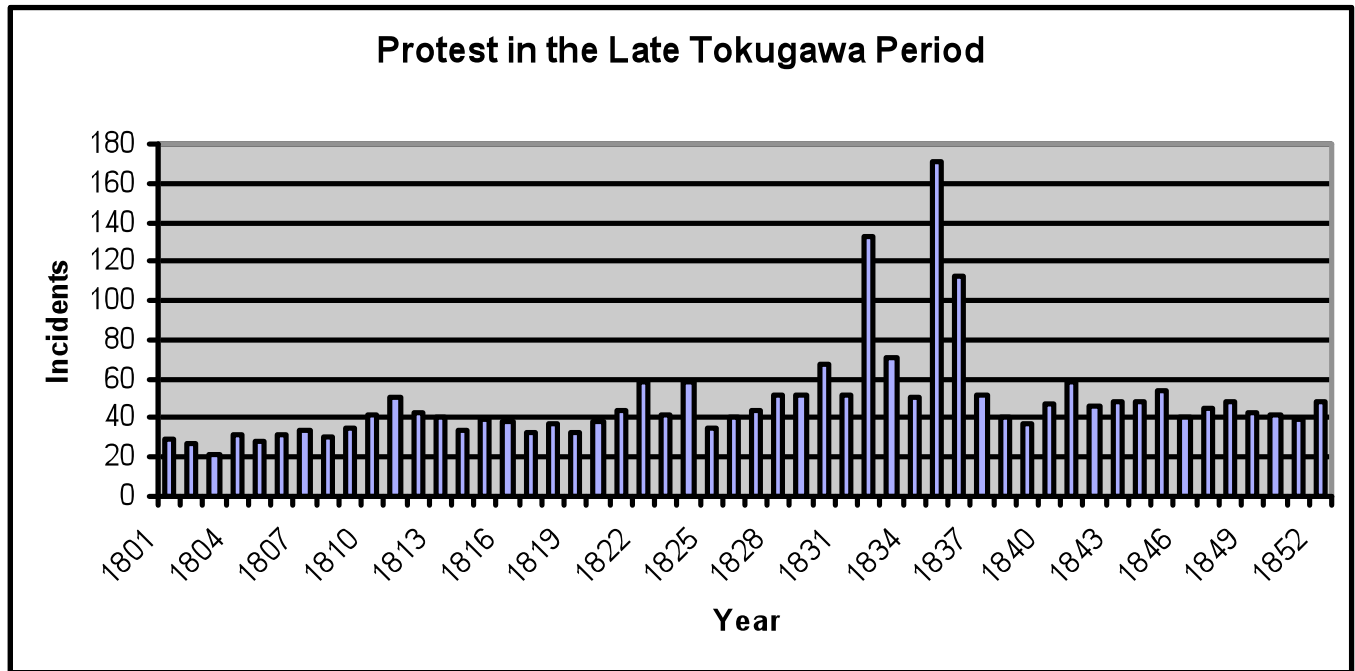
Herbert Bix’s 1986 *Peasant Protest in Japan, 1590-1884* notes that throughout the Tokugawa Period there were 2,750 *ikki*, and that the final five decades represented the high-

⁸¹ Okamoto 193.

⁸² Reports from the aftermath of Ōshio’s riot, as transcribed in “Ukiyo no arisma” (Conditions of the Floating World), distinguish the nature of his riot from ones across the countryside. (*Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shūsei* (Compendium of Historical Documents on Japanese Agrarian Life) Volume 11, p. 325.

⁸³ Hosaka Satoru’s *Hyakushō ikki to gimin no kenkyū* discusses *sahō* within peasant protest in terms of styles of dress, banners, weaponry, slogans, and procedures by which peasants formed their groups. Even when they secured local administrative support, a *gimin* (literally man of honor) was necessary to serve as a individual representative and bearer of punishment in the culmination of the movement.

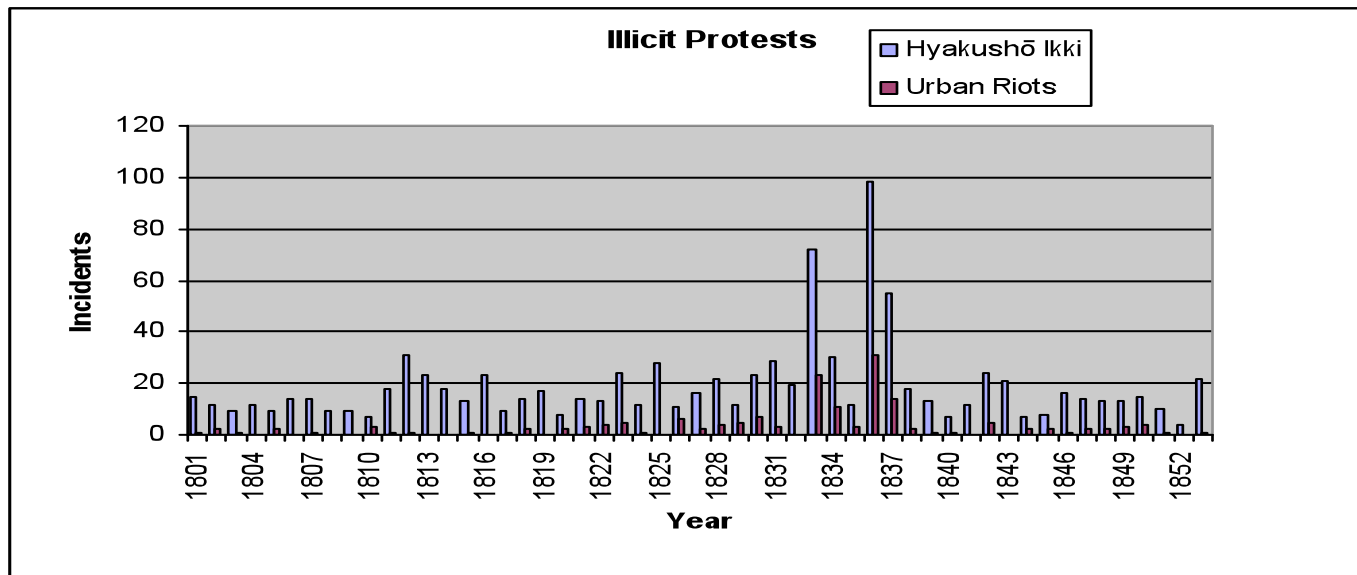
water mark for dissent with 1,028 incidents.⁸⁴ The following chart diagrams the curve of protests overall from 1800-1853.⁸⁵



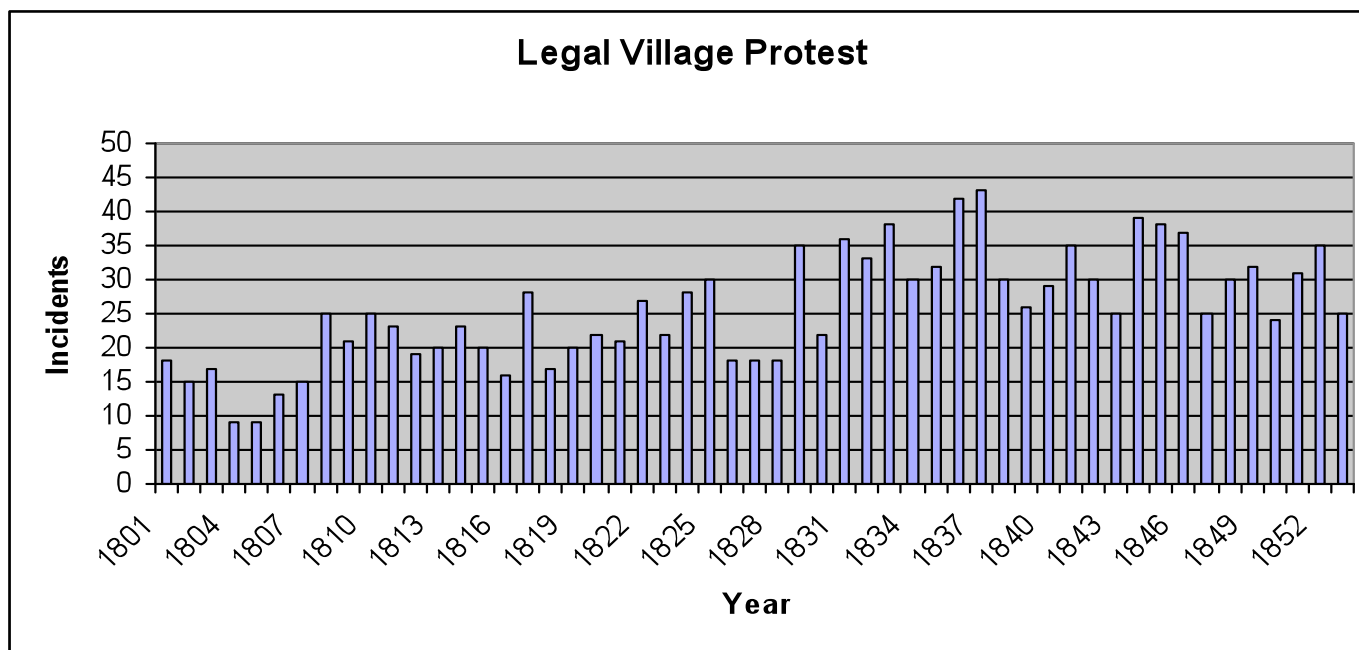
We see three spikes in the graph—the years 1833, 1836, and 1837—that occur within the years of the Tempō famine. The graph rises slightly from 1800 to 1813, and the number of incidents between 1813 and 1832 hovered between 45 and 65, as it did in the years following the famine. Violent and illicit remonstrance follows the same progression, as the chart below illustrates:

⁸⁴ Bix xxiii-xxiii.

⁸⁵ Data to construct this graph and the ones to follow come from Aoki Kōji's 1986 *Hyakushō ikki sōgo nenpyō* (General Chronology of Peasant Uprisings).



Riots and *uchikowashi* in early modern Japan's castle towns and cities thus outnumber the *hyakushō ikki* or peasant riots. Both sets additionally demonstrate similar frequencies, in particular during the peak years in the 1830s. Legal forms of protests—petitions, litigation, appeals—in the countryside demonstrate an altogether different pattern, however:



Legitimate forms of dissent in the countryside peaked, as incidents from the first two charts did, in 1836 and 1837 with forty-two and forty-three cases, respectively. The distribution differs from the former graphs as the number of village petitions generally increase through the same timeframe. That is, the number of cases in each year after the Tempō famine is, on average, higher than the ones before. Thus, as illegal movements dropped to pre-famine levels in the 1840s and early 1850s, lawful rural contention increased.

Illicit forms of protest in Osaka, as expected, reached their apex in the Tempō famine. In the early 1830s, commoners broke into merchant storehouses for money and grain. Then, Ōshio's 1837 riot represented the climax of urban unrest for Settsu.⁸⁶ In the countryside, public protest remained primarily in the legal sphere. As we will see in later chapters, incidents of *uchikowashi* appeared sporadically in Osaka's periphery during the late Tokugawa Period, yet aside from Yamadaya's Nose uprising in the summer of 1837, none correlated with patterns of urban unrest in Osaka or early modern Japan in general.

Legalized forms of protest in the periphery peaked in the 1820s with fifteen cases. Peasants submitted petitions nine times in each of the first two decades of the nineteenth century, thirteen times each in the 1830s and 1840s, and six times from 1850 to 1853.⁸⁷ The majority of the episodes in the 1810s, 1830s, and 1840s stem from grievances over village management and inter-district strife. As we will explore in the dissertation's penultimate chapter, *kokuso* protest accounted for the increase in rural protest in the 1820s, with multiple incidents in 1823 and 1824.

Settsu's geographical, economic, social, and political factors thus came into play in

⁸⁶ Okamoto 195-7.

⁸⁷ A visual graph from 1800 to 1853 serves little use in charting the progress of rural petitions, for the incidents do not number more than 3 in any one year. Patterns of protest in the Kinnai area reflect the general contour of protest in early modern Japan, as Okamoto Ryoichi demonstrates in his 1981 "*Osaka-fu shita hyakushō ikki nenpyō*" (A Chronology of Peasant Uprisings in the Greater Osaka Area), 86-7.

shaping the public sphere of remonstrance in the nineteenth century. Each element or a combination thereof affected the processes by which peasants voiced their disapproval with village and district management, agriculturalists battled monopolistic practices by Osaka businesses, and samurai embarked on violent paths of destruction. By the end of the dissertation, we shall determine that the central authorities—magistrates, the Bakufu, and daimyo—fed into the sphere of remonstrance by easing their restrictions on outlawed movements, essentially aiding villagers in causes the government had once forbidden.

The Public Sphere in Early Nineteenth Century Settsu: Urban and Rural Streams

Introduction

A reawakening of cultural and historical interest in Kansai and Osaka swept through Settsu at the turn of the nineteenth century. Having emerged from the Tenmei famine in the early 1780s, Osaka and its surrounding communities welcomed travelers from distant provinces into the region. The publication of the multi-volume *Settsu meisho-zue*, an illustrated guide to famed areas of Settsu, sparked recreational tourism in the Kinai plain. Religious treks to the Ise shrine in southern Japan brought thousands of pilgrims from the Kanto region through Osaka. Moreover, resuscitated agricultural production stimulated trade between Osaka and the rest of the realm, thereby drawing merchants and farmers into commerce with Settsu guilds. Three decades after this time of prosperity, however, Osaka authorities found themselves entangled in struggles against ward residents who began erecting signboards instructing fellow townsmen to commit *uchikowashi* against the homes of wealthy shopkeepers.

Naturally, one needs only to turn to the Tempō famine (1833-1837) to explicate the rise in contentious movements in Osaka. As the charts from the previous chapter indicate, early modern Japanese protest peaked overall in the nineteenth century during the most severe years of the Tempō period. A closer inspection of the data revealed a contrasting trend for rural conflict: over the same period, the distribution of incidents in the countryside remained relatively even. This chapter explores unrest in both Osaka and rural Settsu to determine how the incidents from the early 1800s to the early 1830s affected the public sphere.

First, it discusses how historiography has interpreted early nineteenth century unrest—or lack thereof—in Settsu. Then, it surveys incidents of remonstrance in and around the city of Osaka. Next, it follows unrest and strife in Settsu's countryside in order to ascertain what accounted for a steady wave of appeals and petitions during a period noted for agricultural productivity and social calm. The conclusion addresses the underlying thought of the movements to explain how the Bakufu played an integral role in preparing Settsu for Ōshio Heihachirō's 1837 riot.

Historiography

In his 1993 text *Early Modern Japan*, Conrad Totman labels the years 1790-1825 as the “Best of Times,” and 1825-1850 as the “Worst of Times.” Economic, cultural, and intellectual booms defined the first thirty years while the heightened presence of foreign ships, the Tempō famine, and internal conflict from Japan's peripheral domains marked the latter years. Totman argues that Osaka's decline as the economic center for early modern Japan mirrored the gradual economic, political, and social deterioration from 1790 to 1860, for he points out that its population fell by nearly forty percent over the timeframe.⁸⁸ An examination of secondary English and Japanese language sources related to early modern Osaka and Settsu reveals that in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the city maintained its role as an economic metropole and that urban decay in Settsu did not begin until the early 1830s.

For example, William B. Hauser's 1974 study on *Economic Institutional Change: Osaka and the Kinai Cotton Trade* details how Osaka experienced a commercial boom from 1804 to 1830. Imports of everyday commodities, ranging from rice to animal hides, were on

⁸⁸ Totman 476-7.

average substantially higher in the first three decades of the 1800s than the amounts calculated in 1736. Hauser notes that it was the Tempō famine that led to a decrease in nearly every import by the 1840s.⁸⁹ Contributors to McClain and Wakita's 1999 *Osaka: The Merchants' Capital of Early Modern Japan* also depict the early nineteenth century as a period of cultural and intellectual flourishing, particularly in the increasing number of pilgrims to Inari shrines and the expansion of Western studies in the early 1800s.⁹⁰ When English language historians do approach the subject of violent remonstrance in early modern Osaka, they do so by focusing their analysis on Oshio's 1837 riot.⁹¹ Otherwise, scholarship relegates contention in early modern Osaka to case studies on violent acts and protests in the eighteenth century.⁹² In English language scholarship on Osaka, the city's decay thus began three decades into the nineteenth century.

Okamoto Ryōichi and Watanabe Takeru paint a similar portrait of the city in their 1973 text *Osaka no sesō* (Social Conditions of Osaka). They assert that from the Bunka to the Bunsei years (approximately 1804-1830), stable weather patterns led to bountiful harvests with few cases of poor crop production for the farmers. Furthermore, they write that with low cost of grain, families subsisted on their annual incomes, consequently allowing for nearly thirty years of ease.⁹³ It was the same three decades of social calm, as Fujitani Toshio writes in his 1968 "*Okagemairi*" to "*Eejanaika*," that renewed *okagemairi* pilgrimages across the Kinai plain. Farmers and townsmen from Japan's provinces embarked on journeys

⁸⁹ Hauser 50.

⁹⁰ Nakagawa Sugane's "Inari Worship in Early Modern Osaka" and Tetsuo Najita's "Ambiguous Encounters: Ogata Kōan and International Studies in Late Tokugawa Osaka" deal with these two issues respectively.

⁹¹ The next chapter will address English and Japanese language historiography pertaining to Ōshio Heihachirō in far more detail, but the two works that detail the subject the most are Tetsuo Najita's 1970 "Oshio Heihachirō (1793-1837)" and Ivan Morris' 1975 *The Nobility of Failure*.

⁹² Uchida Kusuo's "Protest and the Tactics of Direct Remonstrance: Osaka's Merchants Make Their Voices Heard" and Gary R. Leupp's "The Five Men of Naniwa: Gang Violence and Popular Culture in Genroku Osaka" are two such studies.

⁹³ Okamoto and Watanabe 151.

to express their gratitude for plentiful harvests in the past and to receive charms for agricultural gain in the future.⁹⁴

While historians of urban Settsu depict Osaka as a Mecca for social stability in the early nineteenth century, Japanese scholars of Settsu's peripheral districts portray the rural landscape as a hotbed of dissent. In the 1963 study *Kinsei nōson keizaishi no kenkyū: kinai ni okeru nōmin ryūtsū to nōmin tōsō no tenkai* (Studies in the Economic History of Early Modern Economic Farming Villages: The Development of Agriculturalist Negotiation and Strife), Kobayashi Shigeru surveys struggles amongst the agrarians in the late Tokugawa Period. Citing examples from villages in Settsu, he follows a Marxist approach to argue that village struggles in the early nineteenth century consisted of clashes between the village administrators and middle-class farmers. Rural movements in the early nineteenth century, he writes, eventually spread anti-Bakufu consciousness and set the groundwork for Imperial rule.⁹⁵

Fukawa Kiyoshi also adheres to a class-oriented approach in his exploration of village strife in early nineteenth century Settsu. In his 1973 book *Kinsei nihon no minshū ronri shisō* (Logical Thought of the Masses in Early Modern Japan), Fukawa characterizes rural movements in the early nineteenth century as indicative of a yearning for social mobility among the lower peasants. That is, in clashes with village administrations, peasants aspired for vertical social mobility. They did not wish to form new social strata or communitarian cliques; rather, they articulated their demands in such a way that would enable them to attain the same political and social stature possessed by their local officials.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Fujitani 81.

⁹⁵ Kobayashi 313.

⁹⁶ Fukawa 139.

More recently, Yabuta Yutaka has produced a number of studies on Kinai unrest, including the 1992 *Kokuso to hyakushō ikki no kenkyū* (Studies on Kokuso and Peasant Uprisings).⁹⁷ Yabuta writes that mass movements in rural nineteenth century Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi reflect a tighter notion of community and mutual responsibility. Whereas a *gimin* (an individual who shoulders responsibility for a peasant uprising) appears in most cases of remonstrance in the 1700s, representative councils serve as the starting point for mass unrest in early 1800s Settsu villages. These councils, according to Yabuta, defined the collective identity of Settsu villagers through direct action, subsequently easing their transition from an early modern provincial network into a modernized prefectural government in the Meiji period.

Historiography of late Tokugawa Settsu contention hence reveals two trends: first, in Osaka, administrators faced no violent skirmishes until the outbreak of famine in the 1830s; and second, in Settsu's villages, peasants engaged in frequent acts of protest throughout the first few decades of the nineteenth century, foreshadowing the rise of protest in late Tokugawa Japan. Still, urban and rural Settsu both played active roles in shaping the public sphere of remonstrance. The following section explores cases where residents of Osaka's wards immerse themselves in the discursive arena through non-violent and non-litigious means. It draws from case studies in *Osaka no sesō*, accounts from the *Ukiyo no arisama* (Conditions of the Floating World), and material from the *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* (Chronological Compendium of Peasant Uprising Sources) to piece together a picture of the public sphere in early 1800s Osaka.

□ Yabuta's other notable contributions to Osaka and Settsu studies include his 2005 *Kinsei Osaka chiiki no shiteki kenkyū* (Historical Studies on the Early Modern Osaka Region) and his chapters from the 2000 set *Minshū undō-shi* (A History of Popular Movements).

Early Nineteenth Century Osaka's Public Sphere

Although violent outbreaks and legal petitions were to vanish from the realm of discontent in early nineteenth century Osaka, the public sphere did not contract. In fact, primary contributors to the discursive arena, including print literature and religious travel, injected fresh ideas into the sphere. These elements allowed city commoners, merchants, and samurai to engage in antiauthoritarian activities to a degree, a threshold once crossed that stoked the interest of the city magistrates.

At the turn of the century, some commoners and merchants who did not fare well through the Tenmei famine turned toward illicit means to earn livelihoods for their families. For widows, prostitution in unlicensed quarters served as an income source, even in the face of prosecution from the city magistrates. After all, an Osaka *machibure* from the early eighteenth century outlawed widows and daughters from engaging in prostitution. Nevertheless, by the early 1800s the practice had become so prevalent that it drew the attention of the famed author Takizawa Bakin (1767-1848).

In 1802, Bakin left his home in Edo to journey west through Nagoya, Kyoto, and Osaka for seventy-five days. In his travel journal *Kiryomanroku* (Thoughts of My Travels), he recorded his encounters with prostitutes in Osaka's brothels, and commented that the number of pleasure quarters in Osaka far outnumbered that in Kyoto. Later in his stay, he crossed the Yamato River to visit the Sumiyoshi Shrine at the southern tip of the province. Upon his return to the Shinsaibashi harbor, his ship came across a smaller vessel called the Togyarō, which shuttled women back and forth for him and his fellow passengers' pleasure.

The handlers charged fees in rice rather than cash, which prompted Bakin to note that even the most destitute prostitutes in Osaka earned more than their counterparts in Edo.⁹⁸

Bakin's accounts reached an audience so vast that the unlicensed widowed prostitutes became known as a *meibutsu* (local delicacy) of the city. Even though knowledge of the illicit practices became part of the public discourse through travel diaries like Bakin's, the magistrates did not issue a decree to ban prostitution among the poor until the Tempō years, when authorities determined that the Osaka residents needed to exercise frugality in the face of famine.⁹⁹ Osaka and Bakufu authorities deemed that travel literature describing licentious activities thus did not warrant censorship in as far as city commoners exercised restraint in times of social calm. The government did, however, issue ordinances to outlaw print literature and plays that they determined to pose a threat to political stability.

Official censorship in the Tokugawa Period initially focused on banning the production and dissemination of Christian books, as Peter Kornicki writes in his 1998 *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century*. A slew of historical sources and other print literature like calendars also fell under the watchful eyes of the government. Authorities promulgated decrees through early modern Japan's cities to ban particular pieces of literature and to outline the punishments associated with possession and the sales of the texts. Often, Kornicki maintains, the magistrates had no legal precedent for exacting punishment on those who continued to circulate outlawed literature, and they issued *machibure* only as a retroactive device to fine, place under house arrest, or banish offenders.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Okamoto and Watanabe., 142-3.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 144.

¹⁰⁰ Kornicki 324.

The fate that met a used book dealer by the name of Tawaraya Gohei in 1809 jolted booksellers throughout Osaka's merchant wards. Gohei's shop in the Mamenoha ward sold copies of the *Ehon taikōki* (絵本太閤記 or An Illustrated Biography of Toyotomi Hideyoshi), a multi-volume set that was first published in 1797. Edo and by extension Osaka magistrates issued the following *machibure* in 1804 to ban such pieces from further publication and distribution:

It goes without saying that the crests and names of warriors since the beginning of the Momoyama period [1573] have been written and drawn. The crests and their seals shall hitherto cease to be depicted...If this edict is found to have been breached, we will conduct investigations and order the guilty party to cease publication immediately. There shall be no transgressions, and if you disobey this order, you will face severe punishment.¹⁰¹

The edict affected painters like Kitagawa Utamaro (1753-1806) who portrayed warriors in cotton screens and woodblock prints, as the Bakufu ordered them under house arrest for as many as fifty days. Osaka booksellers in addition were forced to collect paintings and works compiled by these artists and turn them into local authorities.¹⁰²

The Bakufu banned portraits of Toyotomi Hideyoshi and his inner court on official grounds that it stirred interest in a lineage that had opposed the Tokugawa regime. On a deeper level, Okamoto and Watanabe argue, portraits of the private lives of Momoyama generals demystified the shogun in the mind of the public. Consumers of works illustrating Hideyoshi's wives, consorts, and children aligned such images with that of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Therefore, banning the images and literature worked to preserve the mystique of the Tokugawa family. Lastly, the fact that Gobei continued to sell copies of the *Ehon taikōki*

¹⁰¹ Okamoto and Watanabe 145.

¹⁰² Kornicki 341-2.

for five years after the official ban underscores the renewed interest in local history, according to the authors.¹⁰³

Despite the magistrates' efforts to curb interest in Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Osaka residents continued to express curiosity in local military history. One way in which they did so without perusing banned literature was by visiting the grave of Kimura Shigenari, a military general who served under Hideyoshi and who perished in the Osaka summer battle of 1615. Rumor spread around the city that if one were to take a needle from a pine tree that grew behind Kimura's grave, and then if he or she were to sleep with it for one night, their illnesses may be cured. Osaka street entertainers, after public performances often spoke of the site and urged others to visit the grave. In the early 1820s, peasants from villages in eastern Settsu took notice of the commoners and abandoned working in the fields to sell food, clothing, and charms to those making the sojourn. With villages unable to meet *nengu* payments, the magistrates issued an ordinance in 1828 to end pilgrimages.¹⁰⁴

On a separate level, Okamoto and Watanabe argue that the magistrates' decision was promulgated in concert with their ban of biographical material on Hideyoshi. Officials began interpreting the visits as evidence of anti-Tokugawa sentiment, and the deterioration of the graves of Tokugawa vassals at the expense of the upkeep of the grave of Kimura provided a tangible cause for the magistrates to take action against the pilgrims. *Yoriki* erected barriers to prevent travel across the province and ultimately exacted fines on those who circumvented their rules to visit the site.¹⁰⁵

Osaka authorities continued to restrict religious travel well into the 1830s. After Ōshio Heihachirō imprisoned a group he suspected of practicing Christianity in 1829,

¹⁰³ Okamoto and Watanabe 146-7.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 156.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 157.

officials grew wary of religious pilgrimages through the city and its outskirts. The magistrates first turned toward Inari folk worship and banned the practice by censuring practitioners and seizing statues of foxes from town and city shops.¹⁰⁶ The magistrates then targeted *Okagemairi* pilgrimages, and on the seventh day of the third month of 1830 they issued the following *machibure*:

In recent years we have seen pilgrimages. Housemasters have left their wives, parents, and children to fend for themselves, even in rented homes. Each of them voluntarily left their house knowing that the elderly and young were to remain behind. We are not aiming to prevent the devoted from visiting the Ise shrine, yet we encounter people who break our ordinances in order to make the journey. They have been careless with handling fire and have been engaging in dangerous activities. In any case, those who embark on pilgrimages to Ise must see to their families before their travels.¹⁰⁷

The pilgrimages nevertheless continued to Ise in the face of the magistrates' ban. Moreover, women participated in the journeys by wearing clothing and carrying tools similar to that which the men did. Transcribed magistrate reports in the *Ukiyo no arisama* detail incidents where women were found to leave their homes, purchase food and clothing from the Tenman ward for the pilgrimage, and in some instances bring their children along with them.¹⁰⁸ To Fujitani, such transgressions rend apart the social strata of the Tokugawa *mibunsei* by blending social classes together in movements across provinces and domains. Additionally, participants used the opportunity to pray for exemption from *nengu* payments, subsequently antagonizing their local administrators. He concludes that *okagemairi* served as the precursor for the *eejanaika* movements during the Bakumatsu period.¹⁰⁹ Okamoto and Watanabe write that the Osaka authorities maintained a rational motive for restricting travel

¹⁰⁶ Nakagawa 208-12.

¹⁰⁷ Okamoto and Watanabe 165.

¹⁰⁸ *Ukiyo no arisama* 94-5.

¹⁰⁹ Fujitani 79-101

to Ise, for Osaka's prosperous merchant culture invited impoverished peasants to beg along the streets of the city's mercantile wards before setting forth once more on their journey south. Moreover, the magistrates found it difficult to regulate the pleasure quarters with a constant influx of visitors from other provinces.¹¹⁰

Pilgrimages to Ise declined within two years as the reality of a realm-wide famine set in on the land. Poor agricultural production led to rising costs of grain throughout early modern Japan, and as the central distributor and cash converter for the majority of western Japan, Osaka felt the initial impact of the Tempō crisis in 1833. The cost of grain in the city had risen nearly sixty percent since the autumn harvest from the previous year. Furthermore, in the ninth month of 1833, Osaka merchants sold their grain at 160 *mon* per bushel, over twenty percent higher than the average cost of rice in all of Japan.¹¹¹

At the end of the eighth month of 1833, commoners started to leave posters on signboards on Osaka bridges. These signs informed ward residents that the merchant homes sought to purchase entire stocks of grain and sell them at lofty prices. In addition, the posters notified residents that they should hold covert meetings to prepare a city-wide *uchikowashi* on the homes and warehouses of the wealthy.¹¹² The magistrates dispatched *yoriki* to remove the signs, and the inspectors issued the following report:

Currently there are about thirty-thousand bales of rice stored in Osaka. The stock is imported from other provinces and is intended for people to subsist on, but it is not at all sufficient. Since the end of the eighth month of this year, the price of grain has continued to increase, reaching a peak of 160 *mon* for one bushel. Those in the lower social strata have suffered greatly due to the high cost of rice. The magistrates have already ordered for merchants to cease purchasing entire stocks of grain, and they have forbidden the shopkeepers from selling rice above 140 *mon*. Any new shipments of rice hitherto shall be sold directly to residents of the wards. We have made arrangements to assist deliveries from the harbor to the city warehouses. Still

¹¹⁰ Okamoto and Watanabe 166-7.

¹¹⁰ Kobayashi "Ōshio Heihachirō no ran o meguru nōmin tōsō" 31.

¹¹² Saitō 366.

people are starving in the city, and they have posted signs around the Tenman wards. Their notices read that the magistrates have been lax in enforcing a ceiling for the price of grain, and that on the twentieth day of this month, they will attack the homes of those who have hoarded the rice. Those who wish to join them are instructed to meet at the Tenman Shrine torii and also to post signs in the Daito villages. The signs further notify readers that the cost of rice in other domains, Chōshu for instance, is only 115 *mon*....

Following the earthquake on the twenty-sixth day of this month, more signs have appeared on every bridge in the area. These signs warn that should the price of rice continue to increase, all homes of the wealthy will be attacked.

Lastly, we discovered five men who were attacking the Tenman ward estate of a *daikon* merchant by the name of Sōbei. We killed one of the gang members, arrested another, and chased the remaining three off to whereabouts unknown. Sōbei himself had not been on the premises, as he was assisting in the reconstruction of the Honganji temple.¹¹³

On the final day of the ninth month, the magistrates released a *machibure* in response to the investigation. They denounce the signboards as “unpardonable,” and threaten to arrest anyone caught erecting posters that incite wards into *uchikowashi*. The officials continue that they realize residents are faced with hardships and calamities in recent years and that they have no doubt that the climate has disrupted commoner livelihoods. Still, they implore for every Osaka commoner, from the master of the house to his wife and parents, to exercise restraint in the manner in which grievances are expressed.¹¹⁴

Ward magistrates did enact measures to alleviate the city’s suffering. Every year between 1833 and 1836, the magistrates instituted a price ceiling for rice. Volunteers consisting of city merchants and samurai officials assisted in the distribution of reserved grain to the starving, and sake brewers reduced their production by one-third. Efforts to increase imports of grain from the south and east, however, met with failure as merchants in neighboring provinces ransacked the stocks from boats delivering the shipments.

Furthermore, a fire razed 7,500 houses in 1835, and poor climate conditions persisted into

¹¹³ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 12 591.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 591.

1836. After floods destroyed entire harvests of grain and vegetables, villagers fled their homes in rural Settsu to come to Osaka and beg in the streets. Despite the magistrates' efforts to curb violence, incidents of *uchikowashi* continued into late 1836.¹¹⁵

The public sphere of remonstrance in urban Settsu clearly thrived in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. From the aforementioned incidents, we can detect two forces propelling Osaka residents into action in the discursive arena. The first, and most obvious at the end of the timeframe, were retaliatory movements of the impoverished against the wealthy merchants. The second was a renewed interest in local culture and history. The magistrates and Bakufu agents attempted to contain both throughout the early 1800s, yet city residents found means and support from their neighbors to continue travels to Ise, peruse banned biographies, and then erect signboards throughout Osaka's wards.

Remonstrance in early nineteenth century rural Settsu manifested itself in a variety of modes that differed from the urban public sphere until the outbreak of famine in 1833. The following section surveys incidents of remonstrance and categorizes them into movements of dissent against local political corruption, appeals for *nengu* reduction caused by environmental and agricultural issues, and disputes over non-financial affairs.

Contention in Rural Settsu

In his 1972 article "*Osaka-fu shita hyakushō ikki nenpyō*" (A Chronology of Peasant Uprisings in the Greater Osaka Area), Okamoto Ryōichi lists forty-three episodes of rural Settsu unrest between 1802 and 1836.¹¹⁶ Ten of the incidents warrant little mention in local histories or the *Hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* due to the fact that, as discussed in the preceding

¹¹⁵ Okamoto and Watanabe 175-6.

¹¹⁶ Okamoto 86-7.

chapter, letters or protests processed through extralegal channels were ordered to be destroyed. Even so, extant sources and accounts of the other thirty or so incidents inform us that village peasants and officials engaged in the public arena to vent their frustration with their conditions.¹¹⁷ Individually the documents provide a snapshot of village strife in certain years; collectively, they demonstrate the range and frequency with which peasants found means to air their dissent. The first set centers on litigation and petitions against village management. The next selection of appeals focuses on strife over climate and agricultural in regard to the effect on the villagers' ability to meet nengu payments. The final set of documents addresses grievances over non-fiscal matters.

Rural Mismanagement

Grievances within the village polity primarily target the administrators and their ability to govern with fairness over the peasants. As James W. White writes in *Ikki: Social Conflict and Political Protest in Early Modern Japan*, local leaders accounted for fifty-one percent of all grievances from 1590 to 1877. Merchants comprised the second largest group with twenty-three percent of petitions aimed at their social class. Fellow peasants faced only three percent of the protests.¹¹⁸ From the cases below, we can discern that in Settsu, peasants vented their frustrations with the village *shōya* and elders by accusing their leaders of corruption and ineptitude in petitions to the *daikan* or city magistrates.

One of the first grievances lodged against a village leader in the nineteenth century appeared in Imamiya Village of the Teshima district in the fifth month of 1806. In a petition to Lord Nishida Sōzaemon, sixteen peasants lodged a complaint against their *shōya*. They

¹¹⁷ It is important to note here that this section will not address inter-provincial kokuso protest against Osaka monopolies, a subject that will be saved for the dissertation's penultimate chapter.

¹¹⁸ White 188.

argue that the official had unilaterally named their new *kumigashira* without consulting any of the farmers. Further, the *shōya* ignored the patrilineal succession tradition in the village's region. Although the peasants attempted to engage the official in talks to resolve the dispute, he refused to compromise, thereby leaving the peasants with no choice but to turn to the village elders. The villagers arrived at the decision that in order to select a new *kumigashira*, the *shōya* must consult with the elders and peasant representatives. They make a plea for Sōzaemon to accept their decision, especially in a time when “several *shōya* officials have been making affairs difficult” for neighboring villages. The letter's conclusion restates the peasants' position and once more asks Sōzaemon to permit the village collective to nominate a new *kumigashira*.¹¹⁹

Later that year, peasants from Teshima's Nishikoji Village also entangled themselves in a dispute with their *shōya*. According to a letter from three *kumigashira* and six peasant representatives, the *shōya* had destroyed several village ledgers by accident and entrusted the remaining ones to his mother and son. When the villagers asked for it, the *shōya* could not produce it for their perusal, thus further exacerbating their frustration. A subsequent village-wide meeting led the nine men to produce a letter to express their dissatisfaction with their chief administrator.¹²⁰

Elsewhere, in the Kawabe district, peasants from eight villages surrounding the Kinraku-ji Temple instigated a movement on the twenty-ninth day of the eleventh month of 1811 to expel the inter-village *shōya* and replace the local *jinya* officials. They write that they face certain admonishment by the *jitō*, but that they feel they have no choice but to submit their appeal. The men accuse the *jinya* officials of colluding with the chief *shōya* to

¹¹⁹ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 8 224-5.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 247.

over-tax the peasants. Their final request demands for the officials' forced resignations and for their return to their home domains in order for the villagers to "live in complete harmony."¹²¹

A series of village disputes against *shōya* ensued for the next two decades. At the end of 1815, peasants from the Higashimuko Village in the Muko district presented a petition to be able to access village records following the death of their administrator. When the new official refused to turn it over, they petitioned the *daikan* for its release.¹²² In early 1824, a peasant named Jiryōyuemon from Tamase Village in Kawabe raised allegations that the *shōya* was disloyal to the peasants and requested for his transfer. Later in the year, farmers from Kawabe's Kamo Village drew a notice to express their lack of confidence in the new *shōya*.¹²³

Then in first month of 1824, anti-authority sentiment resurfaced in the Teshima district regarding the disappearance of a *ninsoku-chōmen* (人足帳面 a ledger that determined the payments to assistants in the fields) in Minami-Toneyama Village. The *shōya* of eighteen years had managed the financial ledgers of the village, but when peasants asked him to retrieve the *ninsoku-chōmen*, he was unable to locate it. Upon entering the *shōya*'s home, the villagers discovered that what was left of the ledger contained merely two or three years of data, and they then sensed that the *shōya* had destroyed the rest. Denouncing their chief as "insolent," the elders, *kumigashira*, and peasant representatives sent an appeal to the territory's lords to seek more time to calculate village data for future *nengu* payments. The villagers promise that they will recalculate the data for a new ledger, hence reifying the

¹²¹ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 9 112-4.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 565

¹²³ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 11 67.

notions that the *shōya* had acted out of self-interest and that they would conduct his duties from that point onward.¹²⁴

Incidents targeting the *shōya* in early nineteenth century Settsu emanated from three districts: Muko, Kawabe, and Teshima. Each region's agricultural production intertwined with the Osaka cotton market, for Muko villages produced dried sardine fertilizer, Kawabe rapeseeds, and Teshima cottonseeds. Thus, in a period when Osaka commerce flourished, village leaders attained new opportunities to prosper at the expense of the peasants. Yet, for villages and districts that subsisted on rice harvests and not from profits in the textile market, even a month-long drought had an indelible impact on rural conditions. In these cases, the entire village body submitted petitions to improve farming conditions and to reduce *nengu* payments.

Environmental and Agricultural Concerns

In Settsu's southwestern Nadame districts of Yatabe and Muko, *suisha* (水車 or waterwheels) facilitated irrigation across the region from major rivers in the districts. *Suisha* also enhanced pressed oil production for neighboring districts like Muko in the east. From the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, as Terada Masahiro writes in his 2000 “*Kinsei seisetsu no sangyō gijutsu to chiiki shakai: nadame suishagyō wo chūshin ni*” (Early Modern Western Settsu's Industrial Arts and the Community: A Study of the Nadame *Suisha* Industry), the *suisha* were indispensable to village life.¹²⁵ Thus, when a drought dried the rivers in the spring of 1809, friction broke out among villagers of southwestern Settsu. The largest incident occurred in Ubara's Nakano Village when farmers relied on manpower to

¹²⁴ *Shinshū Toyonaka shishi: komonjo/kokiroku* 596-8.

¹²⁵ Terada 85-6.

irrigate their fields and consequently struggled to pay fees associated with tilling fields under the Bakufu's possession.

A peasant named Heijurō traveled to the *daikan*'s office to protest the fees imposed on him and his village. The talks disintegrated as Heijurō cast insults at the *daikan* and his subordinates before striking out at two peasant representatives stationed in the office. Each victim of the assault returned to their homes where fellow villagers noticed welts all over the two men's bodies. Heijurō meanwhile took refuge in a local temple in order to evade arrest.

In a petition to the *daikan* office, Nakano Village elders and other peasants provide a narrative of Heijurō's attack. The authors choose not to center the appeal on the villager's actions; instead, they rationalize his actions due to the inaccessibility of water and their difficulty in meeting *nengu* payments. Their principal argument rests on the logic that with limited means to retrieve water and sustain rice production, subsequent attacks may only increase. After all, they claim, the conditions of the village had clouded Heijurō's judgment in his request for aid. The authors of the petition do vow that Heijurō shall be captured and subject to a thorough investigation by the *ginmi*, yet they reiterate that the problem may be rectified only with assistance from district authorities in relaxing forced payments to landholders.¹²⁶

During 1813, flooding in the Nishinari district spurred tenant farmers into submitting an appeal seeking a decrease in land rent. Landholders had ordered the farmers to re-sow the land that had been afflicted with water damage, thereby necessitating time and money from the peasants in order to repair levees around the fields. The agriculturalists believed that they had been inducted into corvée labor and lodged a complaint to the nearby *daimyo*. In the letter, the farmers threaten that they shall abandon the land and allow for the landholders

¹²⁶ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 8 340-1.

alone to maintain it. For the landowners, a sudden shortage in tenants meant that the fields would become barren, and the stewards subsequently met with the daimyo's aides to resolve the dispute with the farmers.¹²⁷

Still, cotton producing villages in Teshima did not escape short periods of drought either. On the twentieth day of the ninth month of 1825, peasants from Harata Village filed an appeal to request exemption from *nengu* payments to the village administrators. Since the administrators held no real authority to release peasants from the annual tax, the villagers forwarded their appeals to provincial authorities. By the end of the eleventh month, the villagers softened their stance on *nengu* payments and instead demanded for the cost of rice to be reduced as income from cotton production had fallen in tandem with the poor climate.¹²⁸

Climate fluctuations in rural Settsu, however slight, hence disrupted village livelihoods enough for peasants to engage their local and regional officials in disputes to alleviate their suffering. According to Fukawa, the spate of incidents above underscores a growing awareness among the villagers that they could compel their lords and administrators into talks with their regional and provincial superiors, even if the protests rarely culminated in decisions favoring the farmers.¹²⁹ If Settsu villages demonstrated a growing political consciousness in their periodic struggles with paying their annual taxes, then they faced a decidedly conservative nature in village administration. The same clash between the ruled and the rulers intensified during disputes over village aesthetics.

Non Financial Village Recourse

¹²⁷ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 9 330-1.

¹²⁸ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 12 141-5.

¹²⁹ Fukawa 119.

Settsu peasants in the Okamachi castle-town often became embroiled in disputes over maintenance of the Hirata Shrine. In 1790 villages around Okamachi protested the *daikan*'s request for tributes to the shrine.¹³⁰ The friction continued into the nineteenth century when the *daikan* and shrine officials approached the townsmen for monetary contributions and assistance in the reconstruction of some of the more dilapidated structures. On the third month of 1818, residents of Okamachi's seven surrounding villages lodged the following protest:

Seven villages in close proximity to Hirata share expenses for the maintenance of the shrine. The townspeople contribute for the upkeep of the shrine grounds. As it has become an expensive affair, with regret, we submit this complaint. With awe and respect, we present the following... Okamachi village elders have been ordered to help collect money for the repairs in the past, but at this time twenty-eight *shōya* from the villages felt the need to end this practice by compiling this letter. We were granted exemption from the dues in years past, and we do not think it is necessary to discuss the details of those incidents right now. We do have misgivings pertaining to the repairs.We were given no details regarding what needs to be constructed in the area. Furthermore, we believe it is necessary to stop the deforestation in the area. Since the request for funds came from the Head Priest Sanbei, the elders visited the shrine to consult with him. It was determined that there will be fees associated with lumber, and the elders relayed these concerns to the Priest...Because the problem has yet to be resolved and because there are further matters to discuss, we ask you to accept our petition and read it carefully. We would be extremely grateful if you could intervene on our behalf and help settle this dispute.¹³¹

The magistrates responded to the villagers' requests by conducting an examination into the details of the reconstruction. They recalculated the amount of money needed to restore the stone walls around the shrine and also determined that the repairs necessary for the inner hall of the shrine stemmed from the faults of the carpenters hired in previous reconstruction efforts. Because the repairs to the outer walls were deemed to be unrelated to expanding the inner hall, the magistrates responded to the peasants that they will not be

¹³⁰ *Toyonaka shi-shi* 178.

¹³¹ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 10 157-8.

charged for the total amount requested. Instead, the shrine must employ carpenters to carry out the repairs within the shrine itself.¹³²

Fiscal interest played an obvious role behind the motivation for the Okamachi peasants to appeal against paying fees to reconstruct portions of the Hirata Shrine. Within the appeal, the peasants also express their concern with the destruction of greenery around the village for unnecessary repairs. Moreover, the magistrates' inspectors also took the matter into account when ordering that carpenter guilds and not the peasants must acquire and supply wood for the reconstruction. It would be premature to conclude that environmental concerns played a central role in the villager's petition. However, it would not be a stretch of the imagination to infer that a concern for conserving forest greenery came into play. Two episodes in Settsu's northernmost district of Nose underscore the battle for the preservation of traditional village architecture.

The first incident began in 1816 in Shukuno Village after a villager named Taguchi Kanbei's home burned to the ground. The fire spread and destroyed houses belonging to two more peasants named Chūbei and Kahei. Soon, all three began constructing temporary houses for their families. Problems arose for the displaced men when other villagers noticed that the roofs of the new homes contained *itahafu* (板破風 or wooden gables) like those depicted below¹³³:

¹³² *Toyonaka shi-shi* 179.

¹³³ *Nose Chō-shi* Volume 1, page 659.



Then, Chūbei compounded the situation by affixing his family crest to the gables. Because peasants who resided in homes dating back to the early eighteenth century believed that both the gables and the crests should adorn only the older structures, they selected a representative to ask Chūbei to remove the crests and gables. Chūbei refused to comply, and the peasants convened once more to ask Kyoto magistrates to intervene. Authorities summoned Chūbei and members of his family to the *daikan*'s office and asked him to remove the gables. Chūbei acquiesced provided that Kanbei, whose fire destroyed his home, also be asked to remove the gables.

Kanbei retorted that he had rebuilt his home in the same manner that his father had constructed the family's home over fifty years ago. His father had received support from village officials to use his family seal in the gables, and his home had official recognition by the priests at the Saihou temple. Chūbei returned to the village and solicited aid from the tenant farmers. The farmers suggested that since Chūbei was involved with water irrigation, he should remove the crests from the gables and instead carve the image of a fish (懸魚 or *gegyo*) on the gables' pillars.

Again, the consortium of old homeowners protested Chūbei's decision, and Chūbei was ordered to remove the pillars. Chūbei brought ledgers to the consortium's chief

representative proving that *gegyo* belonged to homes old and new, regardless of the homeowner's status in the village. Village officials subsequently permitted Chūbei to retain the gables, and in the summer of 1819 issued the following summation and guidelines for future construction:

- 1) Kanbei removed the center boards from his temporary homes and used them to construct his permanent home with his family crest on the gables.
- 2) Chūbei's gables contain crests on the lower part of his home.
- 3) Because there was a dispute over the *gegyo* on the gables, some homes will be allowed to contain the mark, and others will not.
- 4) In the future, one may affix gables to their roofs in accordance with their social standing.
- 5) All other matters related to home construction will pass through the village officials.¹³⁴

In 1832, a separate dispute concerning local architecture arose in the nearby Kamishukuno Village. Village administrators and older residents noticed an increase in *mongata* (門形 or double-occupancy houses) in the vicinity. An artisan by the name of Heiemon, who worked for a construction guild, submitted a promissory note in response to the complaints from officials that the new homes were “eyesores” for the village. In the document, he ensures the local leaders that he would remove pillars from the center of the structures to make the *mongata* less ostentatious. If there were any new plans for double-occupancy homes in the near future, he adds, his guild would not be any part of it.¹³⁵

These three incidents highlight the role extra-budgetary concerns played in the early modern public sphere of remonstrance. Preserving the forests served as both a means and a goal for peasants to protest forced contributions for Hirata Shrine's repairs. In Nose, the design of new homes came to the forefront in contention over village appearance. For the gables in Shukuno, younger residents engaged their administrators and older homeowners in

¹³⁴ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 10 107-10.

¹³⁵ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 12 481.

an effort to erect their homes as they desired. In Kamishukuno, the officials took the initiative in asking district authorities to intercede on their behalf in order to stop construction guilds from tarnishing the rural landscape. Even though editors of the *Nose chō-shi* and *Toyonaka shi-shi* write that the disputes galvanized tenant farmers in movements against the village elite, in two of the cases, the peasants did relent to village customs and compromise with their leaders in preserving village unity.¹³⁶

Conclusions

The public sphere of remonstrance expanded in two distinct ways in urban and rural Settsu. Osaka commoners and merchants engaged in cultural modes of production despite the Bakufu and magistrates' efforts to contain banned literature and illicit travel. Then, Settsu villagers contributed to the public sphere through village disputes related to corrupt leaders, agricultural concerns, and local tradition. In both the center and periphery, an absence of violent remonstrance marked the first three decades of the nineteenth century until the two streams of contention converged during the onset of the Tempō famine in 1833. As seen above, commoners erected signboards throughout Osaka's wards in order to urge residents into *uchikowashi* against the wealthy merchants. One month before the first appearance of these posters, peasants in the Minatogawa region of the Yatabe district also distributed notices asking fellow villagers to strike out against the rice merchants.¹³⁷

We are thus left to question what accounted for the pattern of protest in early nineteenth century Settsu. Japanese language scholarship on early modern rural dissent in the early 1800s follows a teleological approach, arguing that clashes among village social

¹³⁶ *Nose chō-shi* 663-4; *Toyonaka shi-shi* 180.

¹³⁷ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 12 522.

strata—namely the tenant farmers and the officiating peasants—foreshadowed movements leading to the overthrow of the Bakufu nearly half a century later. Historiography on Osaka unrest, with the exception of Okamoto and Watanabe, underscores protest in the 1830s and how it fed into an atmosphere conducive for Ōshio Heihachirō to lead his 1837 riot.¹³⁸

Intellectual history, however, sheds a separate light on the meaning of peasant protest. James Scott's seminal 1976 work *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* argues that peasants rise against their administrators when they sense that their sustenance levels are threatened.¹³⁹ In the same year, Fukaya Katsumi adds reciprocity to the equation of rural unrest by arguing in his article “*Hyakushō ikki no shisō*” (The Thought of Peasant Uprisings) that villagers in Tokugawa Japan expected their rulers to provide them with the means and ability to subsist off of their earnings, and they subsequently would contribute to the annual *nengu* without hesitation. If the administrators threatened their livelihoods by withholding assistance in times of need, the peasants felt they had the obligation to themselves and their families to protest.¹⁴⁰

Stephen Vlastos notes that a mentality rooted in Scott's “moral economy” may explain the correlation between physical acts of remonstrance and subsistence in his 1986 *Peasant Protest and Uprisings in Tokugawa Japan*. However, Vlastos argues, peasants in early modern Japan maneuvered through a fluctuating market for rice by developing sericulture, textiles, and other agricultural-based products. Then, Anne Walthall makes the assertion that peasant protest stemmed not entirely from expectations of benevolent reciprocity from their administrators in her 1986 text *Social Protest and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century Japan*. She argues instead that their actions “owed less to the rituals of

¹³⁸ Kobayashi 1969, Najita 1970, and Morris 1975.

¹³⁹ Scott 10.

¹⁴⁰ Fukaya 1976 214.

communication specified by those in power than to the habitual practices of the peasants themselves.”¹⁴¹ Fukaya later tweaks his argument of peasant reciprocity in the 1986 study *Hyakushō ikki no rekishiteki kōzō* (Historical Structure of Peasant Uprisings) to assert that it was the peasants’ grasp of their place in the Tokugawa social hierarchy that imbued them with the power and political duty to rebel against their administrators.¹⁴²

Yet, intellectual history neglects to recognize one of the central set of actors within the public sphere—the Bakufu and its magistrates. With urban unrest, the Bakufu issued decrees and edicts designated to eliminate subjects and movements it viewed as disruptive to political and social stability. In Osaka, the magistrates dispatched inspectors and subordinates to stymie interest in the Hideyoshi regime. Toward the end of the 1820s, the magistrates began to accept the fact that it could not contain travel and expressions of discontent. Officials understood the ease with which pilgrims could circumvent their restrictions and guard outposts in the south toward Ise and the east toward Kawabe. In time, drought and famine precluded castle-town commoners from embarking on religious journeys, compelling them instead to tend to their families and livelihoods. Nevertheless, even when denouncing the prevalence of signboards on each bridge of Osaka, the magistrates responded in their *machibure* that commoners should exercise restraint in expressing their plights. Osaka authorities had the legal responsibility to counter violence, but at the same time they comprehended the fact that they had no authority or means to quell dissent among their subjects.

Appeals and petitions from rural Settsu sought assistance and judgments from central authorities. Bakufu administrators responded to peasant protest by investigating alleged

¹⁴¹ Walthall 55-6.

¹⁴² Fukaya 1986 111-4.

corruption among *shōya*, mediating disputes among village social strata, and replacing inept *jinya* guards. More importantly, officials legitimized village codes or recognized the authority of peasants in cases where villagers rewrote legislative and financial procedures insofar as the village contracts did not have a long-term impact on *nengu* payments. The Bakufu did not encourage peasant remonstrance in the early nineteenth century; however, it did not issue edicts that delineated new illicit modes of protest, either.¹⁴³

Peasant and commoner political consciousness and their sense of reciprocity thus were not the only streams of thought underlying the growth of Settsu's public sphere. The Bakufu itself adjusted its policies to adapt to the expanded realm of dissent. On the one hand, it maintained judicial order by subduing violent acts. On the other hand, authorities recognized the needs of the peasants and commoners to express themselves in a time of growing social and economic friction. It was therefore with relative ease that the former magistrate *yoriki* Ōshio Heihachirō could, in a matter of days in early 1837, lead hundreds of Settsu peasants and castle-town commoners through Osaka and incinerate one-fifth of its wards.

¹⁴³ As reviewed in the previous chapter, nineteenth century edicts that outlawed protest contained the same contents as those promulgated in the previous century.

Ōshio Heihachirō's 1837 Osaka Uprising

Introduction

To this day, the story of Ōshio Heihachirō (1793-1837) and his Osaka *ran* continues to captivate the imagination of Osaka scholars and residents alike. An advertisement for the performance of *Naniwa sōjōki Ōshio Heihachirō* (Account of Ōshio Heihachirō's Naniwa Riot) at the Shochikuza Kabuki Hall greeted inbound trains to JR Osaka station in the spring of 2007. Documents and artifacts from Ōshio's riot occupy a substantial portion of a hall dedicated to late Tokugawa history in the Osaka Museum of History. Osaka new and used bookstores sell numerous texts related to Ōshio and his attack.

In unearthing the roots of this adulation and awe reserved for Ōshio, one discovers that they stretch back beyond the twentieth century. In fact, only a matter of months separated the riot and the initial lionization of the leader of an attack that destroyed one-fifth of Osaka's neighborhoods. The sentiment, which emanated from the villages and towns in Osaka's periphery, was one that Ōshio himself played the most central role in creating. In this chapter, I argue that a combination of Wang Yang-ming¹⁴⁴ philosophy and self-interest accounted for the samurai's decision to destroy hundreds of homes, stores, and warehouses in Osaka. In blending the two elements together, Ōshio stirred anti-authoritarian emotion in a movement that appealed to multiple strata of early modern Japanese society.

To demonstrate this complex appeal to late Tokugawa Settsu, I first survey English and Japanese language historiography centered on the warrior and his riot. Then, I explore Ōshio's life and career as a magistrate *yoriki* (与力 or inspector) before examining his private

¹⁴⁴ In Japanese, the term denoting Wang Yang-ming is 王陽明 or Ōyōmei, and the philosophy 陽明学 or *Yōmeigaku*.

academy for Wang Yang-ming Neo-Confucianism, the Senshindō. In the following sections I analyze his *gekibun* (檄文 or summons) and summarize his riot, with a special emphasis on the manner by which he appealed to rural *eta* and *hinin* outcastes through his writing and actions. I then incorporate sources which demonstrate that, after the riot, a wave of fear that swept through early modern Japanese urban centers and that a growing admiration for Ōshio began to blossom in rural Settsu. In the conclusion, I address Ōshio's impact on the development of the late Tokugawa public sphere and determine how the riot deviated from the course of remonstrance in late Tokugawa Japan.

Historiography

If any single event or person typifies late Tokugawa remonstrance in historiography, then it must be Ōshio Heihachirō and his riot. An extensive corpus of letters, textbooks, official reports, magistrate records, and local histories follows the samurai turned scholar, hence providing historians with multiple perspectives through which to view the figure. Japanese language scholarship, from the Taishō years to the present day, offers numerous studies on Ōshio and his uprising, and compendiums of documents from the last two decades provide new lenses through which to analyze the subject. Nevertheless, Ōshio has eluded manuscript-length studies in the English language, and with the exception of Tetsuo Najita and Ivan Morris' respective studies, historians have circumscribed Ōshio's narrative within the sphere of early modern protest.¹⁴⁵

Initial investigations into the 1837 Osaka uprising appeared in the 1913 *Ōsaka shi-shi* (City History of Osaka) with sources on the riot compiled in two separate volumes in the set.

¹⁴⁵ Totman 1995 (514-6) and Bix 1986 (154), for example, relegate Ōshio in such a manner.

Four years later, editors of the *Ukiyo no arisama* allocated a section of the text for official reports of Ōshio's riot. Unlike the *Ōsaka shi-shi*, the compilers incorporated documented reaction from provinces outside of Settsu in addition to those from Osaka and its nearby districts. A biography purportedly written by Ōshio's students appeared in 1920, offering the first, though heavily subjective, account of the warrior's life.

Yamada Jun's 1930s scholarship on Ōshio presented the figure as an ideologue by focusing on the samurai's thought. His 1937 *Ōshio Chūsai/Satō Issai* examines the relationship between Ōshio and Satō Issai (1772-1859), a Confucian scholar who became head of Hayashi Razan's Shōhei-kō school. Yamada's 1940 annotation of the *Senshindō sakki* presents historians with the first guide to the ideas and lessons from Ōshio's private academy. Kōda Naritomo's 1942 study *Ōshio Heihachirō* details Ōshio's life and thought, relying on documents from *Ōsaka shi-shi* to portray the samurai without the bias that tainted the 1920 hagiography.

Postwar studies pertaining to Ōshio appeared in resuscitated academic journals of the late 1940s and 1950s. Some like Totani Toshiyuki's 1948 "*Chūsai no taikyo*" (Chūsai's Sky) from the journal *Nihon nōgyō keizai-shi kenkyū* (Studies in Japanese Agricultural Economic History) linked Ōshio to Marxist thought by depicting the samurai and his followers to be engaged in an agrarian struggle against the urban elites. Abe Makoto also underscored Ōshio's role with the peasants in his 1951 "*Nōgyō to tetsugaku no zenshin-Ōshio Chūsai nitsuite*" (Progressive Agriculture and Thought: Ōshio Chūsai) from the journal *Kenkyū* (Research). Maeda Kazuyoshi follows the trend in his 1952 article "*Ōkura Nagatsune/Ōshio Chūsai*" from *Historia* by comparing Ōshio with Ōkura (1768-1861), a late Tokugawa intellectual of rural mercantilism.

In the 1960s, two scholars—Miyagi Kimiko and Okamoto Ryōichi—were responsible for restoring Ōshio Heihachirō’s place in the limelight. In her 1966 article, “*Jugaku no jiko henkaku to minshū-Ōshio Heihachirō ni tsuite*” (Confucianism’s Personal Transformation and the Masses: Ōshio Heihachirō), Miyagi explores Ōshio’s Wang Yang-ming thought to rationalize how a magistrate official would lead a riot against those who had once entrusted him with governmental power and responsibility. Miyagi expanded on her studies into Ōshio’s thought through her 1977 study *Ōshio Heihachirō*. The following year, she presented annotated guides to Ōshio texts, including the *Senshindō sakki* and his summons, in *Ōshio Chūsai* from the Nihon no Meicho (Great Books of Japan) series. In 2005, Miyagi published a new edition of *Ōshio Heihachirō*, which complemented her 2004 *Bakumatsuki no shisō to shūzoku* (Thought and Customs of the Bakumatsu Period).

Whereas Miyagi focused on Ōshio’s thought and career as a Neo-Confucian scholar, Okamoto concentrated on Ōshio’s riot and its effect on Settsu. In his 1956 work *Ōshio Heihachirō*, Okamoto analyzes Ōshio’s career as a magistrate *yoriki* and explores the impact of the Tempō famine on the Osaka *ran*. A 1975 reprint of the book included Okamoto’s commentary on *Kōsai hiki*, an account of the riot written by Ōshio’s close friend Sakamoto Gennosuke. Okamoto offered new avenues of investigation with his 1980 *Ran/ikki/hinin* (Riots, Uprisings, and Hinin) by suggesting that Ōshio’s riot played a demonstrable role in *hinin* lives and peripheral peoples of late Tokugawa Japan.

Miyagi and Okamoto’s scholarship sparked interest in the samurai and his thought not only in Japan but also in North America. Two English language studies on Ōshio appeared in the early 1970s: Tetsuo Najita’s 1970 “Ōshio Heihachirō (1793-1837)” from *Personality in Japanese History*; and Ivan Morris’ 1975 “Ōshio Heihachirō: Save the People!” from *The*

Nobility of Failure. Najita and Morris' respective works reflect the same analytical bifurcation from the 1960s scholarship of Okamoto and Miyagi. Najita addresses Ōshio's thought and writes that the samurai represented the bond between *Yōmeigaku* and samurai discontent of the Tokugawa period, a relationship that connected differing schools of thought in the nineteenth century. Ōshio's actions and philosophy, according to Najita, deemed the man as a remarkable figure who "preached immortality in the sacrifice of self in moral public action."¹⁴⁶

Morris follows a humanistic approach, characterizing Ōshio as a paradigm for the Japanese hero. The suppression of the riot and Ōshio's suicide, according to Morris, "instantly elevated him to the status of hero—the perfect hero, in fact, whose personality is idealized and whose shortcomings, however blatant, are all forgotten."¹⁴⁷ Thus, Ōshio symbolized the proverbial stuck-out nail, a man whose "resistance to practical restrictions" infused him with an attribute most Japanese would be reluctant to display.¹⁴⁸ After Morris' monograph, Ōshio and his riot became compartmentalized in English language discourse on late Tokugawa remonstrance and thought.¹⁴⁹

Nevertheless, interest in the samurai did not wane in Japan. Following a 1975 conference on Ōshio and his uprising, the colloquium organizers began publishing the biannual periodical, *Ōshio kenkyū* (Ōshio Research). In the preface to the 1976 premiere issue, Sakai Hajime writes that the journal shall be a platform from which academics, students, or anyone interested in the subject may contribute scholarship concerning the

¹⁴⁶ Najita 178-9.

¹⁴⁷ Morris 183.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 215-6.

¹⁴⁹ Indeed, Ōshio warranted mention in Rubinger 1982, Bix 1986, Walthall 1986 but did not merit more than five of pages of analysis in each text.

samurai, his thought, and his riot.¹⁵⁰ Since its inception, the journal has imparted to historians a wealth of knowledge ranging from village reactions to Ōshio's teachings, to the role of gender in the riot, to personal reflections on studying Ōshio.

With the exception of Takahata Tsunenobu's 1981 biography *Ōshio Chūsai, Sakuma Shozan*, Ōshio's writings and primary documents related to the riot became centerpiece for publications on the samurai during the last three decades. Initially, publishers focused on reprints of Ōshio's central texts. Half of the forty-sixth volume of the *Nihon shisō taikei* (Compendium of Japanese Thought) contains both a classical Japanese transliteration and original Kambun reproduction of the *Senshindō sakki* along with an annotation and glossary. Publications thereafter tended to material documenting reaction to the riots, communiqués between Ōshio and his pupils, and letters surrounding the samurai and his riot.

On the sesquicentennial anniversary of the riot in 1987, the National Institute for Japanese Literature's Department of Historical Records published *Ōshio Heihachirō ikken kakitome* (A Registry of the Ōshio Heihachirō Case), a transcription of inspector reports and trial recordings for those implicated in the riot. Then, Nakada Masayuki's 1990 *Ōshio Heihachirō kengisho* (Ōshio Heihachirō Proposals) investigates letters Ōshio had written to governmental officials immediately before his riot. Nakada's book details the letters themselves and the confiscation of them after the uprising, thereby informing readers of the immediate reaction to the riot. Nakase Juichi and Murakami Yoshimitsu's co-edited 1990 *Minshū shiryō ga kataru Ōshio jiken* (The Ōshio Incident as Depicted in Historical Documents of the Masses) surveys the riot through accounts written by Osaka residents in its aftermath. Their second volume, 1992's *Shiryō ga kataru Ōshio jiken to tempō kaikaku* (The Ōshio Incident and the Tempō Reforms as Depicted in Historical Documents) bridges the

¹⁵⁰ Sakai 1.

1837 Osaka uprising with Mizuno Tadakuni's fiscal and sumptuary reforms in the early 1840s by selecting Bakufu and magistrate documents that contain references to Ōshio and his riot. Then, Aiso Kazuhiro's 2003 three-volume set *Ōshio Heihachirō shokan no ken'yū* (Studies of Ōshio Heihachirō's Correspondence) provides transcriptions, modern Japanese translations, and historical background for letters between Ōshio and his pupils, colleagues, and family.

Of final mention is the online *Ōshio no ran shiryōkan* (Ōshio Revolt [sic] Museum).¹⁵¹ The website, maintained by Sone Sakishin, contains a current bibliography on Ōshio and his riot, digitized documents from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, select articles from academic journals, and summaries of events during the Tempō period. Weekly updates to the site inform users of new research and materials on Ōshio, hence inducting the ideologue into the digital age.

The following sections of this chapter draw from the aforementioned primary and secondary sources to determine the warrior's impact on Settsu. It culls data and documents from some of the more contemporary compendiums in order to expand on Ōshio's relationship with Osaka's periphery. In doing so, I aim neither to pinpoint Ōshio's place in the heritage of Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism nor to elevate him to the status of hero. Rather, I intend to underscore Ōshio's role in the development of a public sphere that by 1837 encompassed Osaka samurai, commoners, and merchants as well as Settsu village agrarians and outcastes.

¹⁵¹ The site's URL is: <http://www.cwo.zaq.ne.jp/oshio-revolt-m/>

Early Life and Career

According to legend, a new Eastern Ward magistrate, Takai Yamashirō, took one look at a twenty-three year old *yoriki* and promoted him immediately to one of the head watchmen of the city. The young official, Ōshio Heihachirō, gained renown amongst his colleagues and subordinates to the extent that the magistrates chose him first to perform prestigious tasks in policing Osaka's wards.¹⁵²

A number of accounts of the rebellion report that Osaka residents were astonished to learn the leader of the 1837 uprising was Ōshio Heihachirō. For example, in *Ōsaka no sesō*, Okamoto Ryōichi and Watanabe Takeru write that to those who were acquainted with Ōshio during his career as a *yoriki*, it was inconceivable that such a man would incite a violent outbreak in the city.¹⁵³ In addition, Matsuura Sanae, a retired Hirado Daimyo, remarked in his journal the astonishment with which a man who claimed to be a descendent from the Imagawa¹⁵⁴ line would tarnish his family's name by rebelling against his colleagues and authorities.¹⁵⁵ Ōshio had nonetheless chosen a path that would lead to the destruction of nearly one-fifth of Osaka's neighborhoods along with his own demise.

Ōshio's transition from an astute government official to the leader of a mass uprising followed calculated moves and decisions that established a circle of support for his ideals. In fact, in the months preceding the riot, he choreographed a movement that appealed to starving peasants, poor commoners, and his fellow scholars at the Senshindō. His life as a steadfast magistrate *yoriki* and his decision to retire from his post to instruct *Yōmeigaku*

¹⁵² Miyagi 1977, 272.

¹⁵³ Okamoto and Watanabe 180.

¹⁵⁴ Samurai from the Imagawa family had served as bodyguards for Tokugawa Ieyasu.

¹⁵⁵ Matsuura 25.

defines Ōshio's complex character. On the one hand, he portrayed himself as a man of the commoners in his role as city inspector, intellectual, and ideologue. On the other hand, Ōshio exhibited a level of cunning that distinguished him from his newfound community of followers. Ōshio's formative years and his public life mirror this dichotomy of private identity and public persona.

Ōshio Heihachirō was born in 1793 to a low-ranking samurai family from the Tenman ward of Osaka.¹⁵⁶ His father, Ōshio Heihachirō Noritaka, worked as a *yoriki* for the magistrate's office in Osaka. As per samurai income and status in early modern Japan, Noritaka inherited the position from his own father, and would continue to work as an inspector until his death in 1799. Ōshio's mother, Onishi, died the following year and was buried in a separate temple from her husband.¹⁵⁷ Ōshio lived with his grandparents and two additional foster families from 1800 to 1818.

Ōshio began to express interest in his own lineage during the eighteen years he lived with his adoptive families. He established that he was the direct descendent of the Imagawa line, a renowned samurai family whose members had once served as personal vassals for Tokugawa Ieyasu. In contrast to Morris and Najita's description of Ōshio as a man who did not place himself above the commoners, Ōshio held his alleged namesake in high esteem. During his *seijinshiki* (coming-of-age ceremony), he frequently referred to his Imagawa ancestry, and he even hoisted banners marked with the Imagawa crest during his 1837 riot.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ According to Miyagi's *Ōshio Heihachirō*, there exists many questions regarding Ōshio's heritage; one was whether Ōshio was even born in Osaka.

¹⁵⁷ Japanese language biographies do not explain why Ōshio's parents were buried in separate temples—we may speculate that his parents had different religions or that their own ancestors were buried in different areas.

¹⁵⁸ Again, Miyagi 1978 points out that there is no proof that Ōshio was a direct descendent of the Imagawa samurai. Also, see *Ōsaka Fu-shi*, p. 55-56.

Concomitant with his investigation into his heritage, Ōshio continued his family's patrilineal tradition of serving the post as a police inspector in Osaka. At the age of thirteen, Ōshio moved to Osaka's Higashi ward office to become a *yoriki* apprentice with the magistrates.¹⁵⁹ Ōshio's training as an inspector facilitated his studies in the martial arts he mastered spear weaponry at the Shibata School and attended classes on gunnery at the Nakajima School in 1809.

When Ōshio completed his apprenticeship, he began his official duties as a watchman for the Sawada ward. For the next nine years, Ōshio traveled through Osaka's wards and adjacent districts to listen to commoners and peasants and relay their various complaints to the appropriate government officials. Additional responsibilities included arresting thieves and *ranbōsha* (disturbers of the peace) in Osaka and rural Settsu.¹⁶⁰ Soon after his grandfather Masanojo Narisue died in 1818, Ōshio wed Hashimoto Hiro, the daughter of a wealthy Osaka samurai. The marriage secured an extra level of prestige as it cemented him as head of the Ōshio family and furthered his career on the grounds that his heir and would succeed him in his official capacity as magistrate inspector.¹⁶¹

After his marriage Ōshio also began working for the *shōmonyaku* (standards office), a position that entailed scrutinizing legal contracts and deeds. Two years later in 1820, Edo authorities installed Takai Yamashirō as the magistrate of Osaka's Higashi ward, an event that, as mentioned above, led to Ōshio's promotion through the *meyasu* (head watchman) and *ginmi* (inspector) ranks.

¹⁵⁹ Okamoto 1975 40.

¹⁶⁰ *Ōsaka Fu-shi*, p. 33-34.

¹⁶¹ Morris wrote that Ōshio's wife was the daughter of a rich farmer, and not a samurai. This, according to the author, was indicative of Ōshio's "headstrong, iconoclastic nature" (188).

In 1821, Ōshio additionally served the *gokuinyaku* (official stamps) office, where he notarized government documents and bonds, and three years later, he led the *dōzokuyaku*, select government officials responsible for arresting robbers and investigating the influx of black market goods from other *han* into Osaka. The magistrates subsequently asked him in 1826 to take charge in procuring ledgers, weaponry, and administrative items for the office. Later that year, however, he submitted a formal request to be permitted to leave his post with the Osaka *yoriki*. His superiors rejected the application, and instead assigned him with a set of prestigious and arduous tasks between 1827 and 1830.¹⁶²

During the initial two years, Ōshio led fellow *yoriki* in the search and incarceration of clandestine Christians in Settsu.¹⁶³ Then in 1829, his duty revolved around investigating and trying Yugei Shinzaemon, an Osaka outlaw from whom he took three-thousand *ryo* and subsequently distributed to among the city's destitute. Finally, in 1830, Ōshio penalized priests who had been accused of breaking Buddhist doctrines. Ōshio completed his final obligation as an Osaka official at the end of the year, which coincided with Takai Yamashirō's resignation from the magistrate's office.

Ōshio Heihachirō's career as an Osaka official was indeed an exemplary one. Belying his devotion to maintaining jurisprudence in Osaka, however, was an overt intent of creating a name for himself. Following Takai's departure, Ōshio retired from his post in the magistrate's office to dedicate himself full-time to *Yōmeigaku* studies at his private academy, where he broadened his base of students.¹⁶⁴ Scholars including Ivan Morris argue that Ōshio

¹⁶² Okamoto 1975 41-3.

¹⁶³ Yamane Chiyomi's 1985 "*Kirishitan kinseishi ni okeru kyōsaka kirishitan ikken no igi*" (The Meaning of the Kyōsaka Kirishitan Incident in the History of Outlawed Christians) and Nakagawa Sugane's 1999 "Inari Worship in Early Modern Osaka" both cover Ōshio's involvement with the locating and detaining of practitioners of Christianity in the late 1820s.

¹⁶⁴ *Ōsaka Fu-shi* 33-4.

felt compelled to retire because of the social ills and general corruption among the Osaka bureaucrats.¹⁶⁵ Yet an equally plausible explanation was that after having accomplished the three tasks at the final stages of his career in the magistrate's office, Ōshio sensed that he had reached the limit in his professional advancement as a *yoriki*. The Senshindō served as a conduit for Ōshio to appeal to Osaka and Settsu residents through Wang Yang-ming Neo-Confucianism and for him later to act as a provocateur for the oppressed.

Ōshio and the Senshindō

Colleagues of Ōshio expressed little surprise that the esteemed inspector resigned from his post to commit himself to training others in *Yōmeigaku*. In fact, during the final years in his capacity as a city inspector, Ōshio balanced his public and private lives by indoctrinating himself and later those around him into Wang Yang-ming studies. It was only during his *yoriki* apprenticeship that he read Confucius' *Analects* and Mencius, for Ōshio's formal education had been restricted to samurai *hankō*, where he trained in military arts, weaponry, and other warrior subjects. Yet, after he read the two Confucian texts, he believed that only by devoting himself to studies in *Yōmeigaku*, could he truly enrich himself and achieve the prominence that his ancestors in the Imagawa line had attained. By the time he abandoned his academy to lead the riot, Ōshio had found pupils from within and without Osaka's city gates to instruct them in the literary Confucian world.¹⁶⁶

To Ōshio, the Wang Yang-ming tenet that one must endure harshness rectified the physical and mental conflict he faced while performing his duties. Physically, Ōshio suffered from a recurrent lung ailment in his twenties; nevertheless, he felt compelled to

¹⁶⁵ Morris writes that the retirement is comparable to Saigo Takamori's 40 years later, as this was an opportunity for Ōshio to dedicate himself to *Yōmeigaku* and to "rectify the unjust system" (190).

¹⁶⁶ *Ōsaka Fu-shi* 35-6.

carry out his official duties at the expense of his own health. Ōshio believed that *Yōmeigaku* delegated to him the responsibility to pinpoint social corruption and venality, and he proceeded to abide by his beliefs in remedying Osaka's ills in his capacities as official and instructor as well as violent dissenter.¹⁶⁷

Even as early as 1825, when Ōshio operated the Senshindō from his home in the Tenman ward while serving Osaka as a *yoriki*, he attracted other noted Confucian scholars of late Tokugawa Japan. Shinozaki Shochiku (1781-1851), a famed Osaka Zhu Xi Confucian, and Rai Sanyo, a poet and historian of the late Tokugawa era, took notice of the young samurai. Both men met with the *yoriki*, visited his home, and exchanged poetry and artwork.¹⁶⁸

Moreover, Ōshio's colleagues from the Higashi Ward magistrate's office charged Ōshio with their children's moral and educational upbringing at the Senshindō. At any one time in the late 1820s, at least twenty-five of the administrators' children attended his lectures. Ōshio's fellow inspectors hence deemed Ōshio not as a subversive threat; in fact, they delegated Ōshio with their sons' schooling in lieu of Osaka's formal institutions.¹⁶⁹

Nonetheless, these early students of the Senshindō belonged to the same social status as Ōshio—samurai who were on the fringe of the wealthier and nobler warrior class and who could rise only as far as a magistrate's assistant or ward inspector. It was only after he retired from the official realm that Ōshio began to open the doors of the Senshindō to additional social strata.

Ōshio maintained that his students follow two central tenets at the Senshindō. The first was, "*jin wo motome*"—one must constantly strive to be benevolent, as Confucius and

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 37

¹⁶⁸ Miyagi 1977 271.

¹⁶⁹ *Ōsaka Fu-shi*, p. 38.

Mencius had once done. The second was “*chikō gōitsu*,” a phrase meaning that action and thought must be reconciled. Ōshio contended that nineteenth century Japanese intellectuals had become adept in devising ideas and goals, but that they always failed to make them materialize. Then, those who held a position that allowed them to promulgate reforms were not “thinkers.” Ōshio thus accepted and promoted the goal that a true benevolent scholar must be ready to defend their “talk” with concrete “action.”¹⁷⁰

Ōshio expanded on these principles after his retirement from the magistrate office. In addition to signing an agreement to follow the aforementioned tenets of the Senshindō, students were required to follow traditional Confucian ideals like filial piety, benevolence, and righteousness. Furthermore, Ōshio forbade his students from visiting brothels, imbibing in sake, or associating with anyone in Osaka he considered immoral or depraved.

He also reinforced a master-pupil relationship, which established him as a central part of his students’ lives. Ōshio insisted that his students consult him before moving from their residences in Osaka. He wanted his disciples to inform him first and foremost when they were to wed or if they were to suffer a loss in their family, for it was of crucial importance to the master to celebrate or commiserate with his students. The bond formed between Ōshio and his students had become so taut that they were inseparable from their master at the height of the 1837 riot. After all, they not only felt an ideological connection to their master, but they also had a familial and formal relationship with him as well.¹⁷¹

In the early 1830s, Ōshio conveyed to his pupils that his teachings had diverged from strict Wang Yang-ming Neo-Confucianism. In response to new students’ inquiries regarding the brand of Confucianism they were studying, Ōshio often denied that he adhered to any one

¹⁷⁰ “Senshindō sakki” in *Iwanami Nihon shi jiten*. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1999

¹⁷¹ Takahata 21-3.

strand and asserted that his teaching style deviated from that of Wang Yang-ming himself. Still, the crux of Ōshio's lessons demonstrated consistency with the *Yōmeigaku* style to the extent that several of the Senshindō students referred to their master as Ōyōmei.

Needless to say, Ōshio did present an eclectic Confucian curriculum in his academy. Synthesizing themes from the Confucian classics, he asked that his pupils adhere to *risshi* (holding steadfast to your goals), *kangaku* (devotion to learning), *kaika* (apologizing), and *sekizen* (committing good deeds). For *risshi*, Ōshio cautioned his pupils that if they were unable to establish personal goals, they would face several hurdles in the process of becoming enlightened and succeeding in their studies. He also pointed out that those at the Senshindō must be aware of the interplay of their surroundings with their goals and that they must take heed of the potential consequences of achieving their aims. After his students had set their goals and grasped the possible outcomes, they could attain *kangaku*.¹⁷²

Ōshio's end-goal for his pupils was for them to attain a level of understanding that approached the mindsets Confucius and Mencius. Interconnectivity played the most vital role in achieving this goal, for Ōshio imparted to his students the notion that everything in the universe was interdependent. He also wrote that the students must be both proactive and attentive in their studies, as Confucius' students had been.¹⁷³ Confucius and Mencius' texts thus constituted the core reading curriculum at the academy.

Should one of his students lag behind others or become insolent, Ōshio admonished him, asserting that the pupil could not possibly immerse himself in a dialogue with his peers and that it would be impossible for the delinquent student to master the Classics. He further warned his pupils that if they did not reach a qualified mastery of their studies, they could not

¹⁷² Ibid, p. 25.

¹⁷³ Ibid, p. 23-4.

communicate with any true Confucian scholar. To Ōshio, an enlightened philosopher would be able to deem their true worth.¹⁷⁴

Ōshio believed that the more the students studied the fewer errors they would commit in logic and reason. Nevertheless, *kaika*, was an indispensable lesson at the Senshindō. Ōshio taught his pupils that even the sages were not without fault: it was not the person who avoids error that becomes sage-like; rather, it was the scholar who understood his mistakes and who had the ability and maturity to atone for them that becomes admirable. Once the students had eliminated within themselves the fear of failure, they would be ready to interact with others and prosper outside the gates of Ōshio's academy.¹⁷⁵

Ōshio's original contribution to scholarship at the Senshindō belonged to his understanding of the unity among all things on earth. Ōshio reasoned that with everything in the land, there is one sound, one true color, one flavor, and one method of change. To identify these matters, it is necessary to listen, look, taste, and understand from within one's heart. He continued that if people do not attain the right set of mind and are not willing to devote themselves to locating these true aspects of the universe, then to them, there is nothing on earth. He wrote that in the past, the sages were able to understand and sense these features of the universe, but currently, nobody studies to achieve the same sense of unity. Therefore, to Ōshio, it became a matter of aligning one's spirit with heaven in order to recognize the true meaning and value of things on earth. It was this lesson that Ōshio insisted his pupils convey to others once they complete their training at the Senshindō.¹⁷⁶

In 1833, Ōshio and his students compiled his teachings into the *Senshindō sakki*, the academy's textbook, and presented it in the Kambun style. The work contained two volumes

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 27.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 28.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 30.

containing a total of 310 chapters. The writing consisted of his thoughts, lessons, and studies in *Yōmeigaku*. In 1835, Ōshio allowed his pupils to publish his text for perusal outside of the academy. After the riot, rumors spread among Osaka residents that Ōshio had climbed Mount Fuji and left a copy of the book at the peak for others to read. His contemporaries also fanned rumors that his text had been cherished and left for public reading by shrine officials at Ise.¹⁷⁷

Ōshio Heihachirō thus demonstrated an unfaltering devotion to his studies and instruction in *Yōmeigaku*. His philosophy may have represented an amalgamation of early Confucianism and Wang Yang-ming neo-Confucianism, yet the fervor with which he insisted that his students adhere to his instruction and guidelines separated the warrior from other Osaka intellectuals. Ōshio's efforts in the mid-1830s to circulate his texts— and by extension his philosophy—amongst villages and towns outside of Osaka shed light on the duality underlying his academic persona: a committed scholar who also strove to galvanize the masses. As conditions in Osaka continued to deteriorate during the Tempō famine, Ōshio disseminated his *gekibun*, a call for all afflicted samurai, commoners, and peasants to rally against their oppressors in an ultimate display of the unity of thought and action.

The *Gekibun*

Ōshio Heihachirō directs his *gekibun* to the *shōya*, elders, peasants, and enfeoffed farmers in the villages of Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima. A close analysis of the text, however, illuminates a multi-layered approach the samurai follows in appealing to diverse

¹⁷⁷ Miyagi 1978 272.

readership in early modern Settsu.¹⁷⁸ To literate commoners and peasants, he alludes to recent calamities and alleged governmental corruption. To intellectuals, he elicits Confucius, Mencius, and Chinese Sage Kings. Finally, to concerned officials, he cites cases of both virtuous and corrupt historical rulers. Ōshio does not divide his piece into sections that are directed to one audience or another. Instead, the text interlaces historical referents with accounts of the recent disasters to appeal to his readers.¹⁷⁹

The Tempō famine of the 1830s served as the primary impetus for Ōshio's decision to leave the confines of his academy and lead his riot. In the year before his attack, over one hundred thousand perished of starvation after a series of floods and typhoons had destroyed crops throughout Japan's provinces.¹⁸⁰ The first few lines of the *gekibun* address the disasters that have befallen Japan and explain the cause of the calamities:

When there is trouble in the four seas, heaven's contentment disappears, and when the land is ruled over by those of little competence, disasters occur. The sages of the past have imparted this to their sovereigns and to those who would rule over future generations ... Nevertheless, during the two hundred and forty to two hundred and fifty years of tranquility, those of the higher classes have come to revel in luxury.

The summons asserts that inept and corrupt rule incurred the wrath of heaven. It furthermore accuses a growing life of ease among those in governmental power. Later in the *gekibun*, though, Ōshio shifts his target from government officials to wealthy merchants as the cause of poverty and distress for its subjects. He argues that in the midst of suffering and death, merchants lead an inexplicable life of luxury akin to high-ranking samurai retainers:

They live in unprecedented wealth, and even though they are merchants, in many cases they are treated by the Daimyo as if they were the lords' chief retainers. Also,

¹⁷⁸ Peter Kornicki, in fact, argues that it is indeed the diverse nature of the summons' audience that indicates widespread literacy in Osaka and its surrounding communities (275).

¹⁷⁹ The appendix of this chapter contains the full translation of the *gekibun* from source material in the *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 14, p. 181-2.

¹⁸⁰ Bolitho 117-9.

they have innumerable possessions of their own, including new rice fields. Somehow they are never satisfied. Even in the midst of the natural disasters and divine punishments of this age, they have no fear... They are enticed into visiting concubine homes, brothels, and tea houses, where proprietors treat them as if they were Daimyo retainers. They pour and drink high-priced sake like water. At a time of hardship, they dress in silk clothing and greet courtesans who are wrapped in erotic garb.

Toward the *gekibun*'s conclusion, Ōshio proposes a solution to the calamities of the peasants in the Kinai plain. He writes that Osaka merchants have overstayed their welcome in the city, and therefore he exacts a sentence of death upon them. The piece then summons villagers from Settsu and its neighboring provinces to Osaka once they finish reading the text. Ōshio ensures them that they shall be rewarded with cash and rice from the storehouses of the wealthy and non-benevolent administrators. At the end of the movement, the samurai guarantees to the peasants that tranquility shall be restored to their lives. His final words caution the farmers that should they impede others from seeing the *gekibun*, they will be sought after and castigated.

The philosophical and historical referents intertwined within the text speak to a separate audience comprised of Ōshio's fellow learned samurai. Mention of the Confucian Sage Kings Tang (r. 1751-1739 BC) and Wu (r. 1121-1116 BC) challenges the leadership and benevolence of the Bakufu, whereas allusions to the corrupt King Zhou aggrandize the extravagance and greed of Osaka merchants. Ōshio moreover rationalizes his decision to remove grain from merchant storehouses to give to the impoverished by claiming that the act was analogous to the seizure and "the distribution of gold and millet from King Zhou's Kakudai storehouse to the commoners...to relieve the suffering of the famine at the time."

The final section of the *gekibun* cites a rash of rebellions during the rules of Taira no Masakado (d. 940) and Akechi Mitsuhide (1528-1582) as well as the reigns of the Chinese Emperors Wudi (356-422) and Zhu Quanzhong (852-912). Ōshio writes that his motives

have historical precedent in rebellions against corruption, yet he also insists that his plan is not “the case where our entire sympathies lie in the wish to overthrow the realm’s rulers.”

He finally elicits the Mandate of Heaven in concluding that the riot conveys the sentiment of heaven’s *Kami*, for “after all, the predecessors of Tang, Wu, Han, and Ming along with their vassals met with death.”

Lastly, a faint trace of pro-imperial sentiment surfaces in the summons. Ōshio notes that the Emperor’s command had been ignored, thus engendering disorder in the land. When peasants and commoners lack a figurehead to which they may relay their distress, he writes, disasters like earthquakes and fires ensue. He further insinuates that Osaka authorities along with the merchants devised a scheme to weaken the Emperor by sending surpluses of rice to the Shogun in Edo rather than to the imperial house in Kyoto. It is this misdeed that Ōshio equates to a Daimyo named Katsuhaku who killed a boy for carrying food out of the domain.

Despite the frequent mention of the Emperor, *sonnō* (pro-Imperial) thought played an ambiguous role in the *gekibun*, for as we saw above, Ōshio himself rejected any revolutionary undertones in his pending attack. Moreover Najita diminishes the importance of the Emperor in the summons, as he writes that Ōshio employed a “Japanese flavor” of restoring the Imperial line as a means of captivating his audience, not as an agent to completely dismantle the Bakuhan system.¹⁸¹ Mukae Tsutomu offers a different interpretation in his 1991 article “*Gekibun no shisō wo saguru*” (Scoping the Thought of the *Gekibun*) by proposing that, when read alongside Ōshio’s letters to the Bakufu *rōjū*, the summons amplifies Ōshio’s call to reforms in government starting with the institution of an Imperial rule.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Najita 171.

¹⁸² Mukae 48.

Ōshio's *gekibun* hence elicits a combination of Classical and Neo-Confucian thought, intermixed with an appeal to peasant political consciousness and pro-imperial sentiment. In doing so, Ōshio communicates his plans to plunder the homes of Osaka's leaders and the warehouses of the city's merchants for a vast audience comprised not only of peasants but also of Kinai intellectuals and lower governmental officials. Though he addressed his text to rural farmers, he grasped the limitations of the peasants' knowledge even writing at the end of the summons that temple priests or physicians must read its contents to the illiterate. Referents to Chinese and Japanese historical figures in all likelihood did little to stir the peasants' emotions, but they did garner support from Ōshio's fellow intellectuals. Finally, calls for reforms, however subtle or indirect, spoke to those in the governmental realm.

The Riot and Its Underlying Motives

In the month separating the *gekibun*'s circulation and the riot's onset, Ōshio avoided contact with *bannin* watchmen. He gathered his students from the Senshindō and closed his academy in preparations for the attack. Even though Ōshio rejected the notion that his movement had precedent in Tokugawa era contention, he elected to carry weaponry common to mass movements, including wooden pistols, iron cannons, and torches.¹⁸³

Like other early modern uprisings, the group drew banners with political and religious slogans, albeit phrases deriving from the *gekibun*. The largest one, "*kyūmin*" (救民 or rescue the people), announced Ōshio's intent, and the second one, "*tōburyōseiō*, *Amaterasu kōdai jingū, tōshōdaikongen*" (湯武両聖王、天照皇太神宮、東照大権現 or Both Sage Kings Tang and Wu, The Grand Shrine of the Empress Amaterasu, The Great

¹⁸³ Okamoto 1975, 152-4.

Buddha Avatar Illuminating the East¹⁸⁴), signified that his riot aimed to restore the benevolence and order of an idyllic past. A third flag bore Ōshio's crest, personalizing a riot that at first numbered fewer than ten and that would accrue hundreds more.¹⁸⁵

In the early of morning on the twenty-ninth day of the second month of 1837, Ōshio, his sons, and his pupils left his home in the Tenman ward, hoisted the banners, and proceeded to burn Ōshio's family home.¹⁸⁶ Through the ward, the group fired cannons and lit several smaller stores on fire. A western wind fanned the flames from Tenman across the Ogawa River and into Osaka's harbor. Meanwhile, the rioters broke into estates of the wealthy in Tenman and looted them before the structures collapsed.¹⁸⁷

The men crossed the Naniwa Bridge into Osaka's northern harbor, at which point approximately three hundred commoners and peasants from Settsu's villages had joined the *ran*.¹⁸⁸ Ōshio stood at the forefront of the crowd and carried the *kyūmin* flag, while samurai held his coat of arms, hoisted separate banners, wore helmets, and wielded iron weapons. The peasants, though, held makeshift weapons and were clad mostly in cloth. As Ōshio's march proceeded into Osaka's Uemachi ward, several city commoners who had not even seen the *gekibun* soon partook in the antiauthoritarian activities. Often, the rioters beckoned mere bystanders to join them as the movement progressed into the merchant wards.¹⁸⁹

As the crowd traversed the Higashiyokubori River, word of the riot reached the Osaka magistrates. The magistrates deployed guards on horseback in order to quell the rioters;

¹⁸⁴ *Tōshōdaikongen* may also refer to Tokugawa Ieyasu, who was enshrined in Nikko as the Eastern Avatar.

¹⁸⁵ Diagrams, measurements, and reproductions of these banners may be found in *Hennenn hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 14, 221. The introduction and second chapter detail the importance of peasant uprising *sahō* (or conventions), which according to Hosaka Satoru's scholarship (2000 and 2002), include weapons, banners, and slogans.

¹⁸⁶ *Ōsaka Fu-shi* 54.

¹⁸⁷ Okamoto and Watanabe 177-9.

¹⁸⁸ Only twenty of Ōshio's men came from social strata higher than the peasant class (*Ōshio Heihachirō ikken kakitome* 1-2).

¹⁸⁹ Okamoto and Watanabe 179-81.

however, the horses were startled at the noise of the gunfire and shouts from the crowd. The animals reared and threw the magistrates' officers from their backs. According to police accounts, peasants could be heard throughout Osaka's streets laughing and chanting about the magistrates' folly.¹⁹⁰

On the second day of the uprising, Ōshio's men entered the Awaji and later the Uchihirano wards, where the magistrates and their guards finally confronted the rioters. A brief exchange of gunfire ensued, but soon the magistrates overpowered the rioters and wrested control of the gunnery and cannons from Ōshio's men. The conflict witnessed the death of five of Ōshio's followers, yet not one of the magistrates' forces had been harmed in the melee.¹⁹¹

Fires continued to burn throughout Osaka's wards, even though most of Ōshio's gang had disbanded and fled from the city. When the magistrates had ascertained that the attack had reached its conclusion, they impaled the heads of the slain rioters on their spears and marched through the streets in efforts to compel residents of the wards into dousing the flames.¹⁹² Ōshio and his son-in-law, meanwhile, eluded the magistrates' forces and went into hiding. When they received word that a few of the rioters had been executed, both men committed ritual suicide.¹⁹³

A description of the destruction in *Ōsaka fu-shi* (A Compendium History of Osaka) reveals that Ōshio Heihachirō initially did target the wealthy merchants in his uprising. They razed three stores owned by the Konoike conglomerate and looted forty-thousand *ryō* from the owner's estate. The men also lay waste to smaller stores owned by the Mitsui, Iwaki, and

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 181-2.

¹⁹¹ Matsuura Sanae. 1975. "Nighttime Conversations" in *Ōsaka hennen shi*. Vol. 19. Osaka: Osaka Shiritsu Chuo Toshokan, 25.

¹⁹² Ibid. 25-6.

¹⁹³ Okamoto and Watanabe 183.

Matsuya merchant families. Furthermore, they attacked over a hundred homes of guards, *yoriki*, assistants, and other officials from the magistrates' offices. Guards surrounding the homes of the magistrates themselves had deterred the rioters from breaching the estates' gates.

In the end, Ōshio was not as discriminating as he claimed to be in his *gekibun*. Ōshio and his men destroyed 620 wards—approximately one-fifth of Osaka's total neighborhoods. They obliterated 3,389 homes, 1,306 apartments, 230 barns, and 103 cellars. The rioters also leveled five bridges and razed fourteen temples, three shrines, and twenty-two *dōjō*.¹⁹⁴ While it is possible that Ōshio lost control of the peripheral supporters in his riot, maps of his route reveal that he did traverse those areas where the temples and shrines once stood.¹⁹⁵ Of more significance is the fact that not one of the secondary sources or primary records of the incident reports that Ōshio ever gave money or grain to the poor during the course of the riot.

The events of the riot itself call into question whether Ōshio's *ran* indeed served to “save the people” or if it represented a vainglorious act of self-destruction. His scholarship in *Yōmeigaku* and the wording of the summons lend credence to a philosophical rationale behind the decision to lead the strike. Yet the *gekibun* as well as the riot also reflect a deliberate effort to attract participants untrained in Neo-Confucianism.

An examination of the relationship between Ōshio's riot and Osaka's outcaste minorities highlights Ōshio's motives in the final months of his life. During the preparations for the riot, Ōshio wrote to his pupils that it was conceivable that they might garner support from the outcastes around Settsu, for he claimed they “have suffered from discrimination, so if we promise them that we can emancipate them from their imposed social conditions, no

¹⁹⁴ *Ōsaka Fu-shi* 70-2.

¹⁹⁵ See maps from Okamoto and Watanabe (Insert), and Miyagi (also insert).

matter the trouble or danger posed, we can gather many of them.”¹⁹⁶ When Ōshio led his men across the Naniwa Bridge into the Osaka Bay, both the magistrates and the attackers vied for support from the Buraku. A few did join the rioters on the second day of the attack, but at the same juncture several more from Osaka’s outlying villages sided with the officials. As Kuboi Norio writes in *Edo jidai no hisabetsu minshū* (The Discriminated Peoples of the Edo Period), the riot pitted the Buraku against each other in a battle that fostered discriminatory attitudes toward the Buraku following the *ran*.¹⁹⁷

Then, the outcastes who opted to avoid the scene altogether upon witnessing smoke rising from within Osaka’s walls also bear special examination. These men included *eta* and *hinin* to whom Ōshio and his relatives directly appealed. Outcastes residing in Osaka’s Suita and Hannya villages, for instance, made a conscious decision to retreat from the scene upon realization that it would be a futile effort to procure enough assistance to repair whatever damage may spread to their homes. Moreover, *yoriki* stationed outside of other outcaste communities refrained from soliciting help from *eta* and *hinin*, believing that anything less than full consent among the outcastes would be futile in pursuing Ōshio’s men.¹⁹⁸

Perhaps Ōshio’s reaction to a tardy group of *hinin* from Watanabe Village sheds the strongest light on his motives behind the riot. In the first month of 1837, Ōshio relayed to the *kogashira* (小頭 or leader) of the Watanabe-mura *eta* that he would allocate fifty *ryō* of gold to the village and provide the *kogashira* with a sword in order to gain support from the outcastes there. On the morning of the first day of the riot, the *kogashira* was so inebriated that he had forgotten his pledge to lead others to Osaka. Thirty other outcastes from the village dashed to the scene only to retreat to Watanabe-mura when they caught sight of Ōshio

¹⁹⁶ Okamoto 1983, 188-9.

¹⁹⁷ Kuboi 133.

¹⁹⁸ Uchida 5-6.

and his followers' anger. Soon thereafter, Ōshio had pledged to kill any outcastes who had been aware of the riot but failed to throw their support for the movement.¹⁹⁹ Thus, the same people Ōshio proposed to liberate from the fringes of Tokugawa society became adversaries the warrior and his band came to detest. Those who did partake in the *ran* were of instrumental means for Ōshio: they inflated the size of his supporters and at the same time presented obstacles for the magistrates to cross in subduing the riot.

The mobilization and manipulation of the outcastes advance an argument that Ōshio's riot was not grounded entirely in Wang Yang-ming thought. Like his promises of enhancing the outcaste society, Ōshio proposed in his *gekibun* that a heaven of sorts may await the people once the riot ends. Furthermore, as Ōshio antagonized those he pledged to support, his actions in the riot veered away from the stated vows in the summons. His words when contextualized in his riot depict the samurai not as a devoted ideologue but rather as a man who employed all resources at hand to inflate his sphere of supporters and followers on a march to his own death.

Reaction to the Riot

The Bakufu and Magistrates

A trial was to proceed immediately after the riot had been quashed; however, the Bakufu postponed the trial for a number of reasons. First, it wished to commend the Osaka magistrates and their subordinates who worked to suppress the rebellion. To honor the men who confronted and repelled the rioters, the Bakufu held an official ceremony on the first day

¹⁹⁹ Kuboi 134.

of the fourth month of 1837, during which time most received promotions and monetary bonuses as rewards for their actions.²⁰⁰

Secondly, officials originally implicated nearly one thousand men, women, and children in the uprising. Most of the accused did not partake in the violence or arson; they had merely witnessed the riot without aiding the magistrates' forces. Even officials like Mizuno Tadakuni, who had been slow in the response to Ōshio's uprising, received minor reprimands.²⁰¹ Investigators brought former students of Ōshio's into questioning. For example, the Dutch scholar Takashima Shuhan had once studied at Ōshio's Senshindō, and authorities thusly placed him under house arrest because of this previous association. Takashima's exoneration came within a few days of his incarceration, and he left Osaka to travel to Nagasaki in order to continue Western learning.²⁰²

Finally, the Bakufu may have been concerned with the popular reaction to Ōshio's uprising. Three months after the Osaka riot, Ikuta Yorozu led a six-person attack on a guard post in Kashiwazaki, a town in the Echigo domain. In addition, Yamadaya Daisuke led a rebellion in Settsu later that summer. Thus, the Bakufu temporarily detached itself from addressing those involved in Ōshio's riot in order to avoid incubating even more public backlash.

For nearly twenty months, Bakufu authorities conducted a prolonged investigation and trial into the Osaka uprising. Inspectors demonstrated such meticulousness in their interviews and caution in their investigations that the government did not issue any official response until three months after the riot. Following the trials of Ōshio's family and colleagues as well as the riot's participants, the Bakufu exacted punishment on thirty-two

²⁰⁰ Kitajima 206.

²⁰¹ Ibid. 205.

²⁰² Arima 101.

individuals. Osaka magistrates executed nineteen men who had been labeled as Ōshio's central coconspirators and then paraded the heads of these men, as they had done with Ōshio and his son's, through the city's streets. Twenty-two more faced exile and banishment from Settsu. Those who avoided court arraignment faced relatively minor penalties including fines and house arrest.²⁰³

Subsequent Movements outside of Settsu

In the immediate aftermath of Ōshio's riot, a wave of fear spread throughout early modern Japan's provinces, leading to the destruction and confiscation of any material connecting others to the samurai. Residents as far away as Mito, for instance, expressed wariness with parcels and letters from Ōshio and his students. In an exchange between two Mito samurai scholars, Fujita Tōko and Egawa Taban, Fujita told of a mysterious parcel sent to Mito from Ōshio. He wrote that since their daimyo, Tokugawa Nariaki, had been unsettled by Ōshio's riot, Nariaki had ordered the couriers to deliver to him any correspondence from Osaka. Fujita continued that when Nariaki discovered to whom Ōshio had written, he would attain a peace of mind, and normalcy would return to their domain since suspicion would be lifted from those suspected of collaboration with the Osaka samurai.²⁰⁴

As Bakufu and magistrate officials conducted their investigations in Osaka, however, a rash of copycat riots broke out in other provinces. On the twelfth day of the third month of 1837, fifteen men in Kawachi Province's Daigatsuka Village lit fires in the village in response to famine. Two days later, in the Suo province, destruction and arson befell

²⁰³ Miyagi 1978 517.

²⁰⁴ Nakada 217-18.

Iawakuni-machi. Even Edo could not withstand the wave of influence from the Osaka uprising.

On the sixth day of the fourth month, a poster appeared in the streets of the capital signed by a person self-labeled as “The Osaka Ronin:”

A gang led a disturbance in the wards of Osaka. At the time, there was a farewell note stating that the riot was an earnest intention to save all the people, something not to be criticized. Thusly, with awe and respect, and as long as I shall live, I will never take mandate of heaven lightly. Those of small stature amass like clouds. Heaven’s light never shines upon us, and the masses are not set upright. With all honesty, I believe that because there are those without the wisdom and the way of the Sage Kings, there is much to regret... From the provinces of Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi, I have gathered seven hundred from the warriors to the mountain peasants to lead disturbances in Edo and Osaka. On either front, there are at least three hundred. With the great distance and waters separating us, it will be impossible to coordinate the attacks. In Edo, the ward fire brigades will strike back at any signs of disorder. That is why I sincerely plead for your assistance.

If there are any who believe in this cause, we shall send a signal on the eighth hour of the eighth day of this month... From then, we will divide our labor and concentrate on attacking the homes, storehouses, and property of the wealthy all at once. If something unexpected prevents us from doing so, we shall light signal fires along the river shores.

If we can gather as a unified group, then we shall not say anything in the wards, and simply go to the targets and begin the attack.²⁰⁵

The poster implies that Ōshio himself, an Osaka Ronin, has come to Edo to lead another attack with forces gathered from the Kinai provinces. Yet, with no documented evidence of an attack on Edo in 1837, we can surmise that the text’s author had heard of the attack in Osaka and attempted to stir up antiauthoritarian activity in the capital.

Perhaps the clearest outgrowth from Ōshio’s riot was Ikuta Yoroze’s attack in the Echigo domain four months after the Osaka uprising.²⁰⁶ Ikuta (1801-1837), like Ōshio, belonged to the samurai class and became a scholar in his early adulthood. Ikuta, though, studied *kokugaku* (national learning) under Hirata Atsutane and became so disillusioned with

²⁰⁵ *Hennen Hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 14, 430-1.

²⁰⁶ We shall examine Ikuta’s riot and its meaning in more detail in the dissertation’s conclusion.

his governors that in 1828, he wrote and submitted a memorial to domainal authorities. The piece presented a list of conditions that afflicted those around him and proposed a set of reforms that Ikuta felt must be followed in order to improve the lives of both samurai and commoners. After eight years of self-imposed exile from his home domain, Ikuta returned to Echigo to lead six others on an attack against a Bakufu outpost, a disturbance that culminated with Ikuta's suicide and the execution of his accomplices and family.²⁰⁷

Reaction within Settsu

Only one episode of violent remonstrance in Settsu followed Ōshio's. This disturbance transpired in the seventh month of 1837 in Nose, a distant corner of the province. There, a former Osaka herbalist²⁰⁸ by the name of Yamadaya Daisuke incited over two thousand farmers into joining him on a march toward Kyoto but quickly lost control of the group once he beheaded a *hinin* who refused to aid his men.²⁰⁹ Notwithstanding the Nose incident, the rest of Settsu fell into a guarded calm during the magistrates' investigations.

Beneath the layer of serenity, however, was a respect for Ōshio among Settsu peasants. The villagers did not call on Ōshio the ideologue as a source of their respect; rather, they elicited Ōshio the *yoriki* as a rallying point. A lengthy appeal lasting from 1835 to 1837 from multiple villages in Settsu and Kawachi presents a rationale for the adulation. The piece pinpoints alleged corruption among Osaka *yoriki* and *dōshin* as well as rural administrators and leaders. In particular, villagers criticize an official named Uchiyama

²⁰⁷ See Harootunian 276-92 and McNally 222-7 for summaries of Ikuta's philosophy and riot.

²⁰⁸ Untrained as a physician, Yamadaya simply worked at a pharmacy (薬屋), tending to customers who frequented the store for herbal medicine.

²⁰⁹ See the next chapter for a detailed analysis of Yamadaya Daisuke and his disturbance.

Sanjirō (1797-1864), Ōshio's successor as Eastern Ward Magistrate *yoriki*, and they target him as the principal instigator of malevolent behavior:

He deals with abject thievery with compassion...for that reason, actually there has been an increase in the number of those who turn to evil deeds. There are no bounds to his amusement. As such, we have seen an increase in evil people. It seems that he and his subordinates have not evaluated our conditions properly, and they have not acted with any benevolence for those who earn an honest living along the sincere path to truth. They have exhausted our rare valuables, which they had stolen. They are even criticized by several *eta*. And so, there are those reluctant to make any mention of their deeds, and there is an abundance of praise for this shamelessness... In cities, it is rare for samurai to shun their true duties and intentions. Nonetheless, we center our appeal on Lord Sanjirō, who among the samurai who have fallen into greed, carries his two swords in one of the most esteemed positions.²¹⁰

The conclusion of the document brings Ōshio into the forefront in a comparison of the former *yoriki* with the current one. The villagers note that officials in charge of *hinin* affairs took bribes and lived in extravagance at the expense of the peasants. They write that:

Seven or eight years ago, the *yoriki* Ōshio Heihachirō set off toward our villages on work. At that time, he handled and executed those charged with crimes. He placed the head of an underling for the *hinin* administrator with others on a prison gate, and at that instant, the leaders of our land were satisfied and content. Since Ōshio Heihachirō retired, the one lacking the way, Lord Uchiyama, has arrived at the scene. In contrast with the kindness and benevolence found within Kami and Buddha, there is no end to his extravagance and offensiveness.²¹¹

Villagers thus establish a binary relationship between Ōshio and Uchiyama in which Ōshio performed his duties with loyalty and compassion and Uchiyama carried out his tasks with corruption and dishonor. Furthermore, they convey the impression that Ōshio and Uchiyama maintained this same opposition even after Ōshio's retirement. In the aftermath of the Osaka riot, the villagers reinforced the notion that Ōshio viewed Uchiyama as a perpetrator of transgressions against the people. Yet, the connection was circumstantial at

²¹⁰ Nakada 150.

²¹¹ Ibid., 161

best, and the depiction of the two *yoriki* underscores the burgeoning lionization of Ōshio more than a mutual antagonism.

Uchiyama rose through the magistrates' ranks at a slower pace—approximately eight years—than Ōshio's, yet Uchiyama persevered in his duties and attained honors and promotions Ōshio never actualized. He continued to serve the city of Osaka well into the Bakumatsu period until he was assassinated by the Shinsengumi in 1864.²¹² Still, Ōshio and his followers did single out Uchiyama's home in the Tenman ward as they burned it during the initial stages of the attack, thereby leading observers to believe that Ōshio would kill Uchiyama. A story spread after the riot that Uchiyama had become incensed and led the charge against the rioters before discovering the corpses of Ōshio and his son.²¹³ In truth, Uchiyama had left the city of Osaka during the *ran*.

A missive from a mutual acquaintance of the two samurai forewarned Uchiyama of the attack, and days before the riot began Uchiyama departed Osaka on an official trip to Nishinomiya in western Settsu. Formal reports of the riot's conclusion furthermore mention no word of Uchiyama's involvement. Instead, a *dōshin* named Hirayama Sukejiro led the magistrates' forces against Ōshio. Hirayama also purportedly heard of plans of a riot, but could not authenticate them before the onset according to magistrate records.²¹⁴

Ōshio's incineration of magistrate officials' homes did adhere to plans from the *gekibun* and did, at least in the first stages of the riot, present the samurai as a savior for the people. At the same time, as Watanabe Tadashi writes in the 2006 *Ōsaka machi bugyōsho ibun*. (Tales from the Osaka Ward Magistrates), the presence of a letter informing Uchiyama and Hirayama of the riot's preparations in addition to the delayed reaction to it hint at a

²¹² Yabuta 347-9.

²¹³ Ibid., 351-3.

²¹⁴ Watanabe 230.

subtle sympathy among some officials for Ōshio's cause. He moreover calls into question whether or not Uchiyama had deliberately escaped the riot or whether he had actually been assigned to duty in western Settsu.²¹⁵

The adulation borne within rural Settsu for Ōshio derived from an idealized past and an imagined antagonism between the warrior and the current magistrates. During the years in which the peasants believed Ōshio had been working on their behalf, he had in fact been censuring those who had been accused of practicing Christianity in Osaka. In addition, Uchiyama Sanjirō was neither reprimanded by his superiors nor implicated in the charges levied upon him by rural Settsu and Kawachi villages. If Ōshio reserved odium for Uchiyama and other Osaka administrators, the officials did not return the sentiment. Nevertheless, the manufactured rivalry engendered a newfound apotheosis for the samurai, even at the height of one of the most thorough judicial inspections of late Tokugawa Japan.

Conclusions: Ōshio's "Success" and His Impact on the Public Sphere

On the Riot's Success

When juxtaposed with Ōshio's stated goals from the *gekibun*—rectifying social ills, restoring order to the realm, and rescuing the destitute—the riot reached none of its aims. When interpreted as a means for Ōshio to rally Osaka and Kinai masses into a cause he designed and initiated, the riot became a qualified success. Furthermore, an aura of respect and fortune that Ōshio himself helped produce survived the riot and grew in the months after his death.

An underlying duality to Ōshio's nature attracted Kinai peasants, commoners, and samurai to a movement that ended with a zero-sum gain for them. In his career as a *yoriki*,

²¹⁵ Ibid., 231-2.

Ōshio performed his duties with such diligence that he received numerous promotions and commendations. At the same time, he became fascinated with his own lineage and Wang Yang-ming philosophy. After he was granted permission to retire from the magistrates' office, he devoted himself to his private academy and to his pupils.

Ōshio had become an inseparable component of his students' lives, tending to their personal needs, moral upbringing, and career goals. Even with a dedicated few—those who would be executed or banished for their association with the samurai—Ōshio still strove to broaden his circle of disciples by publishing and disseminating his academy's texts. He articulated into his *gekibun* the Wang Yang-ming tenet of uniting thought and action in such a fashion that his text appealed not only to the farmers and commoners it was written for, but also to samurai, intellectuals, and a few officials.

Ōshio's call to the *hinin* and *eta* in the weeks before the riot and his expressed frustration with them during the riot shed light on the notion that the warrior aimed not to liberate them from the fringes of Tokugawa society but rather to employ them in order to prolong the attack in Osaka's wards. Moreover, that Ōshio neglected to distribute rice and money to those who followed him into an attack on Osaka casts further doubt on Ōshio's stated intentions for his movement. Finally, Ōshio's posthumous fame grew once word of his leadership in the riot reached Osaka's outlying districts, provinces, and domains. In official circles, an association with Ōshio, whether or not it was fabricated or substantiated, was taboo. Among villagers and commoners, Ōshio, in his capacity as a former Osaka *yoriki*, became a symbol of benevolent and just jurisprudence. Thus, as a provocateur for the oppressed, Ōshio failed in his role. However, in cementing his name in the late Tokugawa

collective consciousness and stirring support for his riot, he achieved a level of success unsurpassed at the time.

Ōshio's Impact on the Public Sphere of Remonstrance

Ōshio Heihachirō's contribution to the late Tokugawa public sphere of remonstrance was manifold. As an Osaka *yoriki*, Ōshio worked outside of the public sphere. Indeed, one of the final tasks of his career—arresting clandestine Christians in 1829—represents an effort to suppress the public sphere insofar as illicit modes of expression had occupied it. In the same period, Ōshio played an active role in the public sphere by serving in one of its principal components, civil society. That is, his private academy, the Senshindō, offered Osaka residents an opportunity to partake in civil society as students in a school of *Yōmeigaku*. Finally, the dissemination of the school's texts permitted Ōshio to contribute to print literature of the nineteenth century, thereby providing the literate public with access to his Neo-Confucian thought.

When Ōshio abandoned the Senshindō, qua civil society, he entered a separate section of the public sphere, violent civil disobedience. Ōshio's riot then signified three changes of course in Settsu remonstrance. First it transferred the sphere from Settsu's countryside into urban Settsu, hence focusing officials' attention on disturbances in cities across Japan rather than the towns and villages. Secondly, as discussed in the previous chapter, the realm of nineteenth century protest prior to the 1837 encompassed the peasantry. Yet, Ōshio solicited participation from the warrior and commoner strata as well as the farmers, thereby increasing the range of participants in a single episode of protest. Lastly, portions of the riot and its preparation indicate that thought did not completely account for the motives behind the riot.

Instead, we can detect threads of greed and self-interest intertwined with the stated Wang Yang-ming philosophy from the *gekibun*.

Ōshio Heihachirō's ultimate contribution to late Tokugawa Settsu remonstrance was the interjection of the individual actor into the public sphere. He devised a movement based on his own philosophy and established himself at the forefront of the march through Osaka. Ōshio presented himself as savior for the troubled, yet we find no evidence that made any effort to follow through with his pledges from the summons. Instead, he choreographed a movement that enveloped the multiple social strata from early modern Japan in such a manner that individuals led subsequent uprisings proclaiming, as Yamadaya Daisuke was to do four months later in Nose, to be allies of Ōshio in their own destructive quests.

Appendix: Ōshio Heihachirō's *Gekibun*

When there is trouble in the four seas²¹⁶, heaven's contentment disappears, and when the land is ruled over by those of little competence, disasters occur. The sages of the past have imparted this to their sovereigns and to those who would rule over future generations. Even Tokugawa Ieyasu²¹⁷ proclaimed that the sages' teachings were the foundation for benevolent and compassionate rule over widows, widowers, and those without families. Nevertheless, during the two hundred and forty to two hundred and fifty years of tranquility, those of the higher classes have come to revel in luxury. Even in their official capacity, rulers entrusted with the important affairs of governance accept and offer bribes. With their connections to ladies in the inner court, they have ascended through the ranks to become successful officials, positions they attained despite a lack of morals, benevolence, righteousness, and propriety. They devise clever schemes and plans to benefit themselves and their homes. They exact excessive taxes from the peasants and commoners residing in their administrative domains and territories. For years, many [peasants] have suffered from exorbitant *nengu* payments, unfair contributions to their rulers. Alongside the trouble of the four seas, [the officials'] demands have increased. Their path has given us no choice but to hold grudges against corrupted governors in all of our provinces. Ever since the Ashikaga line our emperor has commanded the rulers, but as his ability to reprimand them has been taken away, disorder has commenced. Therefore, the commoners have lost the means and support in which they could present their trouble, for the people direct their aggravation through the Emperor. For years, there have been earthquakes, fires, and landslides. Floods have led to various widespread natural disasters, wiping out all of the grains and leading to famine. Even though everyone now can express their profound gratitude for the mandate of heaven, those in elevated positions do not reciprocate at all with their hearts and minds. Still, the crooked of little caliber and their cronies carry out governance. They agitate the lower classes and rob them of their gold and grain. Therefore, we shall strike out against them. Even if there is actual extensive sympathy for the peasants' distress from beyond the shadow of grass²¹⁸, if there are no rulers influenced by King Tang and King Wu or shaped by the morals and virtue of Confucius and Mencius, their concerns are neglected. As the cost of grain increases evermore, Osaka magistrates and officials have forgotten the underlying benevolence of all things. They rule only with consideration for themselves. They deliver rice to Edo, and yet they fail to send rice to Kyoto, the residence of our emperor. They also arrest people for going to the Kyoto and purchasing five boxes of rice. This is the same point, the same story, and the same implication as when a past daimyo by the name of Katsuhaku killed a child for carrying the *bentō* of a farmer outside of his domain. Without doubt, the

²¹⁶ Here Ōshio cites Confucius' description of the world as 四海 or the four seas. He actually paraphrases Confucius' statement that "if there shall be distress and want within the four seas, the Heavenly revenue will come to a perpetual end" (Legge 350).

²¹⁷ The text mentions 東照神君 or the Eastern Avatar, yet the term may also represent Tokugawa Ieyasu. As Ōshio cites the 250 or so years of peace, it is likely he is referring to the beginning of the Tokugawa period and thus the first shogun.

²¹⁸ Ōshio cites *kusa no kage* (草の陰) as a referent to another world, presumably of the past sage kings.

Tokugawa clan rules over any land on which the commoners reside. By breaking apart social order with malevolent rule, leaders exacerbate matters by often distributing, at their own discretion, self-serving decrees. These value the slovenly of Osaka. Inept rulers of the past, as already mentioned, did not embody morals, virtues, benevolence, or rituals. That is why there is an increase in indolence and corruption among the rulers. Moreover, one-third of Osaka's wealthy, along with the daimyo of years past, have prospered from rice stipends in addition to the gold and silver they exacted as interest from loans. They live in unprecedented wealth, and even though they are merchants, in many cases they are treated by the Daimyo as if they were the lords' chief retainers. Also, they have innumerable possessions of their own, including new rice fields. Somehow they are never satisfied. Even in the midst of the natural disasters and divine punishments of this age, they have no fear. There is absolutely no relief for the poor beggars dying of starvation. [The Rich] eat rather fine food with the flavor of fatty meat. They are enticed into visiting concubine homes, brothels, and tea houses, where proprietors treat them as if they were Daimyo retainers. They pour and drink high-priced sake like water. At a time of hardship, they dress in silk clothing and greet courtesans who are wrapped in erotic garb. What kind of manner is this, to be engrossed in entertainment as though conditions were normal? It is the same as a long night of revelry of King Zhou. Although the magistrates have command over the merchants, they do nothing to aid the lower classes. They interact on a daily basis with merchants only in the marketplaces of Osaka's Dojima district. In reality, it is unforgivable for them to prosper while they ignore Heaven and the teachings of the sages. For those of us who are confined in our homes, we now find it impossible to endure this. We do not have the power of King Tang or the virtues of Confucius, but we work under Heaven. We have nobody to which we turn; we have only our own kind. This time, we will convene with those who are willing to do so and then exact revenge first on those officials who create troubles and hardships for the commoners. Furthermore, we shall exact a death sentence for the haughty wealthy merchants who have overstayed their welcome in the city of Osaka. We will distribute, allot, and share hidden bags of rice from our targets' storehouses as well as gold, silver, and other money stored up in their cellars. We will give the gold and grain to those who do not have their own rice fields in Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima and to those who have rice fields but who also are incapable of caring for their children, wives, fathers, and mothers. If you hear reports of a disturbance transpiring in Osaka city, do not grow weary of the distance and come at once to Osaka. We will be dividing and distributing the gold and rice to each person there. The distribution of gold and millet from King Zhou's Kakudai storehouse to the commoners was done to relieve the suffering of the famine at the time. If there were men of dignity and talent now, each one of them would collect for the poor. We shall punish those who lack the way and then deal with the difficult task of containing the samurai militia. Naturally, this differs from incidents of previous peasant uprisings and disturbances. In time, the nengu payments to the officials shall be eased. All *kami* will be impressed with our efforts in restoring society and will instill governors who can rule with magnanimous generosity. We shall rectify the trends in extravagance and debauchery in a thorough cleansing of the corrupt. All people of the four seas will always be grateful for the Heaven's grace.

Each father, mother, wife, and child will be tended to. Everyone will be freed from the hell of their current lives. The Buddhas in Nirvana of the afterlife²¹⁹ will appear right before your eyes. Even if it is difficult to restore an era of Imperial rule from Amaterasu or the reigns of Yo and Soon, we can be sure that we will improve our conditions. This note shall be made accessible to each person in each village, and as with other decrees, it will be posted in temples and shrines to which many homes stand adjacent. Be careful not to reveal this summons to the *bannin* who are on patrol from Osaka. It should be quickly disseminated among the villages. If you discover that *bannin* or *metsuke*—those scoundrels of the Osaka offices—have been warned about or have come into possession of this piece, you should not hesitate to kill them. If you have doubts and do not rush to join us when the riot commences, or if you arrive too late to join, the grain and gold of the rich will all be burned to ashes in a fire. Since it is said that the realm's treasures have been lost, naturally we will be detested. You should not be concerned of any slander you hear about us as we rid the city of its treasures. That is why we are announcing our plans to every one of you. We shall burn all records, ledgers, and other documents pertaining to the *nengu* payments of the villages in the area. This is something planned with much forethought and to be done with the intention of easing the commoners' distress. This action is similar to the rebellions during the reigns of Taira no Masakado, Akechi Mitsuhide, the Chinese Emperor Wudi, and Zhu Yuanzhang, and the goal of ours is no different. Yet, this is not the case where our entire sympathies lie in a wish to overthrow the realm's rulers. The sun, moon, stars, and other heavenly bodies reflect the divine.²²⁰ The forefathers of Tang and Wu, Han, and Ming along with their vassals were, after all, met with death. Their predecessors had disobeyed heaven. If you doubt what is written here, when our act has finished, your eyes shall be opened and you will understand.

For those peasants who are illiterate, the priests of the temples or physicians should kindly read it to you. If you should fear your elders or leaders and hide the document from others, you will face severe consequences.

With respect, Heaven has mandated this attack.
Eighth year of Tempō
Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, Harima Villages
To the *shōya*, elders, peasants, and enfeoffed peasants

²¹⁹ The document refers to this as 死後の極楽成仏.

²²⁰ Oshio uses the phrase 日月星辰の神鑑 or (divine reflection of the sun, moon, stars, and heavenly bodies) to justify the natural order in rectifying his society's ills.

The Nose Incident

In the summer of 1837, Yamadaya Daisuke bid farewell to his wife and children in Osaka's Saito Ward to return to his home village of Yamada in the Nose district. Before crossing the city's borders, he called upon two Osaka friends, Imai Fujikura and Satō Shirōemon, to accompany him on his journey north. After spending time in the Yamada village, on the second day of the seventh month, the three men instigated an incident that involved nearly three thousand peasants from thirty-three villages in Nose and Kawabe as well as hundreds of containment forces from Osaka and Kyoto magistrates and regional *jinya* offices.

The Nose incident's value for the early modern public sphere is multifold. First, its locality signifies how the rural displaces the urban in terms of the centrality of discontent. Secondly, it epitomizes the power of the individual over the masses. Thirdly, elements indigenous to the Nose movement suggest an evolution in the thought of Settsu protest yet at the same time the maintenance of *sahō* or propriety. Lastly, its expanse lends to the development of a tangible, yet imagined community that envelops its leaders, followers, suppressors, and recorders.

This chapter first addresses how Japanese historiography has overlooked or at least marginalized Yamadaya's movement. It then depicts 1830s Nose District and provides a narrative of the events of the incident itself. Finally, it draws from Yamadaya's *kaijō* or circular to highlight a hybridization of individual action and propriety that underlies the disturbance.

Historiography: From the Shadow of Ōshio to the Cover of Nationalism

The fact that the Nose incident followed Ōshio Heihachirō's Osaka uprising by only five months explains in part why Yamadaya Daisuke has been largely neglected in historiography. English language scholarship, to my knowledge, has until now yet to touch upon the event. Japanese language studies on the subject first appeared in the 1970s as research concerning peasant uprisings peaked. Mention of the Nose incident initially was relegated to chapters dedicated to the aftermath of Ōshio's uprising.

For example, in his 1975 book *Ōshio Heihachirō* Okamoto Ryōichi distinguishes Ōshio's riot from Yamadaya's by noting that Yamadaya's movement typifies anti-Bakufu movements in the nineteenth century, whereas Ōshio's disturbance represents a certain level of content with the *bakuhan* system. The relative importance of the Nose incident, Okamoto argues, pales in comparison to that of Ōshio's since the former was restricted in scope to peasant participants. As for the leader of the disturbance, he characterizes Yamadaya as "immature" in the planning of an incident that was grounded in "heroism."²²¹

Hayashida Ryōhei's 1977 article "Yamadaya Daisuke no Nose ikki" from the journal *Ōshio kenkyū* recounts the Nose incident and provides some biographical background for the principal actors. Hayashida casts doubt on the validity of harsh criticism levied on Yamadaya, for he writes that both Yamadaya and Ōshio suffered from the same famine conditions and reacted to them in similar fashion.²²²

Kawai Kenji's 1979 piece "Tempō/Settsu Nose undō no saikentō" (A Reinvestigation of the Tempō Settsu Nose Disturbance) from *Rekishi hyōron* also details the incident as well as its social and economic stimuli. He does, however, steer away from comparisons with the

²²¹ Okamoto 168-72.

²²² Hayashida 14-5.

Ōshio's Osaka riot. Kawai argues that Yamadaya's actions and not the circular caused the event to resound throughout the region like a "firecracker of individual action." Within this individuality of action, Kawai argues that the event foreshadows *Bakumatsu* rhetoric that called for an absolute Imperial institution in lieu of Bakufu rule.²²³

Historiography pertaining to the Nose incident proceeded to sink below the radar through the 1980s only to resurface during the last fifteen years in thematic studies on early modern mass movements and the modern state. Fukaya Katsumi's 1991 *Kinsei no kokka/shakai to tennō* (The Early Modern State/Society and the Emperor), for instance, pigeonholes the Nose disturbance inside of the budding *sonnō* (pro-Imperial) thought.²²⁴ Hosaka Satoru also refers to Yamadaya Daisuke's movement in his 2006 study on propriety in peasant uprisings, *Hyakushō ikki to gimin no kenkyū* (Studies in Peasant Uprisings and *Gimin*). He cites the case as an example of changes in conventions among peasant movements from the seventeenth century onward and in particular details the types of weapons employed by Yamadaya's group, noting that they used only three of the twenty most common tools in early modern uprisings.²²⁵

That the Nose incident failed to garner attention on its own merit attests to more than just the disturbance's temporal proximity to Ōshio's. One dilemma relates to the lack of consensus over the event's nomenclature. While Hayashida labels the incident as an "*ikki*," Kawai and the *Nose Chō-shi* (History of the Nose Town) describe it as a *sōdō* (騒動 a term reserved for movements of rural discontent). Furthermore, compilers of Ikeda City's history even refer to it as a "*ran*" or uprising.²²⁶

²²³ Kawai 22-3.

²²⁴ Fukaya 158-165.

²²⁵ Hosaka 83, 91, 110.

²²⁶ *Ikeda Shi-shi* 302.

The second obstacle involves primary sources. In the case of Ōshio Heihachirō, studies may draw from the multitude of records from his official career as a *ginmi* or inspector, his ideological tenets from the *Senshindō sakki*, correspondence between the samurai and his pupils, and written recordings from trials of the riot's supporters. Yamadaya's disturbance, though, lacks such extensive documentation. Aside from local histories like Osaka, Ikeda, or Nose's, the *Ukiyo no arisama* (Conditions of the Floating World) and *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* (Chronological Compendium of Historical Records of Peasant Uprisings) contain the only notable transcriptions of records from the Nose incident.²²⁷ The limited number of documents thus leads to little variation among reports of the incident and its underlying thought. .

It is from the aforementioned sources, nevertheless, that the following section will employ in order to present a narrative of the Nose incident. Events during the movement demonstrate its key role—one which matches if not surpasses that of Ōshio's riot—in the evolution of remonstrance in the Settsu province. Moreover, it reveals that the transitory nature of the riot itself defies strict categorization within Tokugawa protest yet and still justifies focus on Yamadaya Daisuke's path to self-destruction.

The Disturbance

Environment and Conditions

The conditions that afflicted Osaka at the beginning of 1837 did not differ from those that shook northern Settsu five months later. After all, Edo and provincial authorities would not counteract the economic and social strife of the 1830s with any effective measures until

²²⁷ *Ukiyo no arisama* is a 13-chapter account of “natural phenomenon, physiographical changes, and human affairs” of Japan from 1804 to the late 1840s (*Ukiyo no arisama* 1); *Hennen...* is a 19-volume compilation of documents related to uprisings and disturbances throughout the Tokugawa era.

the following decade. In some ways, however, the Tempō famine (1833-1843) affected rural districts like Nose with more severity than Osaka.

The Nose district lies in northeast Settsu, which currently situates in the northwest region of the greater Osaka prefecture. Rivers flow south toward Osaka and southwest into the neighboring Kawabe district. Passes run through mountains leading into the Yamashiro province and Kyoto.

Notwithstanding the fact that mountainous terrain covers the majority of the district, Nose's villages relied on agriculture for economic gain. During the Tempō years (1830-1844), Nose's thirty-six villages had an estimated *kokudaka* (land value in terms of *koku*²²⁸ of rice) of 12,663.²²⁹ Yet areas with fertile ground yielded grain differently from other districts of Settsu. Data from Kamisugi Village reveal that while rice fields accounted for nearly seventy-five percent of the agricultural output, over one-third of the harvest came from lower and arid lands, while fourteen percent came from higher ground.²³⁰ In other words, fertile ground accounted for a slight margin of Nose's agricultural production. Kawai ascribes this phenomenon to major landslides following periods of high rain in the eighteenth century. Heavy rainfall in 1740 and 1764, in particular, flushed farmers away from elevated ground toward the drier lower ground.²³¹

Nose agrarians thus turned toward other means to supplement their livelihoods.²³² Historically, Nose Mochi (rice cake) had been a district-wide specialty good for over 1,300 years. One of the first entries related for the Nose district in the *Settsu meisho-zue*²³³

²²⁸ One *koku* is approximately 5 bushels of grain.

²²⁹ *Osaka-fu chimei daijiten* 951-2.

²³⁰ *Nose-Chō shi*, Volume 3, 243.

²³¹ Kawai 24.

²³² “*Shibakari*” and “*Nawanai*” officially were the terms describing secondary production.

²³³ *Meisho-zue* were illustrated guides to famed areas around late Tokugawa Japan. The first such book appeared in 1780 and detailed well-known spots around Kyoto.

identifies mochi production for the annual autumn *i-no-ko* (children of boar) festival as one of the province's central tourist and historical draws:

Nose-mochi...appeared in the province as a remembrance of times of yore when we were fighting with the monarch of the three lands of Chōsen²³⁴. When our sovereign fled into the mountains of Nose and perished, several wild boars emerged. The animals leapt out at the monarch's pursuer, King Kōhan. The king had no choice but to climb to the top of a large tree. The boars saw this and dug their tusks into the trunk, shaking the king from the tree and then mauling him. This saved our empire, and after peace was restored to the realm, our Emperor promulgated a decree honoring the event on the tenth month of every year... Mochi production for the festival starts in specialty houses with walls that are covered in pure bamboo and floors in new straw mats. First red beans are thoroughly boiled and then mochi rice is chilled. They are then steamed in a *koshiki* pot...As the color of the mochi turns crimson, we are reminded of the meat of the boar...²³⁵

Villagers from Kokuzaki traded firewood as a commodity with neighboring communities. Kurokawa Village residents exchanged brushwood for grain from Ikeda. Some other locales even reserved rice and firewood for sake production and trade.²³⁶ During the famine, villages concentrated on rice production for sustenance, yet did not rise from poverty until the 1840s.

Many regions and villagers in Nose had amassed severe debt to more prosperous cities and businesses. Obligations to pay *nengu* (land tax) pressured villagers into borrowing silver from merchants and urban moneylenders. Representatives from Yamada Village penned the following complaint to Otsu officials in order to alleviate financial burdens in 1835 after most farmers fell into substantial poverty:

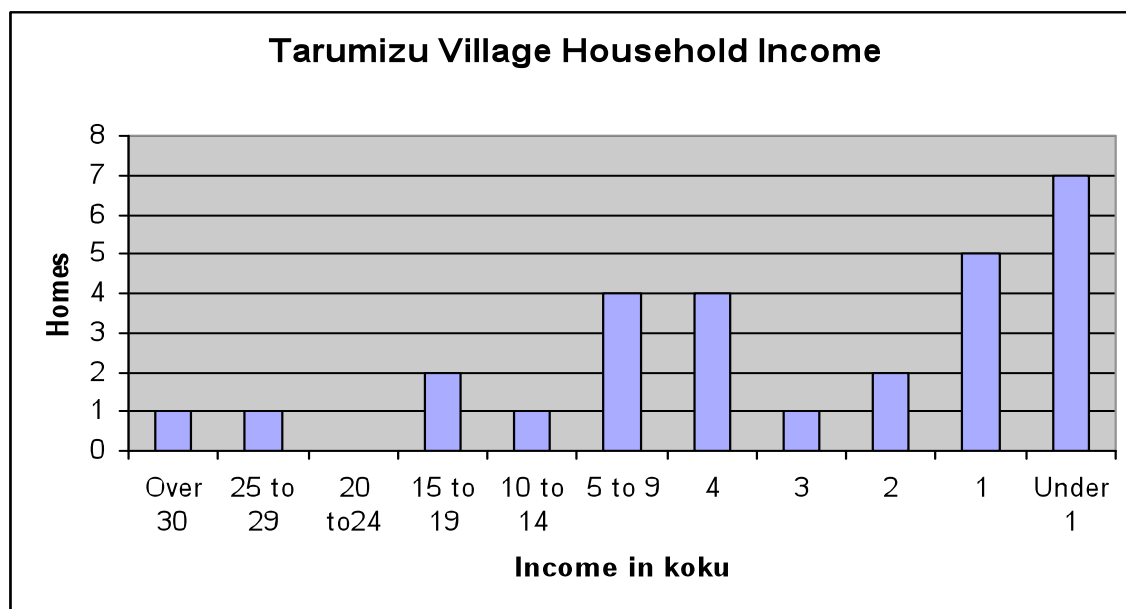
²³⁴ This refers to a battle before the reign of Emperor Oujin around the 5th century. The three regions in Korea at battle with ancient Japan were known as *Shiragi*, *Kudara*, and *Kōkuri*.

²³⁵ *Settsu meisho-zue* 541-2.

²³⁶ Kawai 25-6.

Our villages have fallen into debt after having taken loans from moneylenders outside of our region. This has led to severe conditions and distractions for the villagers in our territories. Now, to satisfy the demands of the *Daikan* and his officials, we have selected Tennō Village *Shōya* Riyuemon, Sasao Village *Shōya* Hanzaemon, and Kamisugi Village elder Heizaemon as the three men to administer financial matters for our region. They conducted a thorough investigation into the villages' debts, and they then established a system for repayments. Yet, even with the repayment system in place, many peasants remain in substantial debt to the Daimyo, and they cannot comply with their scheduled repayments. Each silver borrower has already filed his own demand through multiple appeals, and the village remains in a state of disarray. By the third month of the coming year, we ask for you to listen to and resolve our requests.²³⁷

The Tempō famine also tilted the distribution of income toward the poorer residents of Nose. For instance, records from Tarumizu Village in 1838 reflect this imbalance of wealth.²³⁸



While only two of Tarumizu's twenty-eight homes earned more than twenty-five *koku* of rice, twenty-three families earned fewer than ten. Likewise, of the 149 wage-earners in the

²³⁷ *Nose-Chō shi*, 815.

²³⁸ Adapted from *Nose Chō-shi*, Volume 3 and Kawai 24.

village, fourteen and seventy-eight percent fell in the top and bottom percentiles, respectively.

Conditions in Settsu's northern countryside thus presented an ideal environment to channel regional discontentment into a larger stream of protest. Having seen corpses along the streets to and from Osaka and having communicated with relatives in his hometown of Yamada, Yamadaya Daisuke knew that the Tempō famine was not confined within the city of Osaka. Along with the social-economic conditions of rural Settsu, Yamadaya's life as an inconsequential herbalist and reputed street ruffian induced him to lead his movement in Nose.

The Ringleaders

Little is recorded about the lives of Yamadaya Daisuke, Satō Shirōuemon, and Imai Fujikura outside of their participation in the Nose incident. Most biographical accounts on the three men derive from Osaka magistrate's investigations as transcribed in the *Ukiyo no arisama*. An inevitable slant tarnishes the witnesses' accounts due to the illicit nature of the movement, yet the following descriptions employ the *Ukiyo no arisama* sources in order to recount their lives.

To begin, Yamadaya Daisuke was born in Nose's Yamada Village at the end of the eighteenth century.²³⁹ His father, Yamadaya (Nemoto) Genroku, served in the retinue for the Tadaï family, one of the longest residing samurai clans in Nose. Having sustained a sizeable financial debt, Genroku moved his family to Osaka when he was in his late twenties. There, the family rented a home in the Nunoya ward.

²³⁹ This chapter has refrained from providing birth dates for each of the men due mostly to this lack of biographical information. Tanaka Masakazu, though, provides a birth year of 1790 for Yamadaya (多田雪霜談考). We shall estimate the same 30-40 age range for the other leaders then.

Genroku began work as an acupuncture specialist but soon quit after his landlord left the ward. For a while, he served as an official barber²⁴⁰ before finding his calling as an herbalist. As Genroku's business expanded, he opened a second store in Osaka's northern Miyako ward where Daisuke joined his father and presided over shipments at both his father's store and an ancillary branch.

Genroku and Daisuke achieved a level of notoriety among ward residents after they were arrested for selling pirated wares, but authorities pardoned both men after several months of investigation.²⁴¹ During the period of inquiry, Daisuke undertook training alongside other Osaka merchants in the *kenjitsu* (wooden sword-fighting) and *jujitsu* martial arts. He attempted to open his own stable to teach the skills, but since there were no rooms available for rent he retained the position of apprentice.²⁴²

Daisuke also partook in underhanded activities, according to the accounts from *Ukiyo no arisama*. His neighbors alleged that he would often emerge from a local bathhouse draped in black cotton clothing typical of petty gamblers. Residents reported that they witnessed Daisuke standing on his tiptoes, "gazing with a smile here and there" at street games. At a more egregious level, ward residents implicated Daisuke for his role among a circle of thieves in neighborhood storehouses. Daisuke purportedly removed swords from guard posts and storehouses and then peddled them to merchants. He evaded arrest by bribing guards and employing intermediaries to transfer the stolen goods on his behalf.

²⁴⁰ This was noted as 剃髮 (*teihatsu*), which during the Tokugawa period was a punishment of shaving the hair off of adulterous women

²⁴¹ *Ukiyo no arisama* notes that both men were pardoned for their crime, one that was met with the death penalty in many instances (400).

²⁴² *Ukiyo no arisama* authors note that Daisuke's skill was accomplished in a time that warriors themselves had allowed their skills in the martial arts to erode (401).

Genroku denied consenting to his son's thievery during the magistrates' investigation into the nose incident, yet authorities did censure him for sheltering some of the circle's members.

Daisuke then rented a home from a wealthy silk merchant in Osaka's Saito ward. He found construction work in renovating nearby shrines and temples. The site's foreman, a "principled man" named Shimohara, drew the connection between Imai Fujikura and Yamadaya Daisuke for investigators. Shimohara noted that Fujikura, a *rōnin* skilled in calligraphy, had met Daisuke in the Nunoya ward. He maintained that when the men were together, they appeared as if they were brothers.

Fujikura and Daisuke's friendship extended beyond mere acquaintanceship, however. In the evenings, both men concocted a scheme to forge paper cash. Once Fujikura produced a forged note, he and Daisuke alternated in taking the counterfeit money to Osaka's outlying districts in order to acquire various goods. Guards uncovered the plot and imprisoned Daisuke in Sakai for nearly one-hundred days. Fujikura meanwhile absconded to his home in Osaka when he heard of his partner's incarceration. It was noted that during the imprisonment, Daisuke's wife suffered and worried to the extent that she prepared herself "along with their son and daughter to be transformed into demons in their afterlife."²⁴³ Upon release, Daisuke returned to his spouse, allayed her concerns, and remained in the Saito ward until 1837.

The incident's third ringleader, Satō Shirōuemon, appears infrequently in accounts of the episode, yet more than one source mentions his name. The *Hyakushō ikki jiten* (Dictionary of Peasant Uprisings) describes Shirōuemon as a learned samurai who befriended Daisuke in Osaka and who sympathized with his efforts in Nose.²⁴⁴ The *Ukiyo no arisama*

²⁴³ Ibid., 402.

²⁴⁴ *Hyakushō ikki jiten* 397-8.

also identifies Shirōemon as samurai who once served in the Inaba province and later took residence in Osaka. It was Shirōemon's idea, according to *Ukiyo no arisama*, for the men to leave Osaka under the pretense of embarking on a *Fushimi-mairi* (pilgrimage to the Fushimi shrines).²⁴⁵

The Ōshio Inspiration

Documentary evidence sheds little light Daisuke's activities during the five months separating Ōshio Heihachirō's riot and the onset of the Nose incident. The conditions indeed were ripe for agitation in rural Settsu, as this chapter has already established. Moreover, villagers in Nose heard word of the Osaka uprising, and officials feared that residents would harbor fugitives and in turn be incited to riot.²⁴⁶ Yet, we must employ circumstantial evidence to determine the role that Ōshio's *ran* played on Daisuke's decision to lead a movement in northern Settsu.

Texts conflict over whether or not Daisuke joined Ōshio's riot in the second month of 1837. On the one hand, the *Ukiyo no arisama* indicates that Daisuke did participate, although it concedes that he fled the scene at the sight of mass violence. It also mentions that Daisuke was disappointed that he witnessed former pupils from his martial arts stable incinerating homes, stores, and warehouses. Finally, the text notes that Daisuke and Fujikura eluded forces, yet their wives, children, and maids were placed under house arrest.²⁴⁷

On the other hand, Kawai casts doubt that Daisuke was an active participant in Ōshio's uprising. He questions why Osaka authorities would allow the Yamadaya herbal stores to sustain business in the Saito ward if Daisuke was under investigation for criminal

²⁴⁵ *Ukiyo no arisama* 404.

²⁴⁶ *Nose-Chō shi* 806.

²⁴⁷ *Ukiyo no arisama*., 402-3.

activities in the early part of the year.²⁴⁸ Further, editors of the *Nose-Chō shi* write that even though officials located a copy of Ōshio's *gekibun* in Daisuke's home after the Nose disturbance, Osaka city magistrates records do not implicate Daisuke in the *ran*.²⁴⁹ Along a similar vein, it is also unlikely that Fujikura joined Ōshio's forces since his calligraphy store continued to operate until he left Osaka in the middle of 1837.

Daisuke, in all likelihood a mere witness to the Osaka riot, viewed the uprising as an inspiration for his own movement later that year. He certainly grasped the impossibility of leading a subsequent *ran* in Osaka, for *ginmi* and *dōshin* conducted lengthy and detailed investigations into the Ōshio affair. Yet, Nose served as a prime candidate for creating a stand against harsh economic and social conditions. Daisuke himself achieved little recognition as an herbalist; after all, his drug store did not carry enough weight to earn an entry in Osaka's guide of city shops.²⁵⁰ Conversely, whatever fame he did garner involved illicit activities and questionable business practices. Daisuke embarked on path that would essentially mark him as the antithesis of Ōshio Heihachirō: for Daisuke, the disturbance would become a means for recognition; and for Ōshio, fame as a magistrate *yoriki* and Neo-Confucian scholar served as a means for riot.

*The Onset*²⁵¹

Yamadaya Daisuke and five companions including Satō Shirōuemon and Imai Fujikura approached Nose district's Imanishi Village in the early morning of the third day of

²⁴⁸ Kawai 28-9.

²⁴⁹ *Nose-Chō shi* 812-3. Even elements of the *Ukiyo*...allude to the fact that possession of the summons does not directly lead immediate prosecution for partaking in the riot. A brief transcription of an interview between the magistrates and Daisuke's landlord Shinozaki Chōzaemon indicates that the former claims that as a devout Confucian, even he had possession of the summons (403).

²⁵⁰ Kawai 29.

²⁵¹ See the end of the chapter for a map charting the progress of the incident.

the seventh month of 1837. They sounded the bell of Jingū-ji (a branch temple within Imanishi's Kinenomiya complex) and lit small fires around the Kinenomiya's grounds to which twenty peasants responded. Daisuke announced to the group his intentions to rally peasants from rural Settsu in order to present their troubles to the Imperial Court in Kyoto. Fujikura penned the context of Daisuke's speech into a circular that would be copied and distributed to nearby villages.²⁵²

The twenty-six men then surrounded the village headman's home and demanded for the official to dispatch *ninsoku* (人足 or laborers) for their cause. The headman provided them with fifteen *ninsoku*, and the group retreated to the nearby Myokenzan village where they spent the night.

Daisuke and his followers returned to Kinenomiya the following morning and rang the Jingū-ji bell on the seventh hour of the day. Nearly fifty additional peasants joined the group, which Daisuke threatened with murder should any stray from his cause. The men devised banners that they planned to carry along the road to Kyoto. The first contained the phrase, "*Tokusei Ōshio mikata*" (徳政大塩味方 Friends of Ōshio's Benevolent Government), and the second flag read "*Tokusei soshō bito*" (徳政訴訟人 or Plaintiffs for Benevolent Government). Hoisting the banners, Daisuke's men marched away from Kinenomiya to procure provisions and forces for their trek to Kyoto.

Theft and Murder

Yamadaya Daisuke's crowd progressed through Imanishi and Inachi villages, beckoning additional farmers to follow them to the Emperor's Court. Daisuke's exchange

²⁵² The next section of this chapter will provide a complete translation of the text and a discussion on it.

with an official at Inachi exemplifies the threat the group exacted on the region. At the village, Daisuke called upon the headman Juemon for *zeni* and rice. After Juemon ignored the group's demands, Daisuke and his followers set fire to his home and forced him out of the village.

An official in Inachi did not meet with such a fortunate fate after refusing to aid the movement. There, a *hiningashira* (非人頭 or outcast affairs officer) by the name of Yōsuke faced Daisuke's men when the group approached his home for money and food. Yōsuke replied to the group's requests that he would not provide for them. With a single stroke of his sword, Daisuke slew Yōsuke, causing one witness to remark that the murder lifted the "spirit of the village up into heaven."²⁵³ *Ninsoku* from larger homes bore witness to the slaughter and joined the men without having been asked from their masters or the agitators to do so. Elsewhere, local headmen abandoned their residences once they heard that Daisuke had entered their villages. Generally, even after looting the headmen's possessions, the group razed their homes.

Those who wished to preserve the integrity of their estates relented to Daisuke's demands. In Tarumizu village, for example, a sake brewer named Saburō Yuemon distributed five *kan* of *zeni* and two *koku* of grain to the crowd. Moreover, he allotted sake and fermented rice to around two-hundred people.²⁵⁴

A few village elders took precautions when they heard rumors of the attack. For example, villages along the Tanba and Tango lines to Kyoto relayed news of the murder and copies of the circular to magistrates in Osaka. Similarly, magistrates from Kyoto's Nijō ward learned of Daisuke's movement from officials in Sonobe, Koide, and Shinogawa. It was at

²⁵³ *Hennen* Volume 14 567.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 582.

this point that the magistrates and Jinya forces began preparations to suppress Daisuke and his men.

Retreat and Death

Daisuke and seven-hundred followers began planning on the fifth day of the month to cross the northern Meigetsu pass, traversing Kameoka along the way to Kyoto. They soon discovered that district *jinya* had blockaded the pass, and the group retreated back to Kinenomiya and then headed west into Settsu's Kawabe district. Daisuke followed the road southward to Hayashida Village. There, a local official relented to the group's request for zen and rice, and the men took respite in the west at Manshō-ji, a small temple outside of Kamisatori village. More than three-hundred peasants from Sugio, Kamisatori, Kamakura, and Hayashida villages joined Yamadaya, making the movement over one-thousand men strong. Several hundred, though, fled from Manshō-ji when they heard gunfire resounding in the south.²⁵⁵

Later, Daisuke led the movement back toward Nose, but authorities had also blockaded the local roads into the district. Returning to Manshō-ji, the crowd called on an oil merchant by the name of Denzameon for additional provisions, including one-thousand *ryo* of cash and ten *kan* of silver. They slept the night in the temple, and on the sixth day they headed through Kamisatori toward Mokki Village. The group took lodging in a nearby temple named Kōfuku-ji, and there the movement reached its conclusion.²⁵⁶

News of the incident and its violence had already reached the Osaka magistrates office by the morning of the fourth day of the month. The office dispatched *yoriki* and

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 567-8.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 568.

dōshin to Nose later that day, while the district *Daikan*, Nemoto Zenemon, left for Ikeda village around the same time. The magistrates' forces camped in Hirano, a village leading into the Meigetsu pass. The *Daikan* also supplied the magistrate's forces with temporary assistants in the effort to suppress Yamadaya's crowd. Later that night, local *jinya* meted out gunnery and cannons to the forces. Thus, by the fifth day, the road to Kyoto had become virtually impenetrable.²⁵⁷

Meanwhile, authorities from Sanda (a *han* within Settsu's Arima district) organized six-hundred men to travel to Mokki Village in order to fortify the western Shidehara mountain pass. Other domains followed suit and barricaded roads leading to their territories. On the sixth day, Bakufu, district, and provincial forces had amassed enough weapons and funds to deny access to paths leading away from Kōzuki. From the magistrate's office, five-hundred *yoriki* and *dōshin* approached Mokki from the south, and four-hundred officers from the *daikan*'s office advanced from the east. Around the second hour in the afternoon, the forces encircled Kōfuku-ji and waited for Daisuke to surrender.²⁵⁸

Daisuke had already lost several hundred of his group over the night as peasants were allowed safe passage back to their homes, but the group still numbered nearly eight-hundred men. Daisuke, Fujikura, and Shirōuemon emerged from within Kōfuku-ji and faced the Bakufu and magistrate forces. A brief exchange of gunfire ensued, piercing Daisuke's throat. Fujikura assisted Daisuke in ritual suicide and then killed himself. Shirōuemon withdrew back into the temple and fatally shot himself in the abdomen.²⁵⁹

Punishment, Reward, and Burden

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 576.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 566-7.

²⁵⁹ *Nose-Cho shi* 810-12.

Daisuke, Fujikura, and Shirōuemon's corpses were preserved in salt, wrapped in Echigo cloth, and sent to Osaka where the bodies would be paraded along the streets for city residents to witness. Ten peasants were arrested after the three bodies were prepared for travel, but the hundreds of other participants were permitted to return to their home villages. Officials still conducted a detailed investigation into the incident and incarcerated those they believed to have outfitted the group with provisions or participated in the violence and destruction.

For example, authorities banished seven Yamada village elders from the Kinnai region because of their contributions during the incident's onset.²⁶⁰ Even though the men had not joined Yamadaya's march toward Kyoto, officials faulted them with the misallocation of funds and provisions during a time of famine. Moreover, individual peasants like Kamiyama village's Yoemon and Kashiwara Village's Giyuemon faced house arrest for demanding food and money from district estates. They escaped capital punishment due to their cooperation with the detectives in the search for additional participants. Then, for Kamisatori village *Shōya* Souemon of the Kawabe district, the failure to send a missive to officials reporting the death of the *Hiningashira* in Inachi served as an ample reason for temporary arrest and fines.²⁶¹

In the Nose and Kawabe villages where Daisuke and his men had traversed, scores of officials and *ninsoku* faced penalties for their connection to the incident. Most of the indicted incurred light fines, but those who were implicated in the circulation of Yamadaya's call to action faced more substantial penalties. Generally, village *Shōya* shouldered the heaviest

²⁶⁰ Two received the harshest banishment to isolated islands (遠島), and the remaining 5 were prohibited from ever returning to the kinnai region (中追放). A vagrant by the name of Jujiro was meted the lightest banishment (軽追放), which entailed restricted access to Osaka.

²⁶¹ *Hennen* Volume 14 574.

financial burden, followed by the elders, and then the *ninsoku*. Of the thirty-three villages directly implicated in the incident, only those from Nose's Katayama eluded any reprimands.

Katayama villagers avoided fines as Daisuke's men leveled the estate of Sadaemon, one of the district's wealthiest villagers. Even as the crowd razed his home, Sadaemon refused to allocate any laborers or funds to the peasants. Furthermore, investigators noted that Sadaemon took steps to prevent other Katayama peasants from leaving the village to join Daisuke. Osaka officials rewarded Sadaemon's efforts by giving him seven sheets of silver, allowing him to possess a sword, and bestowing him with the surname of Eiei. Ten *ninsoku* from Katayama did leave the village to aid Daisuke's cause, but none were implicated in any further inquests.²⁶²

The magistrates' investigation did not extend past the ninth month of 1837, yet northern Settsu villages felt repercussions well into the following year.²⁶³ Specifically, in Nose's Kurisu Village, local officials felt the strain of the penalties from the previous summer. A petitioner named Hachinoshin wrote to a provincial Lord named Abe regarding the difficulties he and his villagers faced in the months following the Nose incident. Hachinoshin laments that after ten local officials were taken into custody, the village was unable to maintain a balance in handling public and private affairs. He asks to be released from his obligations in managing village records in order to care for his aged mother, and he also solicits assistance in temple maintenance. Later in the petition, he accuses two provincial lords, Tabuchi Eijirō and Saitō Katsuyuemon, of imposing additional penalties on

²⁶² *Nose-Chō shi* 820-1.

²⁶³ This case will be examined more closely in the following chapter.

him and other villagers by asking for local administrators to procure gifts of food, candles, paper, and footwear for them.²⁶⁴

Yamadaya Daisuke's Thought

Ideology of the Kaijō

Daisuke's circular from Kinenomiya presents the only opportunity to analyze the thought underlying the Nose incident. Transcribed by the calligrapher Imai Fujikura, the letter documents Daisuke's thoughts and announcements to those in attendance on the first day of the movement.²⁶⁵ Its epistolary style does not differ from early modern letters of petition and protest, and it contains the standard redundancies in supplication and honorifics. The following translation attempts to preserve the style as literally as possible:

With awe and respect, we humbly present this petition and written memorandum. The price of grain has risen astronomically in the past few years. Moreover, it is clear that widespread epidemics have led to countless numbers dying of starvation. Since the spring, twenty out of every hundred people have starved to death. Thus, the land's treasures have been taken away from us. We can furthermore ascertain that with the rising cost of grain, our hardships will peak in a ninety-day period this autumn when fifty out of every hundred people will perish from starvation. We cannot sustain our rice fields and bequeath them to our offspring. We ask for you now to distribute rice to strengthen all residing in your domains. The domains in turn will distribute the grain to their residents in equal proportions. For the sake of everyone, we plead with you to follow through with our requests before disaster besets our regions this fall. We humble ourselves to petition you to listen to us. Due to the inflated price of commodities in recent years, everything—from the village body itself to things of trivial importance—has truly been afflicted. For instance, villagers have no choice but to borrow *zeni* to prepare for agricultural work this fall. We ask you to take this into account, for all domains are caught in a cycle of borrowing and lending. We wish for you to consider this in the name of virtuous government; however, should virtuous government not be administered, decades of

²⁶⁴ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 15, 10-11.

²⁶⁵ Hayashida brings into question the text's author and readership; after all, he comments, there were inconsistencies in the language style—something perhaps attributable to Fujikura's transcription—and few peasants were able to read and understand it (20).

strife shall ensue. Even if our hardships persist for only a few years, nothing, no matter how great or small, can be sustained. Because our rice fields will dry up at that point, we plead for you to administer rule with the utmost benevolence and virtue. Should the Emperor command this upon the lands' governors, even if it appears that indeed we will face severe reproach, our efforts will not have been in vain. As such, we respectfully present this to you. That is all.

The Seventh Month
To the Royal Highness the Kampaku²⁶⁶

Addendum²⁶⁷

As we have just written, with respect we present this petition. It shall be circulated to each head of the household in each domain. At night, we will gather in Kinenomiya. If there are problems, we will seek assistance from those in other villages. We will ask village headmen to lend resources for us to proceed to Kyoto. We shall distribute this from Kinenomiya so that it promptly arrives at its intended destinations. That is all.²⁶⁸

Daisuke elicits rudimentary Confucian ideals in his call multiple calls for benevolence from the realm's leaders and for virtue in his request of sympathy from those in power who read the piece. The text also hints at the Mandate of Heaven by equating the peasants with the "treasures" of the realm and by arguing order in the land may only be restored if the peasants are placated. In contrast to Ōshio Heihachirō's *gekibun*, Daisuke avoids referents to Chinese and Japanese history and instead grounds the text in his contemporary world of suffering, even if the figures he presents in it are embellished.

The most conspicuous feature of the circular involves the Emperor. Daisuke refrains from targeting anyone by name, yet he addresses his petition to the "Royal Highness the Kanpaku" which refers to the regent for the Emperor Ninkō (r. 1817-46). Within the text itself, however, he writes that the efforts of the movement would be successful when the

²⁶⁶ Translation of 関白殿下

²⁶⁷ Here Yamadaya lists the following villages he to which he intends to circulate the text: Kunisaki, Yoshikawa, Kurokawa, Todoromi, Higashiyama, Yoshida, Yoshie, Nakagawara, Kibe, Ikeda, Hagiwara, Yazama, Tadaï, Hirano, Uneno, Uehara, Yamashita, Sasabe, and Hitokura.

²⁶⁸ Japanese versions may be found in *Hennen... Volume 14* 566 and *Ukiyo no arisama* 397-8.

Emperor decrees that the land should be ruled with virtue and benevolence, provided his petition is accepted and read with complete understanding. Finally in the postscript, he announces that the movement's destination is Kyoto, thus necessitating a march through local villages to procure the necessary resources for the journey.

Research into the Nose incident centers on the mention of the Emperor in the *kaijō* in order to compartmentalize Daisuke's thought into one of two camps. The first falls in *sonnō*, or pro-imperial cause. Hayashida argues that in peasant uprisings and petitions, it is rare to find references to the Imperial Court or Kyoto in terms of an end-goal. He further writes that the circular represents a key forerunner to *sonnō* thought in the Meiji Period.²⁶⁹

The second interpretation belongs to Fukaya Katsumi's peasant consciousness faction. In his article "*Hyakushō ikki no shisō*" (The Thought of Peasant Uprisings), Fukaya writes that early modern peasants had a keen awareness of their social stratification within the Tokugawa political order. Rural dissent did not serve as a means to usurp the power or revolt against the rule of the Bakufu; rather, he maintains, the uprisings served as a crucial tool for the peasants to enhance their social conditions and economic livelihoods within the *bakuhān* system.²⁷⁰ Kawai subscribes to the line of peasant thought in his article on the Nose movement. He argues that the *kaijō* does not "reject the Tokugawa feudal system," but instead appeals for the "expansion of government and state consciousness" for the plight of the peasants. In addition, he opposes the *sonnō* interpretation, claiming that the presence of Emperor in name does not validate any pro-Imperial/anti-Bakufu sentiment.²⁷¹

Both theories remain problematic and oversimplify Daisuke's reach into Nose's peasantry. To claim Daisuke was a precursor in *sonnō* thought of the *bakumatsu* period

²⁶⁹ Hayashida 19-20.

²⁷⁰ Fukaya 60-82.

²⁷¹ Kawai 34-5.

educes an unlikely connection to the Mito School of the 1820s. That is, it is doubtful that Daisuke studied Aizawa Seishisai's theories of *kokutai* (national polity) or adhered to *sonnō-jōi* rhetoric. Likewise, Daisuke's actions during the course of the Nose incident do not clearly reflect a desire to preserve the Tokugawa social hierarchy. After all, Daisuke targeted the homes of village bureaucrats and elites in his eventual path of destruction.

Yamadaya Daisuke's *kaijō* represents an amalgamation of thought that appeals to whoever accesses the document. In adhering to general Confucian principles of benevolence and virtue, it offers a vague sense of righteousness for peasant agitation. In articulating the demands to the Shogunate and his lords, it suggests the possibility that the Tokugawa order may be corrupt but can persevere through the realities of famine provided the Emperor rectifies the dire environment.

Nevertheless, the intellectual underpinnings of the circular do not explicate the violent nature of the movement itself. For the case of Ōshio's riot earlier in the year, the *Yōmeigaku* tenet "*shikō gōitsu*" or unity of thought and action provides an intellectual justification for the Osaka riot. Yet for the Nose movement, no particular strand of thought in the circular rationalizes the incident's wanton violence and coercion.

Does this entail that Yamadaya Daisuke grasped at ideological straws in conveying his intentions to his supporters in Kinenomiya? Gazing at the circular through the lens of early modern Japanese intellectual thought will fail to detect any single strand of philosophy and correlate it with the subsequent actions. Viewing the document through the filter of individualism begets a separate interpretation. Daisuke, along with Fujikura and Shirōuemon, galvanized the emotions of Nose's peasants through an assortment of vague promises of improved economic and social conditions. By hoisting banners that proclaimed

his movement shared goals with Ōshio's riot, Daisuke created a sense of continuity with popular protest from urban Settsu. At the same time, he amplified the importance of his goals by announcing his plans personally to set foot in the Imperial Court in order to share his concerns with the Emperor.

Manipulation of Sahō

If Yamadaya Daisuke's Nose movement echoed in nineteenth-century Settsu like Kawai's "firecracker of individual action," then it did so only by incorporating elements of peasant uprisings, urban riots, and village disturbances in such a manner that the event evades strict categorization. Daisuke redefined the parameters of his movement in efforts to appeal to as broad an audience as possible, just as his circular had done. An examination of how Daisuke manipulated *sahō* or the conventions of late Tokugawa unrest helps clarify this point.

Hosaka Satoru delineates the features of early modern *sahō* in his 2000 monograph, *Hyakushō ikki no sahō* or *The Propriety of Peasant Uprisings*. Specifically, these include village councils, circulars, signboards, flags, banners, weapons, and dress. The eighty years spanning from 1730 to 1810 represented the heyday for *sahō*, according to Hosaka, for most elements were present in each case of peasant unrest during the timeframe. En masse, he writes, these conventions strengthened inter-village unity among the peasants.²⁷² By the Tempō period, Hosaka argues, rural remonstrance abandoned traditional practices in favor of illicit forms of protest.²⁷³

²⁷² Hosaka *Ikki to shūen* 35.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 3.

On the surface, the Nose incident adheres to *sahō* schema. The written formalities in and humble tone of the *kaijō* share the same lexicon and characteristics with circulars from earlier peasant protest. Furthermore, like formal letters of discontent, the text outlines socio-economic conditions, pinpoints the place of gathering, and includes an overview for the movement. Even the flags Daisuke's group carried hearken back to political slogans written on the banners earlier in the century. Although Hosaka notes that the language on the flags shifted from political to the religious and metaphysical in the 1830s, Daisuke's catchphrases clearly plead for righteous governance and identify his cause as part of an ongoing struggle for early modern Japan's social and economic restoration. Finally, as noted above, the participants bore weapons and tools common to peasant uprisings from the previous century.²⁷⁴

Nonetheless, the violent and lawless nature of the incident itself diverges from the structured character of the peasant uprisings earlier in the century. The Nose incident starts as a simple village disturbance: Daisuke writes his demands and voices them to various administrators. Then the movement takes the form of an *uchikowashi* as the group razed estates in villages surrounding Kinenomiya. Lastly, after resorting to murder in the Inachi village, the incident transforms into a riot not unlike Ōshio's, driving provincial and Bakufu forces to amass arms in order to suppress the villagers.

Daisuke's stated goals obviously fell short of materializing. Whereas previous episodes of peasant remonstrance achieved a qualified success when the magistrates issued forth a *machibure* (a law designated to appease urban ward residents or rural villagers), the

²⁷⁴ The weapons carried in the Nose incident included bamboo trunks fashioned into spears (竹槍), iron guns (鉄砲) and swords (刀). These constitute three of the commonly used 5 weapons in peasant uprisings. The two absent from the movement were bows (矢) and regular spears (槍) (Hosaka *Hyakushō ikki to gimin no kenkyū* 110).

Nose affair culminated in the death of the leaders and a criminal investigation into those regions and villagers that participated in the aggression.

Neither a single train of thought—Confucian, peasant uprising, or otherwise—nor a combination thereof fully defines the Nose incident. The *kaijō* indeed contains elements standard to circulars and summons of early modern protest, and it alludes to a basic Confucian ontology. Yet, the events following the dissemination of the text suggest a selective effort by Daisuke to embrace traditions of propriety in late Tokugawa dissent. Daisuke employs the consciousness of province-wide unrest within Settsu's rural population to tailor his cause into one that suits the agrarian needs. At the same time, he guides the sentiment into a course of action that blends so many components of protest that what eventually materializes is an event which had no precedent in the history of Settsu protest but which also failed to become commonplace in subsequent provincial dissent.

Imagining and Centering Yamadaya Daisuke's Sphere of Remonstrance

Ōshio Heihachirō's uprising expanded the public sphere into one that allowed multiple strata of early modern urban Japan to engage in an antiauthoritarian activity that stretched the capabilities of the city magistrates to contain it. Yamadaya Daisuke's movement restored the arena of remonstrance back to its prominence in the province's countryside. In the official and public consciousness, however, Ōshio's inclusive sphere did not deflate with the events of five months later. Conversely, it appeared to expand. Despite the fact that Settsu's peasantry constituted the majority of the Nose incident's members, recorders and observers centered their attention on action of the leaders to the degree that fictive elements entered their accounts.

A narrative presented to the *Shōya* of Ikeda a few weeks after the movement, for example, romanticizes the actions of a samurai by the name of Kazuma. The author not only introduces Kazuma as one of the central participants in the affair but also casts him in the role as patron of the incident:

...Yamadaya Daisuke garnered fame for his instruction in the martial arts with city officials as his pupils. Also, Imai Fujikura, instructor of reading, joined their party. This group did not have sufficient means to fund their journey, but there was a *rōnin* named Kazuma who took their affairs to heart. The three were at the mercy of their allied *rōnin*...²⁷⁵

The account implicates Kazuma in the death of the Inachi Village's *hiningashira* but mentions little else about the figure until the incident's finale:

The men sheathed their swords...and even though there were no escape routes, with gunnery they had borrowed from the villages, they slowly approached the magistrate forces. They reloaded their weapons with ammunition, but were fallen back by the suppressors. Daisuke again withdrew his sword, emerged from the temple, and stepped onto the horse path while holding in his left hand the hair of Kazuma. He cried "Kazuma, Kazuma, Kazuma." Since nobody responded, Daisuke took it upon himself to slit Kazuma's throat, at which time he was shot.²⁷⁶

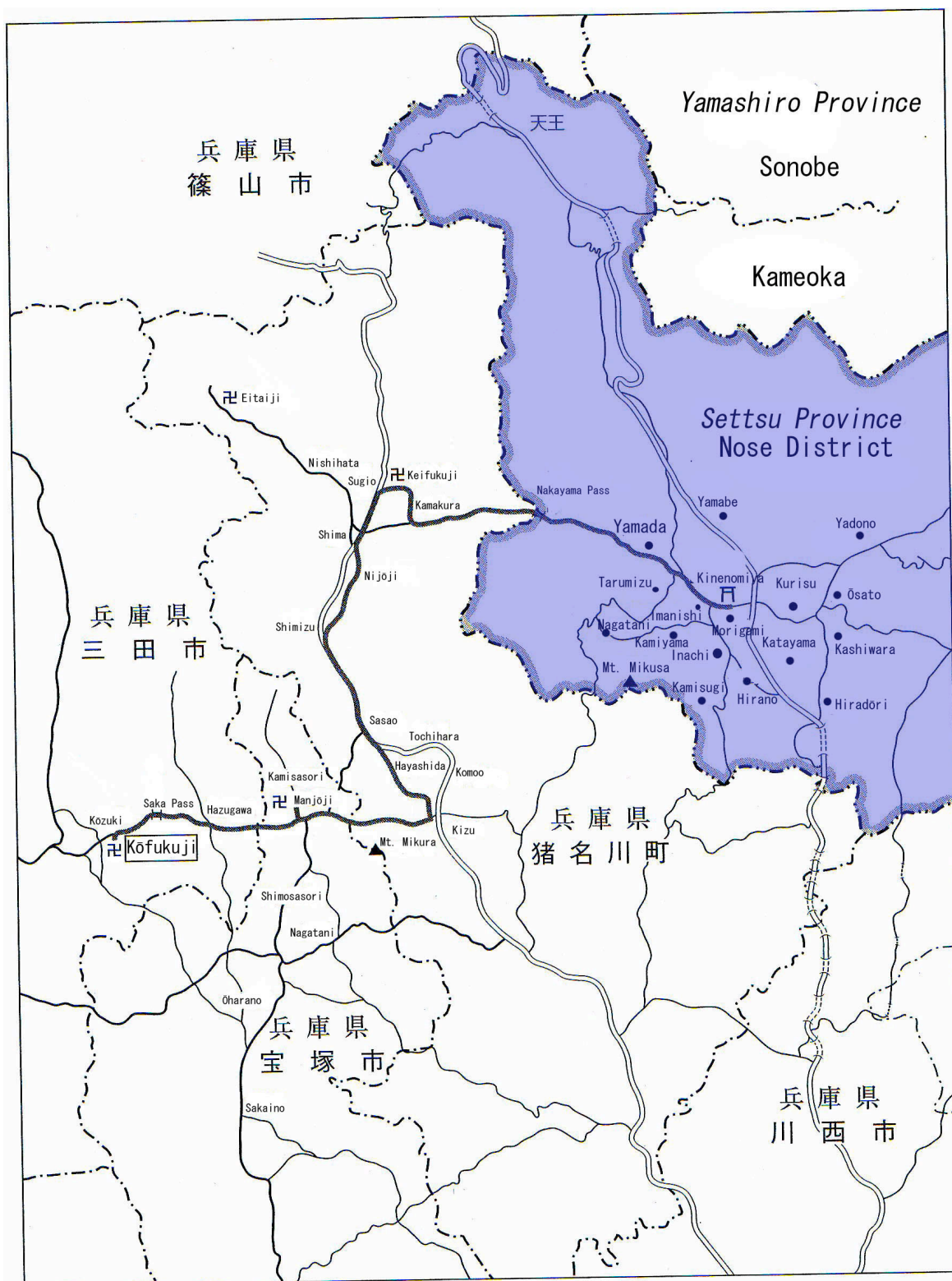
The possibility exists that Kazuma was the *nom de voyage* for Satō Shirōemon, but no other source mentions the name. Other documents also do not refer to any warrior sponsorship for the incident; after all, the group procured *zeni*, gold, and silver forcibly from over thirty villages in Nose and Kawabe. Finally, in regard to samurai or *rōnin* participation, the only figure with a clear attachment to the warrior class or even in a

²⁷⁵ *Hennen*... Volume 14 566-7.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 568.

remote circumstance the rōnin was Daisuke, who was already a generation removed from active service and who was in all practical purposes an Osaka druggist.

Nonetheless, Yamadaya Daisuke's public sphere should not be viewed as simply the offshoot of Ōshio's. The significance of the Nose incident moreover does not lie in the growth of the community, real or fictitious, of early modern dissent. The Nose incident ultimately exemplifies the growing power of the individual over the environment in illicit remonstrance in the Settsu province. Daisuke's stated case incorporates the same combination of economic, social, and political strife endemic to the outlet of public dissent in Settsu. On a greater level, Yamadaya choreographed a movement that selected conventions from mass protest in order to manipulate the peasants' emotions to complement that of his own. This newfound agency had repercussions elsewhere in 1837 Japan—a point to be addressed in the conclusion—yet the individual contributor would vanish from the Settsu public sphere. It was instead replaced in the public sphere with a newfound political culture among the peasants—one that prodded farmers to take proactive measures to enhance their conditions and livelihoods in the face of any potential threat from allegedly corrupt officials. Ōshio and Yamadaya's contributions to mass protest emboldened Settsu villagers with the recognition that they could induce change in such fashion that officials would comply with their requests to deter any further mass outbreaks.



(Map adapted from *Nose-Chō shi* Volume 1 p. 811)

Rural Settsu Remonstrance from 1838 to 1853:

The Transition to an Active Political Culture

Introduction

Calm prevailed in Settsu following Ōshio Heihachirō and Yamadaya Daisuke's respective incidents. Osaka magistrates and their inspectors crisscrossed the province searching for conspirators and evidence associated with the 1837 riots. Even as far as Mito, inspectors confiscated parcels and letters bearing the seal of Ōshio or his students. Still village petitions and litigation, although fewer than before the Tempō period, persisted throughout the final decades of the Tokugawa Period. From these texts we can detect a shift from a subject political culture to an active one in mid-nineteenth century Settsu.

Robert E. Ward defines political culture as an integral feature of modernity characterized by the “internalized cognitions, feelings, and evaluations of Japanese towards their political system and their own roles therein.”²⁷⁷ He asserts that members of the early modern Japan's lower social strata (primarily the peasants and commoners) concerned themselves in political affairs in as far as the matters affected their villages or townships. This engendered a “subject political culture” where the agrarians or artisans found social complacency provided their rulers manage them with effective and benevolent governance.²⁷⁸ Remonstrance in Settsu during the 1840s and 1850s reveals a shift in political culture where peasant complacency no longer is confined to the village boundaries; instead, it expands into a sphere that concerns itself with provincial and central government bodies.

²⁷⁷ Ward 27.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., 34-5.

This chapter surveys incidents from 1839 to 1853 in order to investigate an expansive political culture in Settsu's countryside.²⁷⁹ The first episode involves merchants, peasants, and artisans from the Okamachi region in the Teshima District who accused local administrators of destroying financial ledgers. We next turn to a *hakoso* (箱訴 boxed petition) instigated by residents of the Okabe domain where villagers appealed for the resignation of *jinya*²⁸⁰ officials in the Sakuraidani area. Then, we explore a spate of incidents in the late 1840s and early 1850s that target allegedly corrupt village leaders. The chapter's conclusion addresses the importance of infrequent remonstrative activity in the mid-nineteenth century before discussing the contour and trajectory of the public sphere of remonstrance in the years immediately prior to Commodore Perry's arrival.

1839-1840: A Dispute over Rural Mismanagement in Okamachi

The first incident of remonstrance following Yamadaya's Nose uprising transpired in 1839 Okamachi, a town nestled in the center of Settsu's Teshima District. Adjacent to Harada Shrine—one of the province's oldest shrines dating back to the fourth century—and along the path to Nose in the West, Okamachi served as an administrative center with representatives from villages across Teshima and magistrate inspectors from Osaka residing in the town.²⁸¹ With steady agricultural production in the first half of the nineteenth century, Okamachi's *chōnin* (町人 literally townsmen, but in Teshima predominantly merchants)

²⁷⁹ In contrast with other chapters of my dissertation, this section will not contain a detailed historiography for two reasons: first, some of the material has already been addressed in the third chapter on early Settsu remonstrance; and secondly, a noticeable gap in scholarship on Settsu protest marks the period between Ōshio's riot and the *ee-janaika* movements of the end of the Bakufu. The exceptions are Kobayashi Shigeru's studies on late Settsu protest, each of which will be addressed within the case studies.

²⁸⁰ *Jinya* (陣屋) are Bakufu encampments that housed retainers and officers serving daimyo in domains producing fewer than 30,000 *koku*.

²⁸¹ *Nihon chimei daijiten: Osaka-fu* (Great Encyclopedia of Japanese Place-Names, Osaka Prefecture Volume) 260-1.

prospered at the expense of neighboring villagers. Okamachi officials, from 1778 to 1800, drew contracts with *chōnin* and leased properties to them, a practice that allowed the region to develop into an economic center in Teshima. In fact, by the end of the eighteenth century nearly two-thirds of Okamachi residents leased homes.²⁸²

The disputes in late Tokugawa Okamachi involved friction among the peasants, *chōnin*, governmental agencies, and religious bodies: in 1790 villagers protested new obligatory offerings to shrine officials; in 1818, residents petitioned over increased taxes used to restore nearby shrines; in 1827, three *chōnin* refused to contribute payments to the family of a deceased village elder during a ritual when Okamachi was designated as a *jōchi* (consecrated land); and in 1828, town officials faced a battle with shrine administrators and residents over the unnatural death of one of the villagers.²⁸³ The appeal that began in late 1839 and continued through the summer of 1840 represents the culmination of the strife from the earlier decades of the 1800s, and it also sets the tone for the active political culture among Settsu's rural peasantry in the following decades.

The incident began in the tenth month of 1839, when an elder by the name of Chōbei retired from his post and was to transfer custody of the region's financial records to his successors. Three *chōnin* who took temporary control as elders received all of the documents except the most important one: the *Okamachi makazu nenguchō* (岡町間数年貢帳), a ledger detailing the annual rice tax paid by houses across Okamachi.²⁸⁴ Upon hearing about the disappearance of the book, twenty-six *chōnin* in the region drafted the following statement on the eleventh month to Chōbei and Noda Village's *Shōya* Saburōbei:

²⁸² *Shinshū Toyonaka Shi-shi: Shūroku/toshi* (Toyonaka City History's Revised Edition: Villages and Cities) 94-100.

²⁸³ *Toyonaka Shi-shi* (Toyonaka City History), 177-80.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 181.

A Notice

1) We twenty-six *chōnin* have now compiled this draft over the ledger's disappearance. On the twenty-seventh day of the previous month, this mysterious incident caught our eye, and we lodged an appeal. Our petition triggered an investigation into all concerned parties, just as we had requested with awe and respect from our authorities. Noda Village *Shōya* Lord Sarōbei offered us an apology, and while we demonstrated much patience, both sides continued a dialogue in response to our appeal. We finally realized that the region needs to enact effective reforms. We feel that the *kumigashira* who have been working until this time on behalf of our town's affairs should hereafter retire. Even though there is no precedent for this course of action, we are unanimous in our resolve that our pleas must be heeded. Therefore, on this day we present this notice.

Drafted by the paper merchant Seiemon.

Addressed to the intermediary for Noda Village *Shōya* Saburōbei

Addressed to the village elder and antiquities dealer Chōbei²⁸⁵

In the twelfth month, the twenty-six *chōnin* compiled a list of temporary procedures to be followed until a new village elder could be selected. The document clarifies that three merchants—a rice peddler named Shōichi and two shopkeepers named Sabei and Chōyuemon—would alternate in serving the role of elder. They first write that all records of payments and offerings to the Harada Shrine must pass through their hands before being sent to provincial authorities. Then, they note that the financial ledgers and religious registers must be handled by and stamped with the seals of all three of them. Finally, they ensure that they will tend to all official affairs in Okamachi. The *chōnin* write at the end of the text that they had unanimously agreed on these measures, and that all three of the men would decide on the various matters for the region's wellbeing.²⁸⁶ Still, the document failed to alleviate the concerns surrounding the missing ledger as the men neglected to mention the problem in

²⁸⁵ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* (Chronological Compendium of Peasant Uprising Sources) Volume 15, 332-3.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 333.

their text, thereby leading other administrators to believe that the *chōnin* had deliberately destroyed the record.

In the third month of 1840, Okayama Village *Shōya* Naotarō sent an appeal to the Osaka ward magistrates, casting doubt that the ledger had actually been lost. In the text, Naotarō accuses the interim leaders of collusion in order for them to benefit financially, for the missing ledger accounted for all financial loans and payments among the area's *chōnin*. The *shōya* expresses concern that he and other elders across the region would face economic sanctions due to inconsistencies with *nengu* payments. Furthermore, the three provisional leaders neglected to tabulate payments and tributes in a new ledger after having been instilled with power in Okamachi, thereby casting more suspicion upon their ability to handle the region's affairs. Naotarō also asserts that individual interest among the new leaders led to delays in procuring any sort of ledger, and that each of them hampered the ongoing investigation into the original records' disappearance. The elder at last requests for Okamachi *shōya* to be allowed to revise the records based on documented *nengu* payments from the Meiwa period (1764-71). He promises that "even with discrepancies in the older documents, we now will consult with those in our region in order to revise both old and new loans in accordance with geographical and temporal factors."²⁸⁷

An addendum to the appeal includes a statement by seven village representatives from the Harata region. The men elaborate on Naotarō's accusations to argue that the temporary *chōnin* leaders ordered a paper merchant named Kiyoyuemon and seven of his subordinates to dispose of the original records. They further question why the merchants would treat material written on thick paper normally reserved for formal financial ledgers as

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 334.

wastepaper, unless they were ordered to do so. The document ends with a new call for an investigation into the matter.²⁸⁸

On the eighteenth day of the fourth month, however, the ledger resurfaced and the seven villages in Okamachi delivered it as promised to the three merchant administrators. The *shōya* pored over the document to validate its authenticity, and then handed it back to the interim headmen for safekeeping. As editors of the *Toyonaka Shi-shi* (City History of Toyonaka) write, the incident exacerbated relations between Okamachi and its surrounding villages and had an impact on merchants in the town who strived to maintain their profits. Although the interim leaders relinquished their control to a new headman in 1843, the prolonged merchant management, the editors continue, revealed a heightened power of *chōnin* in local administration.²⁸⁹

In addition to hindering the economic, social, and political relationships between the *chōnin* and other Okamachi residents, the episode also represented a key component in the shift in Settsu's rural political culture. This initial case of remonstrance following the movements led by Ōshio and Yamadaya mirrors the form of rural protest and appeals earlier in the nineteenth century: the documents from the *shōya* to the Osaka authorities contain the honorifics commonplace in written protest; and the texts convey the pleas of multiple rural representatives. What emerges from the incident is not an exclusive struggle over social hierarchy or distrust over governmental corruption. Rather, we read of forthright misgivings pertaining to *chōnin* management, as the peasants file grievances that may preclude any possible corruption among the temporary merchant rule. The missing ledger presented an

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 334.

²⁸⁹ *Toyonaka Shi-shi* 182-3.

opportunity for the peasants to pronounce their mistrust for the *chōnin*, and it also served as a means for them to curb perceived corruption.

1841: A Boxed Petition from Sakuraidani

Our second incident under analysis involves an 1841 *hakoso* (boxed petition) delivered to Osaka authorities on behalf of embittered villagers across four districts of Settsu. The petition targets officials in the *jinya* of Sakuraidani and asks the Osaka magistrates to conduct an investigation into the administrators' perceived unjust rule. Initially, Nose residents complained that the sanctions levied against them from Yamadaya Daisuke's Nose movement were exorbitant and overwhelming. Subsequently, Nose and Arima villages joined the protest and detailed corruption and mismanagement among the *jinya* officials.²⁹⁰

The Sakuraidani *jinya*, while located in northern Teshima and presiding over twelve of its villages, also held jurisdiction over three villages in Nose, three more in Kawabe, and six in Arima. The station belonged to the Abe daimyo of the Okabe domain, and consisted of a *daikan* (deputy) who reported to the *karō* (chief retainer to the daimyo), his subordinates, foot soldiers, and ten other assistants. Throughout the Tokugawa period, the *jinya* governed over the districts' twenty-four villages by overseeing harvest finances as well as commercial trade to and from Osaka. More importantly, as Kobayashi Shigeru writes in “*Settsu no kuni teshima gun sakuraidani sōdō nitsuite*” (The Sakuraidani Movement in Settsu's Teshima District), the *jinya* served as a key station for communication between the province and the Okabe daimyo. These responsibilities became the focal point of conflict when villagers

²⁹⁰ *Hyakushō ikki jiten* (Dictionary of Peasant Uprisings) 407.

perceived *jinya* officials as corrupt individuals who withheld profits from the villagers and who accepted bribes from local leaders.²⁹¹

The 1841 incident began with the incarceration of Hachinoshin, a Buddhist priest, and Jūtayū, a headman in Kurisu Village three years beforehand. *Jinya* officials at first ordered both men to be placed under house arrest for their participation in the Nose uprising, and they soon summoned the two to the station for further questioning and sentencing. Although Hachinoshin was released into village custody, he was later consigned to work in Keifukuji, a temple in Kawabe district's Sugio Village as part of his punishment. At the end of 1838, Bakufu representatives by the name of Tabuchi Eijirō and Saitō Katsuyuemon transferred to Sakuraidani to begin working for the *jinya*. During the next two years, the new officials retroactively levied further taxes and fines on Jūtayū and Hachinoshin, concurrently demanding for tribute and fines from additional villagers for their roles in the Nose uprising.²⁹²

In 1841, village representatives from Nose drafted a *hakoso* in order for Osaka magistrates to conduct an investigation and intervene on behalf of the headmen and priest. Having followed through with the villagers' request, the Osaka authorities concluded that the outpost's *daikan* had conspired with one of the Okabe daimyo's retainers to profit from the villagers. The magistrates inform the villagers that they had completed a thorough investigation into the *jinya* officials' residences, including the homes of the *daikan* and chief *metsuke*. Consequently, they ordered for the corrupt retainer to be placed under house arrest

²⁹¹ Kobayshi 1954 20-1.

²⁹² Kobayashi 1969 48-9.

and for the *daikan* to be returned to Okabe. The response ends with a promise that the affairs have been tended to and that a new *daikan* shall be installed into service at the *jinya*.²⁹³

The magistrates' ruling, however, triggered further petitions and appeals not only from villages in Teshima but also ones from Arima and Kawabe. Representatives from the districts drafted a series of accusations of corruption among the *jinya* administrators. In a letter dated the second day of the tenth month of 1841, three villagers from Teshima elaborated on the original *hakoso*'s accusations and outlined additional ones for Osaka magistrates to consider.

The list first addresses the *jinya* officials' ties to Osaka's Dōjima businesses by accusing the officials of collaborating with the businesses to bill villagers for rental homes and force higher interest on loans. It then tends to the officials who were not transferred from the *jinya* following the first investigation and notes that the Osaka magistrates were sympathetic to the censured bureaucrats who continue to conspire with *jinya* samurai foot soldiers at expense of the peasants. The draft also targets the subordinate officials, alleging that even minor officials demand payments and gifts, which in turn hamper the village economy and local livelihoods. Next, villagers ask for *jinya* officials to cease coming to the countryside to scrutinize the financial ledgers, and instead request that one headman and one elder be able to manage the records. Finally, the appeal accuses Tabuchi of censuring additional villagers in the Yamabe and Kamiyama villages as he had done to Hachinoshin and Jūtayū.²⁹⁴

Later that year, elders from Kawabe villages joined the struggle against *jinya* corruption by affixing their seals to a separate appeal. The new text first expands on the

²⁹³ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 16, 37.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 37-8.

Dōjima business connection with the *jinya* officials and asks the administrators to compensate Teshima villagers for their losses. It then details various tributes—fresh fish, free boarding, New Year gifts, sake, and payments to visiting retainers—from which the villages ask to be granted exemption. The peasants also request to be released from duties in official functions for the *jinya* employees and Bakufu guests. The letter concludes with a blanketed statement indicating that the villagers understand that any subsequent steps must pass through Edo offices while also noting that the entire region would be grateful should the Osaka magistrates free them of the aforementioned excessive duties and payments.²⁹⁵

On the seventeenth day of the first month of 1842, Arima villagers assisted the drafting of an additional petition which asked for compensation for all districts and villages under the *jinya*'s control. In contrast to the previous missives, the letter's tone conveys that the Osaka magistrates have the responsibility to eliminate the *jinya*'s imposed fines. Moreover, they assert that should the demands for tributes and gifts persist, they "shall not deliver at all. With these conditions, now is the time for the villages to react, and we will continue to do so as we have in the past... Villages should be of utmost importance, as everyone is aware, and it is with that that we present our case to you."²⁹⁶

Two more petitions followed from a united delegation of villagers across Teshima, Kawabe, Nose, and Arima, and the episode culminated with a series of letters written by Hachinoshin's mother and Jūtayū. These letters suggest that the incidents outlined in the previous petitions mirror the hardships subjected upon Jūtayū and Hachinoshin. For instance, one letter written by Jūtayū addresses a corrupt *shōya* by the name of Tamizō:

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 38-9.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 40.

The *Shōya* Tamizō is of the same fraternity as the other [corrupt officials]. He follows an unjust path, subjecting the peasants to undue stress by making them sell to him their homes and lands, including their possessions of rice fields and the surrounding mountains and forests. He should pay the amount of ten *ryō* of gold to each person who contributed to his estate's construction costs and return to them their homes, fields, and lands.²⁹⁷

In response to the multi-district protests and individual appeals, the Osaka authorities transferred most of the *jinya* officials under suspicion out of the Sakuraidani area in 1842. Fifteen years later, however, the districts united again to protest forced labor around Sakuraidani. The villagers once more targeted the *jinya* administrators, and in the twelfth month of 1857, two peasants from Minamitone and Nobatake villages destroyed the *jinya* officials' homes. The Bakufu meted out light punishments for the peasants and in turn removed the officials from Sakuraidani.²⁹⁸

For the Sakuraidani area, the 1842 protests produced an inter-district alliance that found strength in persistent and multiple calls for reform. Thus when faced with a violent outbreak in 1857, Osaka magistrates found it easier to placate the villagers than to retain the *jinya* officials. Moreover, as Kobayashi writes in “*Ōshio Heihachirō no ran wo meguru nōmin tōsō*” (Agriculturalist Battles Surrounding Ōshio Heihachirō's Riot), the incident exposed a weakened Bakufu in light of an empowered countryside.²⁹⁹

For the arena of remonstrance, the movement highlights the development of a proactive political culture in rural Settsu that differed from the nature of protest in the province before the Tempō crisis. In the 1840s, the *jinya* connected the Okabe daimyo and samurai to the peasants around Sakuraidani, and at the same time it became the target against which the peasants rallied. Furthermore, grievances attended to concerns that breached the

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 46.

²⁹⁸ Kobayashi 1954, 35.

²⁹⁹ Kobayashi 1969 55.

village and district borders. Jūtayū's letters at the incident's conclusion exemplify the turn toward an active political culture in Settsu: he employs his own experience with unjust officials to assist other villages and districts in removing their own problematic rulers.

The Late 1840s and Early 1850s: Intra-Village Strife toward Corrupt Officials

Cases of remonstrance waned into the 1840s, with scattered petitions submitted to Osaka authorities. Still, one discernable pattern of discontent materializes within the province: calls for the dismissal or forced resignation of the *shōya*. Each appeal details allegations of corruption in its village administrators, and while not consistently identifying the official by name, singles them out as the cause of the strife.

To begin, in the eighth month of 1844, peasants in Nishinari District's Noda Village held misgivings pertaining to their *shōya*'s administration. Throughout Noda's history, the village followed hereditary succession in selecting the new *shōya*. In the 1840s, however, villagers sensed that their leader had begun to conspire with *shōya* from the neighboring villages of Kujō and Higashinari to force peasants to pay higher taxes. In response to the perceived wrongdoings, fourteen villagers drafted the "*Mōshi itashi gōgi sadamegaki*" or Procedures of Deliberation. These measures restricted the political reach of the *shōya* by transferring his powers to elected officials or other village administrators.

For instance, villagers may convene to ban arbitrary decisions of the *shōya* and form a group of *kumigashira* to consult over the village's welfare. Village registrars were no longer placed under the custody of the *shōya*; instead, they were protected by the village elders while their keys were held by the *shōya*. Village officials and elected peasants were to manage the distribution of *nengu*, rice, and village funds. Finally, once the *shōya* leaves

office, the village would hold elections to place two *shōya* and one village elder into power. The set of local procedures, according to Kobayashi in his work *Kinsei nōson keizaishi no kenkyū* (Studies in the Economic History of Early Modern Agricultural Villages), reflected an increasing trend among Settsu villages where rural reforms were enacted to replace those instituted by the Bakufu. Moreover, he writes, such measures precipitated similar ones enacted during the Meiji restoration elsewhere in Japan.³⁰⁰ Hence, we may further interpret that the episode demonstrates an growing active political culture in Settsu well before that in other provinces.

Then in the fifth month of 1845, peasants from Shiba Village in the Muko district drafted an appeal against village officials. In a note addressed to a domainal authority by the name of Aoyama Kanenosuke, they present a list of grievances associated with the village elders and *shōya*. First, the peasants allege that the administrators had received economic aid from provincial authorities, and yet the headmen continue to exact loans and high interest from the peasants. Next, they contend that a parcel had been delivered to the village for village relief, but the officials had yet to distribute even one piece of sliver to the farmers. After citing two additional grievances related to the confiscation and misuse of *nengu*, the villagers shed light on the identity of the accused by accusing the *shōya*'s son Yasuke and wife Yae of demanding payments for farming implements, thus impeding rural production. Finally, they pinpoint the corrupt official as a *shōya* named Rihei. Rihei, they claim, siphoned funds for three or four years from the village's day laborers to compensate for his extravagant tastes in food and alcohol. In the postscript, the peasants state that numerous additional officious acts followed the incidents they had outlined, yet the ones they had elaborated on were the most grievous. They request for a domainal inspector to visit the

³⁰⁰ Kobayashi 1963. 355.

village and conduct an investigation into their grievances before closing the document with the standard formalities.³⁰¹

Even in Yatabe, a district that thrived throughout the 1840s, peasants from Shirike Village found cause to submit a *gōso* or direct petition by flocking to the *daikan*'s residence in the tenth month of 1846. The villagers ascribe blame on wealthy land owners and *jinya* officials who collected most of the profits from the year's harvest. Prospering from the stolen *koku*, the administrators began living a life akin to the shogun's vassals, they charge. They continue that *yoriki* dispatched to the area accept the *jinya* officers' bribes and ignore the pleas of the farmers.³⁰²

The *daikan*'s reply to the petition reads as follows:

Written by Lord Noguchi Katsuyemon

A large number of peasants from Shirike Village recently presented a petition to our estate. We had not been forewarned, of course, by the time they had approached the official residence. One day later, they returned and repeated their calls of appeal. We must undoubtedly penalize them in some way, and that is why we now ask for payments to assist in fixing the damage [they had inflicted]. Once that is accomplished, we will hand over their appeal and soon thereafter conduct an official examination into the circumstances they have noted. Until we circulate an official notice, they must understand our intentions and, for the moment, wait for our next response. That is all.³⁰³

Noguchi's response to the villagers' appeal presents a reluctant acceptance of physical acts of remonstrance among the villagers. The farmers' accusations do not differ from those in cases of the 1840s, and the official reaction to the crime—censuring the villagers with fines to mend the damage—appears relatively mild compared to the

³⁰¹ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 16, 564-5.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 583-4.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, 584.

widespread manhunt for those implicated in Ōshio and Yamadaya's respective, albeit larger and more violent, 1837 movements. Nevertheless, the *daikan*'s demand for minor reparations did not correspond to sanctions—the incineration of written appeals, confinement of the principal actors, and village-wide fines—imposed on illicit protest during the Tokugawa period.

At the turn of the decade, only scattered incidents of remonstrance befell Settsu, and even those were chiefly confined to the Muko district.³⁰⁴ In 1848, for instance, forty peasants from the Amagasaki area protested a new *miyaza* (a group organized to tend to the local shrine affairs) after Kyoto officials had granted the district permission for its new formation. Then at the end of 1849, peasants from Imo Village appealed for the forced retirement of their elders.³⁰⁵ Lastly, in 1851, two more episodes transpired in Muko. The first of which was a conflict between the agricultural peasants and those instilled with power in Hirota Village. The second involved a struggle over elected Higashinomiya and Nishinomiya shrine officials in Kobayashi Village. Although no detailed records remain from these two incidents, as editors of *Nishinomiya Shi-shi* indicate, the conflicts underscore the fact that since the early Tokugawa Period, the peasants' sense of entitlement evolved to the point that the general villagers could oppose and shape the existing order.³⁰⁶

The last incident of village protest within our timeframe occurred in the first month of 1853 when farmers from Teshima district's Sōdōshi Village lodged a complaint against the *shōya*'s disloyalty:

³⁰⁴ Aoki Kōji's *Chronology* (1986) and *Compendium* (1993) contain only references to incidents in Muko for Settsu remonstrance from 1848 to 1851.

³⁰⁵ *Nishinomiya Shi-shi*, Volume 2 828.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 837.

With Awe and Respect We Present This Grievance

1) ...the *shōya* and village elder were born to the same mother. Even so, we have come to detest them. We have held discussions open to everyone in our village to discuss this matter. We are indeed distraught with the hardships we have endured, yet in the past few days due to your compassionate grace, we have been instructed to initiate our own measures. We are sincerely grateful for this and humble ourselves before you. We ensure you that we will exhibit patience in our deliberations, yet while this is somewhat trivial, we have difficulty in meeting our *nengu* obligations. To counter our wayward *shōya*, we are presenting the following appeal concerning our countless troubles.

1) It goes without saying that peasants in the area have agreed to fair practices in divvying out rice fields among each village. Yet even though parts of the fields were to be distributed to the *komae hyakushō* (tenant farmers), the rice from these fields was collected for *nengu* payments. According to payment remittances from land stewards, the rice was given to the village officials. As the documents indicate, because the officials received inferior grain, they exacted excessive payments on us, and we have therefore ceased our payments. When the village officials sent out a request to the *yakusho*, we were ordered to send our payments immediately. Because of our delays, our officials cuffed our hands. They had once before granted [payment] extensions to everyone tilling in the fields. Still, as we had done in the past, we calculated the yield from privately possessed fields and determined the amount of *nengu* that should be paid. We tabulated the amounts in a ledger and delivered it to our *Shōya Kihee*. We have naturally lodged this protest because the officials only collected *nengu* from our fields [and not the privately-owned ones]. We had been persistent in asking for latitude in meeting our payment schedule, but in the end we were asked to hand over the amount we had at hand. Authorities expressed no concern at all for our well-being. This is why we will not send our appeal to the local *yakusho*. This petition addressed to you bears no official seal, but we still would appreciate it if you may listen to our appeal. Should our present difficulties with *nengu* be tended to, we know any resolution will lack precedent and create hurdles in reallocating rice fields in the future. With this in mind, we regretfully send in our petition... We request for you to peruse this missive with your immense compassion. With awe and respect, this is our report. We are grateful for your vast generosity for any measures enacted on our behalf. That is all.

1853 Sōdōshi Village Peasants³⁰⁷

An additional notice details amount of *nengu* paid by the peasants, the rice given to the village officials, and a breakdown of rice provided by the both the enfeoffed and non-enfeoffed peasants. The addendum to the notice informs the provincial authorities that the

³⁰⁷ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 17, 540.

figures are unbiased and true to their complaints. A final letter reiterates their appeal and validates their calculations:

1) On the first day of this past seventh month, officials ordered us to submit this notice. Upon its delivery, the merchant Zōnosuke should have received two *monme*³⁰⁸ of silver. If he had received no cash, then we would have redelivered the notice...He received only one *monme* in the seventh month, which was sufficient at the time, but we have since been ordered to resend our appeal. In the meantime, a recent flood has compounded our troubles. We delivered a promissory note for the remaining one *monme* of silver, but someone had discarded it. We lodged a complaint eventually, but our affairs have reached this point that we find it necessary to speak to Zōnosuke directly. In his capacity as a merchant, he would have a firm grasp of any negotiations that may ensue. All of the exchanges that Eizō made with Zōnosuke were in silver, and as written above, we drafted a promissory note regarding that monetary exchange. It has become increasingly evident that officials hoarded the receipts and disposed of our records. This also has been going along for a long while now. These incidents have created undue anguish for us because we do not normally deal with such matters. We submit this petition in hopes that it will be accepted with your vast compassion. That is all.³⁰⁹

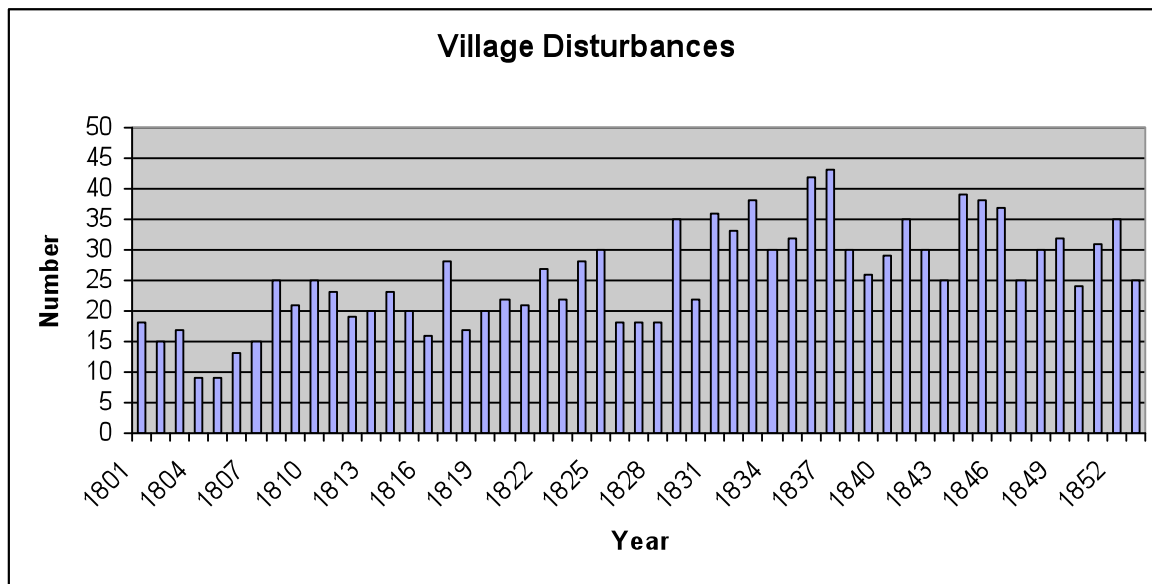
Sudōshi Village's peasants thus portray their *shōya* as a figure who conspired with merchants to make economic gains for himself and his family. Whereas the farmers strove to earn their livelihoods, Kihee colluded with merchants and wealthier peasants to exchange profits from the harvests for cash among themselves. Thus, the peasants had no recourse other than to air their concerns to Osaka magistrates in order to achieve a fair settlement for their livelihoods.

Conclusions: The Importance of Calm and the Nature of Remonstrance in Mid-Nineteenth Century Settsu

³⁰⁸ One *monme* is equivalent to 3.75 grams

³⁰⁹ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 17, 540-1.

To recall from the second chapter, village disturbances (i.e. petitions, appeals, and skirmishes) generally rose throughout the nineteenth century. As the chart below indicates, the rural movements peaked during the Tempō years and demonstrated higher levels of activity after the famine than before.³¹⁰



We thus are left to question why episodes of remonstrance in Settsu declined while protests rose elsewhere among the provinces of early modern Japan. One answer, as mentioned in the first section of the chapter, stems from the reaction to the riots of 1837. That is, Osaka magistrates and Edo authorities had executed, arrested, expelled, fined, or otherwise censured any person or any village implicated in Ōshio Heihachirō and Yamadaya Daisuke's respective movements. Whereas Daisuke's Nose incident remained Ōshio's sole copycat incident in Settsu, other provinces witnessed similar spates of violence into the 1840s. In fact, according to Suda Tsutomu in *"Akutō" no jūkyū seki* (The "Villainous" Nineteenth Century), the frequency of uprisings in provinces like Echigo, Bingo, and Awa

³¹⁰ Data culled from Aoki 1986.

legitimized violence among the masses in late Tokugawa Japan.³¹¹ At the height of the Tempō famine, the Osaka and Nose incidents therefore spurred on a spate of violence for early modern Japanese peasants, yet curtailed such movements within Settsu.

Another answer to our problem involves Settsu's economic revitalization after the 1830s. Mizuno Tadakuni's fiscal and sumptuary reforms of the early 1840s played a temporary role in stimulating the rural economy by disbanding Osaka *kabu* (licensed trade guilds) and by decreasing the price of grain. Moreover, the Bakufu revalued currency, rescinded debts to merchants, and encouraged farmers to leave the urban centers to return to their villages. Yet, while prices of grain and cotton fell across Settsu, they soon reverted to their pre-reform rates by the end of 1844, thus inducing the villagers to devise new measures to resuscitate their livelihoods.³¹²

The smattering of cases of Settsu remonstrance in the 1840s and early 1850s materialized in regions that attracted merchants and artisans or that bordered Bakufu *jinya* and other political centers. Larger production and increased harvests presented opportunities for wealthy or politically powerful peasants and merchants to take advantage of the agriculturalists, and as the above cases reveal, they did so by gaining provisional control of village administration, conspiring together to profit from confiscated *nengu* payments, and siphoning off economic aid designated for the farmers.

It is Sakuraidani's 1841 *hakoso* then that most embodies a growing active political culture among Settsu's peasantry. Unconfined to village borders, the incident spread across four districts in a combined effort to replace the regional Bakufu authority and curtail local corruption. The inter-district alliance furthermore eludes strict categorization for nineteenth

³¹¹ Suda 198

³¹² Hauser 54-5; *Nishinomiya Shi-shi* 958-9.

century protest, as it stems from the fines in the aftermath of the Nose uprising, expands into an anti-*jinya* movement, and concludes with a series of grievances against local administrators. Ironically, the peasants around Sakuraidani found compliance from the Osaka authorities in curbing the unjust sanctions levied against them from their illicit activities alongside Yamadaya Daisuke.

Having discerned the common features—anti-corruption and a shift toward an active political culture—of the movements of the 1840s and early 1850s, we must finally identify what role these fifteen years played in the course of Settsu remonstrations. Examining each incident separately, Kobayashi Shigeru reaches differing conclusions about the cases. As noted above, he detects characteristics common to Meiji era village affairs in Noda Village's 1844 appeal, notes that the 1841 *hakoso* represents an off-shoot of Ōshio's 1837 riot, and hints that other episodes reflect a sense of rural empowerment in the face of an enervated Bakufu.

Then, while not addressing Settsu in particular, Fukaya Katsumi's seminal 1986 work *Hyakushō ikki no rekishiteki kōzō* (The Historical Structure of Peasant Uprisings) marks the 1840s as the bridge between the violent outbreaks of the Tempō period with the *yonaoshi* (world renewal) movements of the 1860s. He offers three explanations for this: 1) their features become less distinctive or representative of protests from earlier in the century; 2) their foundations expand beyond local or regional ones; and 3) they exhibit a sense that the Emperor and the Imperial court should maintain greater authority than the shogun.³¹³

Fukaya's first two assertions touch upon the transition protest where villagers react to their embittered conditions to those that take measures to prevent any foreseeable hardships—the transition from a subject political culture to proactive one in other words.

³¹³ Fukaya 400-1.

After all, the incidents rely on means external to the village to resolve their struggles. Moreover, the expressed concerns in the appeals stretch to neighboring locals and districts. Pro-imperial sentiment, however, plays a fleeting role in nineteenth-century Settsu unrest, for only Ōshio and Daisuke's respective movements called on the Emperor or for imperial rule. Peasants and artisans in fact continued to depend on a Bakufu order to maintain their livelihoods and improve their conditions well into the 1850s. We are thus left to question why remonstrance in rural Settsu departs from the trajectory of dissent across late Tokugawa Japan.

One solution lies in the complex nature of Osaka's peripheral villages. Yabuta Yutaka diagrams the multi-layered character of Settsu's villages in his 1992 *Kokuso to hyakushō ikki no kenkyū* (Studies on Kokuso and Peasant Uprisings). Among the village agriculturalists, one finds land-owning farmers, minor producers, semi-proletariats, and tenant farmers. Rural officials include *shōya*, elders, *kumigashira*, and *jinya* or Bakufu-posted administrators. In addition to village artisans, mercantilists populate the countryside with rural trade guilds and representatives from Osaka trade guilds. Finally, on the fringes lie the outcasts, day-laborers, servants, beggars, and bandits.³¹⁴

Dissent in Okamachi and Sakuraidani exemplifies this organic nature of Settsu villages: we see components of the village body compensating for impediments in village control, mercantile activities, and peasant livelihoods. Not striving for any sort of revolutionary overhaul of village affairs and polity, the peasants' primary concerns entail removing the cancerous elements from the village polity in order to restore balance, which is

³¹⁴ Yabuta 303.

one of the most substantial streams of thought underlying early modern Japan's mass movements.³¹⁵

How, then, do the incidents from this chapter affect the public sphere of remonstrance? We may interpret the petitions as derivative of Ōshio and Yamadaya's incidents. When the two samurai incited the masses into their own movements, they injected individual agency into the sphere of remonstrance. The individual component largely vanished as the chief instigator of remonstrance in Settsu, yet individual interest did manifest itself within the realm of discontent. As we have seen, Jūtayū appeals to the officials' sense of empathy in his plight against injustice in early 1840s Sakuraidani, and villagers admonish their *shōya*'s family for self-indulgence in 1845 Shiba. Ultimately, it is the turn toward an active political culture that most defines the changes in the late Tokugawa public sphere. Settsu's peasants and artisans no longer were content with reactive remonstrance; they took proactive measures to enhance their livelihoods and prevent future corruption among their administrators. After all, Okamachi *chōnin* allowed merchant provisional control once they felt their livelihoods were unthreatened in 1840, and Noda Village peasants drafted their own set of laws designed to grant villagers control in electing a governing body in 1844.

The newfound active political culture among Settsu's rural elites and peasants helped amplify their voices of dissent in a manner in which the public sphere of remonstrance started to overtake the space that the official sphere had once occupied. Peasants found strength in formulating and then administering new codes that they simply relayed to provincial or domainal authorities. Moreover, protests had evolved in Settsu to such an

³¹⁵ See the discussion on the underlying thought of Yamadaya Daisuke's movement from the previous chapter and Fukaya Katsumi. 1973. "*Hyakushō ikki no shisō*" (The Thought of Peasant Uprisings) in *Shisō* 2 (584): 60-81.

extent that, even amid the relative calm in the province, the pattern of public dissent had propelled the province toward an active social, economic, and political arena.

The Kokuso and Mercantile Civil Society

<i>Osaka idete migihidari</i>	Out of Osaka, right and left
<i>Natane narazaru hatake mo nashi</i>	Fields of rapeseeds everywhere
<i>Kanzakigawa no nagare nomi</i>	Only the stream of the Kanzaki River
<i>Asagi ni yuku zo utsukushiki</i>	How beautiful, its flow into the pale blue ³¹⁶

Introduction

One thousand and seven villages from the Settsu and Kawachi provinces joined together in the fifth month of 1823 to deliver a written petition to the Osaka ward magistrates office. In the appeal, fifty representatives drafted and signed their village seals to a list of demands designed to counteract what they deemed as unjust business practices by Osaka's cotton *kabu nakama*, the Bakufu's officially sanctioned trade guilds. Within two months, Osaka authorities recognized the peasants' demands and enacted measures to restrict the reach of *kabu nakama* into Settsu and Kawachi's countryside and to provide the villages with further opportunities to widen their cotton distribution and sales.

This 1,007-village appeal—representing nearly seventy percent of Settsu and Kawachi's residents—typifies the kokuso. Kokuso³¹⁷ refers to a wide-scale petition where villages, districts, and eventually provinces in the Kinai area banded together to protest against allegedly unfair practices of the Osaka *kabu nakama*. Kokuso thus present an anomaly for the public sphere of remonstrance in Settsu since the marketplace serves as the target, cause, and finally the solution to the protests.

Public sphere and civil society scholarship generally avoids discourse on activities within the marketplace, a point Eiko Ikegami expands on in *Bounds of Civility* to maintain that state policies, including those concerning the market, shape public networks and vice

³¹⁶ A verse from *Tetsudō uta* (Railroad Song), a piece written around 1900 in southeast Settsu's Hirano region (*Nishinomiya shi-shi Volume 2* 184).

³¹⁷ 国訴 is generally Romanized as kokuso, but it can be read in the alternative as kuniso.

versa.³¹⁸ I propose in this chapter that in Settsu the marketplace is an inseparable component of the public sphere, for cotton, oil, rapeseed, and fertilizer markets dictated the course of kokuso protest from 1740 to the early 1850s. As inter-provincial networks expanded to combat perceived threats from the urban conglomerates, they began to resemble a mercantile civil society where rural peasants, artisans, and merchants devoted their time and resources to serve in councils that would combat the *kabu nakama*. At first reacting to harsh social and economic conditions and relying on magistrate decrees for assistance, the councils by the end of the 1840s indeed shaped policies by taking proactive steps in appealing to central authorities in order to deter any possible unjust practices of the Osaka businesses.

In this chapter, I will first introduce Japanese and English scholarship pertaining to the kokuso. Then, I will provide a brief analysis of the Osaka cotton market, describe the organic nature of multi-layered production in the Settsu villages, and then outline the steps in the formation of a kokuso letter of petition. The main body of the chapter will explore through the text of the appeals themselves the development and evolution of kokuso from their beginnings in 1740 to their disappearance in the 1840s and finally to their resurgence in the early 1850s. Keeping within the framework this dissertation, I will focus my scope on those appeals in which Settsu villages partook and devote more scrutiny to those incidents in the first half of the nineteenth century. In the conclusion, I will address the value of kokuso for the early modern public sphere of remonstrance and the nature by which they represent a growing political consciousness among the villagers as well as an active civil society in the marketplace.

Historiography

³¹⁸ Ikegami 62-3.

Studies of the *kokuso* are relatively new to the field, having first emerged in Tsuda Hideo's 1954 article "*Kentō shakai hōkai ni okeru nōmin tōsō no ichiruikei nitsuite*" (A Pattern of Peasant Struggle during the Decline of the Japanese Feudal Society) from *Rekishigaku kenkyū*. Tsuda centers his piece on the 1823 movement and argues that the 1,007-village appeal and subsequent movements across Settsu and Kawachi serve as a watershed moment for peasant political consciousness and class struggle.³¹⁹ Tsuda expanded on his discovery in his 1968 "*Iwayuru bunsei no 'kokuso' nitsuite*" (Regarding the So-Called Bunsei "Kokuso"), in which he examines the movements precipitating and following the 1823 petition.

Additional 1960s research on early modern Japan's feudal economy and village life began to incorporate nineteenth century *kokuso* into its discourse. Notable among these are Kobayashi Shigeru's 1963 *Kinsei nōson keizaishi no kenkyū* (Studies of the Early Modern Agricultural Village Economy) and "*Kinai senshin chiiki ni okeru nōmin tōsō no shidōzō*" (The Leaders of Agricultural Struggles in Progressive Regions of the Kinai area) from *Rekishi hyōron* 69. Both pieces identify the middle strata of rural agriculturalists as the focal point for reform and change in village economy through analyses of their protests against economic strife.

In the 1970s, as scholarship on class struggle gave way to popular movement ideology, *kokuso* appeared in larger thematic works pertaining to mass movements and reformation in the late Tokugawa period. Representative studies include Miyagi Kimiko's 1970 chapter "*Henkakuki no shisō*" (Thought in Times of Reform) from *Kōza Nihonshi*, Fukawa Kiyoshi's 1973 *Kinsei nihon no minshū rinri shisō* (Ethical Thought of the Masses in Early Modern Japan), Inoue Katsuo's 1975 essay "*Bakuhansei kaitai katei to zenkoku*

³¹⁹ Tsuda 1954. 12.

ichiba” (The Process of the Destruction of the Bakuhan System and the Provinces’ Market), and Sasaki Junnosuke’s 1979 *Yonaoshi*. With the exception of Inoue’s work, however, the rural economy remained in the background in historiography of popular protest.

This trend continued into the following decade. Aside from Nohara Kōichi’s 1985 overview “‘*Kokuso*’ *no soshiki to sonraku*” (“The Process of organizing kokuso (国訴) and Villeges [sic]”)³²⁰ from *Rekishi kenkyū*, few scholars structured their work around the kokuso. For primary sources, however, the 1980s spurred a boom in the compilation of historical documents largely due to Aoki Kōji’s scholarship. Aoki’s 1986 edition of *Hyakushō ikki sōgō nenpyō* (General Chronology of Peasant Uprisings) differentiates the kokuso from village disturbances, peasant uprisings, and urban riots with a separate chapter for the kokuso, complete with the time, place, and summary of each episode.³²¹ Furthermore, Aoki and Hosaka Satoru’s 21-volume (published incrementally from 1979 to 1997) *Hennnen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* culls, in addition to documents on ikki and riots, kokuso sources from Japan’s archives, libraries, and regional histories.

In the last two decades, Yabuta Yutaka reintroduced kokuso to Japanese historiography through his 1992 book *Kokuso to hyakushō ikki no kenkyū* (Studies of Kokuso and Peasant Uprisings). Yabuta’s stated intention is to move away from a regionally-constricted approach and apply these Kinai-oriented protests within a framework that addresses the relationship between regional economy and the ruling provinces and governments.³²² The book provides the background for and summaries of individual kokuso incidents in the late Tokugawa period and details the financial and social repercussions for

³²⁰ The title is supplied by the editorial staff for the journal, but a more appropriate one might be “‘Kokuso’ Organization and the Villages”

³²¹ The previous edition was published in 1971.

³²² Yabuta 1992. 36.

those villages central to each movement. His concluding section on district councils and the *kokuso* highlights the relationship between the rural and urban and suggests that the association not only was instrumental in altering economic and political development in the Bakumatsu years, but that it also mirrored the development of the modern state.³²³

Yabuta's work from 2000, "*Kokuso/kunibure/kokueki—Kinsei no minshū undō to chiiki/kokka*" (Kokuso/Kunibure/Kokueki: Early Modern Mass Movements and the Region and State), explains in part why *kokuso* studies failed to proliferate after the 1970s.

According to Yabuta, scholarship on popular movements in Tokugawa Japan eschewed regionally-constricted phenomena that seem to embody Marxist class-oriented discourse. In the late twentieth century, though, research into *kunibure* (laws from the provinces designed to be passed to the commoners and peasants) and *kokueki* (mercantilist thought and movements designed to solicit such edicts from the managing bodies) appeared within protest historiography. Yabuta notes that while the *kokuso* maintains a regional identity, all three subjects share elements of individual salvation and economic gain. It is this point, he writes, that makes *kokuso* pertinent to understanding the origins of the economy of the modern Japanese state.³²⁴

English language historiography has yet to address *kokuso* in detail or at length. William B. Hauser's 1974 *Economic Institutional Change in Tokugawa Japan: Osaka and the Kinai Cotton Trade* provides an excellent narrative for the rise and fall of the Osaka cotton merchants in the late Tokugawa period primarily from the perspective of the urban merchants and officials. While he attributes the deterioration and temporary dissolution of Osaka *kabu nakama* to rural discontent and in particular the 1,007-village protest of 1823, he

³²³ Ibid., 163.

³²⁴ Yabuta 2000, 42-3.

neglects to refer to the kokuso pattern of petitions and appeals despite its prominence in Japanese language scholarship since the mid-1950s.

When Western historians refer to the kokuso, however briefly, they tend to compartmentalize the subject within rural and urban protest. Herbert Bix, in his 1986 *Peasant Protest in Japan, 1590-1884*, discusses the 1823 and 1824 lawsuits against Osaka wholesalers and narrows his discussion of the incident to rural representatives who became key supporters for Ōshio Heihachirō's riot.³²⁵ Anne Walthall also refers to Kokuso in her 1986 monograph, *Social Protest and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century Japan*, although the peak period of kokuso activity occurred outside of her book's timeframe. To Walthall, the petitions served as a means for peasants to voice their angst through legal means by supporting the district representatives who affixed their seals to the kokuso text.³²⁶

Aside from Yabuta's scholarship from the past two decades, the kokuso phenomenon has garnered little attention from historians, and English language attention is overdue. After all, Luke Roberts' 1998 *Mercantilism in a Japanese Domain* examines *kokueki* thought in Tosa, and Walthall's 1988 "Village Networks, Sodai and the Sale of Edo Nightsoil" investigates an incident similar to the type of protest that kokuso embody. Thus, for a study on a province rife with both legal and illicit forms of remonstrance, a narrative of kokuso is essential.

Situating, Defining, and Formulating the Kokuso

Osaka, in its standing as the "Merchant's Capital" or "Kitchen" of early modern Japan, attracted and fostered mercantile activity. In both rural and urban Settsu, *tonya* 問屋

³²⁵ Bix 155.

³²⁶ Walthall 1986. 15.

or specialized merchants played the central role in inter-district and inter-provincial commerce. Nakama (仲間) formed when the *tonya* banded together in Osaka to form guilds. When governmental authorities granted particular *tonya nakama* with *kabu* 株 or licenses made from wooden seals, the newfound *kabu nakama* could restrict or expand the amount of stores, trade, and stock for its members.³²⁷

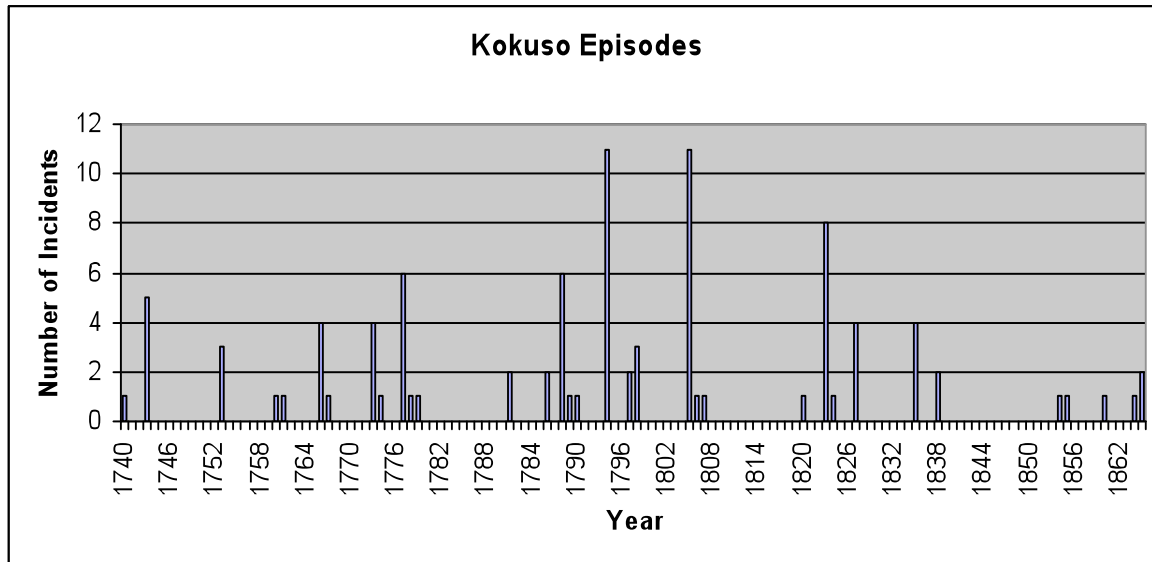
Kokuso emerged as a reaction to the efforts of the *kabu nakama* to increase their presence in and profits from Kinai villages. In general, those villages bordering Osaka or lying adjacent to the city's major waterways and trade routes instigated the movements against the *kabu nakama*. With Osaka as its urban center, Settsu hence appears the most frequently in the petitions—75 of 95 total. Kawachi, which neighbors Osaka to the east joined in or spurred on 41 Kokuso. The Izumi province, which borders Osaka to the south, partook in six occurrences, and Yamato, which contains the city of Nara, seven.

Kokuso progression in late Tokugawa Japan does not correlate with that of peasant uprisings overall.³²⁸ The following diagram, which tabulates data from Aoki's chronology, displays the number of protests from the 1740s to the mid-1860s:³²⁹

³²⁷ Hauser 20-3. Kokuso appeals refer to the *kabu nakama* or *tonya nakama* in their grievances, but essentially they directed their efforts against the licensed guilds.

³²⁸ Please see the charts from page 21 of chapter 2.

³²⁹ Aoki 1986. 622-36.



The chart demonstrates that both 1794 and 1805 were the peak years of kokuso protest. Following the 1,007-village protest in 1823, the protests decline through the Tempō years and appear sporadically in the Bakumastu period. Incidents of remonstrance in nineteenth century Japan, as we have seen from the second chapter, climaxed during the Tempō famine and fell gradually through the final decades of the Edo period.³³⁰

The peaks in the graph do not connote scattered kokuso protests from the provinces across the Kinai plain at the turn of the century. Rather, in the years of high kokuso activity, district representatives devised a series of petitions aimed at securing trade and production rights for individual goods and protecting the businesses from the urban wholesalers, shippers, and intermediary purchasers. In the 1820s, rural officials found it more effective to disseminate inter-provincial kokuso with petitions representing 1,007 villages in spring of 1823 to nearly 1,500 villages the following year.

³³⁰ This is not to say that the rural economy of Settsu and other Kinai provinces was immune to the harsh environment during periods of famine or that villagers had become less litigious in the 1830s. The periphery was, in fact, subject to conditions more severe than those of the urban centers (see the chapter on the Nose Incident). Subsequently, with poor harvests and a realm-wide famine, the villages and provinces maintained little agricultural production. Thus, the interjection of Osaka businesses into the countryside had not as great an impact on village livelihoods as it did in times of greater prosperity. Still, those regions that did maintain some level of output continued kokuso appeals.

The lulls in kokuso activity from the above chart relate to both Osaka ward magistrates' edicts and Bakufu laws. Initial 1740s kokuso engendered magistrate decrees designed to expand village marketing interests, and a similar effect can be seen following the peak kokuso protests at the turn of the nineteenth century. In the 1750s, as Osaka businesses found loopholes in the original laws and infringed on additional markets in the neighboring provinces, village authorities initiated kokuso on the farmers and peasants' behalf. Matsudaira Sadanobu's fiscal laws in the 1780s—the Kansei reforms—regulated the prices of crops and commodities and attempted to bolster Edo businesses at the expense of their counterparts in Osaka, thereby all but negating any cause for kokuso protest until the laws were rescinded in the 1790s. Then, Mizuno Tadakuni's Tempō reforms of the early 1840s outlawed the *kabu nakama*, thus eliminating the target of the village producers. Finally, Kokuso reappeared in the 1850s as Bakufu laws fostered the rebirth of the urban wholesalers.

Kokuso revolve around the Osaka and Kinai provinces' cotton and oil industries. The relationship between the villages and urban merchants in the cotton market, as Hauser diagrams in his book, generally followed one of two paths. In the first route, the farmer sold both his stocks of seeded cotton (cotton that contains seeds that may later be used for oil production) and ginned cotton (cotton with stems or seeds already removed) to sales *tonya*, who in turn would deliver the seeded cotton to artisans who processed it into ginned cotton. The sales *tonya* finally sold the ginned stock to purchasing *tonya*, which next marketed the aggregate supply to the Osaka conglomerates. In the second route, the cotton farmer bypassed the sales *tonya* in order to sell his seeded cotton to the processors and his ginned

cotton to the purchasing *tonya*. The buying *tonya* would then take the ginned cotton from both the cultivators and artisans and sell the stock to the conglomerates.³³¹

Aggravation for the rural producers heightened when Osaka *kabu nakama* and their intermediaries eliminated the middlemen in the production scheme. *Kabu nakama* would simply corner the market by purchasing entire stocks of seed cotton and ginned cotton from the cultivators in one region, thus artificially regulating the price of cotton. The Osaka guilds also impeded trade from the rural producers with provinces outside of Settsu and the Kinai area by confiscating cotton, exacting fees on village producers who wished access to waterways, or using their status as officially recognized traders to coerce other regions into purchasing cotton solely from themselves. In most cases, the villagers ultimately failed to meet their *nengu* (a yearly rice corvée) owing to lower incomes and poor harvests.

Kokuso involving the oil market primarily attend to rapeseed cultivation. The rapeseeds, like cotton seeds, are harvested in villages and sold to local *tonya*. The *tonya* then sold the fertilizer to artisans who press the seeds for oil or to larger guilds in Osaka. Protests materialized, as they did with the cotton industry, when the urban conglomerates infringed on rural businesses by cornering the market for rapeseeds or imposing tariffs. Osaka businesses further needled village communities by blockading rapeseed shipments and confiscating parcels of rapeseeds sent from villagers or rural merchants to regions outside of the Kinai plain.

The 1823 appeal channeled the frustration and economic of strife of Settsu and Kawachi villages against what they deemed as unjust business practices of Osaka *kabu nakama*, but the majority of kokuso in the late Tokugawa period did not directly involve cotton or oil sales and exports. Instead, petitions against oil sediment, rapeseed, dried

³³¹ Hauser 60-1.

sardine, sake sediment, and night-soil businesses constituted the majority of the incidents. The nature of the different commodities and their market is organic: when an Osaka *tonya* corners the market for one of the commodities, the practice affects the villages across the provinces. For example, if one *kabu nakama* were to send its intermediaries into Imazu Village in the Kawanishi District to purchase an entire season's stock of sardines, then the Osaka wholesalers could dictate the cost of dried sardine fertilizer for the entire province. Therefore, in Settsu's Muko district, where rapeseed fields cover the land, as the stanza from the beginning of the chapter connotes, farmers had to either borrow silver to cover the higher costs of dried sardines or rely on other forms of fertilizer to grow their crops. Rural agriculturalists and merchants in the oil sediment and night-soil markets embarked on similar paths of protest when their livelihoods were threatened.

Once the rural farmers felt the financial strain from the infringement of the Osaka *kabu nakama*, they calculated their loss of income in the recent years and then submitted the results to the village authorities. Authorities principally from the ranks of village *shōya* or *toshiyori* elders convened in a council called the *gunchū gitei* (郡中議定) and drafted a petition to submit to the magistrates on behalf of the villagers. In inter-provincial kokuso that represented hundreds of villages, the councils elected representatives called *sōdai* who then met in either an urban center of Kawachi or Settsu, or as in the 1823 case, a warehouse in Osaka's Honmachi-dori commercial street. The petition summarizes the plight of the peasants by addressing the economic hardships in the recent months, the inability to meet *nengu* payments, and in dire circumstances death from starvation. It then lists a set of demands that the council's delegates ask the Osaka magistrates to investigate and finally asks for an *obure* (edict) to be promulgated in the city and afflicted areas to rectify the situation.

Osaka authorities rarely resolved the entire set of demands, and the villagers either withdrew those that were deemed as unnecessary or submitted further appeals with appropriate financial data attached. In the most extreme of cases, Edo authorities intervened on behalf of the magistrates. Such incidents eventually led to the dissolution of the *kabu nakama* in the 1840s.

The kokuso process could last as little as two weeks or as in 1823 well over three months. For the villages and district councils, kokuso necessitated the allocation of time and resources for calculating regional net losses and profits, drafting petitions, and sending representatives to inter-provincial meetings. Moreover, revised laws engendered by kokuso protest did not offset the losses attributed to the urban *kabu nakama*'s practices. Village and district councils at first shouldered the financial burden by funding the protests through such means as collecting resources from district representatives or diffusing the cost among all villages in the district. As the protests mounted in numbers during the nineteenth century, though, the councils employed other devices like imposing taxes on the wealthier villagers in their jurisdictions.³³²

In the aftermath of eighteenth century kokuso episodes, according to Yabuta, regional taxes incurred by the villagers rose in the range of five to six percent. By the 1820s, however, district councils faced a tighter strain in their budgets after allocating weeks and months to resolving the protests. Depending on the size and financial status, a single village may account for anywhere between five to forty percent of the resources needed to process the kokuso. Inter-district and provincial petitions in the short term thus eased the encumbrance

³³² Yabuta 1992 134-5.

for the villagers during kokuso protest, but the councils assessed an increasingly heavier tax on the participating villages as kokuso petitions increased in frequency.³³³

Naturally, from 1740 to 1850, the content, length, and expanse of kokuso varied. In addition, the language of protest within the episodes also indicates a shift from extensive texts inundated with formalities and supplications to shorter letters nearly devoid of such honorifics. Then, as the Bakufu and magistrates requested compliance from villagers in abiding by new laws surrounding the cotton industry, the officials adapted the honorifics in their own appeals to the countryside. By the end of this ninety-year timeframe, an interlocking combination of components—district councils, village politics, the marketplace, and even the authorities—expanded the public sphere in the realm of kokuso activity.

The Kokuso Episodes

1743: The Beginnings

Settsu's first kokuso revolved around *hoshika* (干鰯 or the dried sardine market). Peasants and merchants along the southern coast and river mouths of the Muko district—now Amagasaki and Nishinomiya and their regions in Hyogo—harvested sardines, processed them as dried fertilizer, and sold the stock to Osaka *kabu nakama*. In turn, the Osaka merchant houses sold the fertilizer to villages that cultivated rapeseeds and cotton seeds. As with all Kinai cotton and oil production industries, changes in the cost of one form of fertilizer impacted the entire market. When the Nishinomiya fishermen experienced poor sardine harvests, Osaka merchants vied for the limited stock, thus driving up the price of the dried sardines. In times of abundant catches, Osaka merchants also purchased entire stocks from the fishermen. As a result from either case, villagers who processed and marketed

³³³ Ibid., 162-3.

cotton experienced rising costs of fertilizers, including pressed oil, sake sediment, and night-soil.³³⁴

Peasants in the Muko district relied on silver payments from Osaka *tonya* for their income. Therefore, low sales induced by poor catches led to severe debt for most of the villagers and hampered the ability of some peasants to pay annual *nengu*. In a promissory note dated the seventeenth day of the eleventh month of 1692, a dried sardine harvester in Imazu village by the name of Sukezaemon details the debt incurred by six villagers due to limited sales of dried sardines. After a list documenting a timeline for the delayed payments, the amount of silver loaned to the peasants, and the inflation over the years under examination, Sukezaemon drew the following appeal to the village elders and *shōya*:

[The above calculations] concern Chūzaemon, Moemon, Rokubei, Jizaemon, Rokuzaemon, and Yojibei's silver debts incurred from the low yields of dried sardines. Through this appeal, I am seeking for assistance from Lords Namazu Yajiemon, Nishinomiya Tōjurō and Dōhama Shōbei for tending to this affair. Without a doubt, I would be grateful for their assistance in settling the loans of silver over the three years as listed above. Furthermore, it would be optimal to schedule monthly repayments with no delays. It is assured that if there even a slight postponement in abiding with the schedule, the *shōya* and village elders will quickly tend to it. As such, this is the promissory note.³³⁵

Village *shōya* and elders did, following the appeal, intercede on behalf of the stricken villagers to meet the repayments. Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the number of dried sardine merchants and affiliates rose in Osaka from fifty-seven in 1653 to two hundred and thirty four in 1708. In 1710, Osaka dried sardine houses reshuffled their memberships into two groups: the *shin-kumi*, which contained one hundred and forty merchants; and the *furu-kumi*, which held forty.³³⁶ Members from the *furu-kumi* and *shin-*

³³⁴ For an economic analysis of this effect, see Hauser 129-32 and *Nishinomiya Shi-shi*, Volume 2 155-60.

³³⁵ *Nishinomiya Shi-shi*, Volume 4 793.

³³⁶ *Nishinomiya Shi-shi* Volume 4 155.

kumi temporarily merged in 1713 but divided once more in 1716, when two groups engaged in a competition over sales for the next three decades. Coupled with a high demand for dried sardines and low catches in the villages, the price war drove the cost of the fertilizer skyward. Between 1735 and 1740, the price of dried sardines and other fertilizers rose nearly sixty and fifty-five percent respectively.³³⁷

Villages in Settsu and Kawachi felt the strain of high fertilizer prices after the Osaka *hoshika* houses had monopolized the market for the dried sardines. In the fifth month of 1740, *shōya* and elders from Kamikawarabashi Village drafted the following appeal to be sent to Osaka officials:³³⁸

With Awe and Respect, an Appeal about the High Prices of Manure and Dried Sardines

1) In recent years, the price of dried sardines has been high, and it has been difficult to obtain enough fertilizer for our harvests. Furthermore, manure shortages have undeniably led to decreased crop production. Unable to meet payments of *nengu* and other financial duties, the peasants are burdened with undue stress in this time. To comply with the demands for our goods from our officials and the nobles, it is essential to acquire dried sardine fertilizer from the marketplace. Ever since villagers began processing dried sardines, we have been able to maintain a generally high level of production...Expenses incurred with the dried sardine market have impeded our ability to provide for our households and comply with our duties to pay our *nengu*....Those in the villages have only been able to account for half of their annual payments. Through the years, the dried sardine market has been important, but in recent times local dried sardine houses have not been able to sell their stock. Hence, in periods of low catches, villagers are unable to meet their *nengu* payments. It has been even more upsetting to hear of households that are unable to feed themselves... All of the fields in this region are important commodities for the provinces. It is thus natural that at any one time there will be wealthy regions in any province. Still, in these times, we know that the peasants in all districts, from the wards to the coasts, are in distress. Please understand that if the price of dried sardines is lowered, fertilizer can be acquired. If this were the case, we can harvest barley, cotton, and other seeds in addition to grain. Without a solution, we are troubled...

³³⁷ *Toyonaka Shi-shi* Volume 2 135.

³³⁸ The authors and their villages and districts are unknown or unclear in the original text, but the Nishinomiya city history compilers believe it originated from the Muko district. For the translation, I have tried to maintain the format as close as possible to the original Japanese text. Ellipses are used in lieu of sentences that basically reword the preceding lines of text.

1) Three hundred and sixty people are employed in the *tonya* and brokerages in Osaka's Shin Utsubo, Shin Tenman, Aburakake, Kaifuhorikawa, Shinano, Kaifu, Miyako, and Shichibori wards. Even with the divisions in the *shin-gumi* and *furu-kumi*, market trade has not changed since times of distant past. Over three decades ago, the *nakama* and their brokerages acquired silver for their dried sardine stock, and they had been able to conduct sales using dried sardines. Even after the *shin-gumi* and *furu-gumi* were reorganized, both sides consciously conspired [to regulate the dried sardine market]. Homes and estates from across all of our provinces were unable to purchase commodities due to the high price of dried sardines, which had risen nearly four-fold, leading to troubles for the peasants. When hearing about this, Lord Hōjō Awa and Lord Suzuki Hida and their inspectors discovered that practices among the *tonya nakama* led to price-fixing. Thereafter, the officials ordered the merchant houses by law not to scheme together to drive the prices higher... In the past thirty or so years, the cost of dried sardines did come down... Accordingly, the peasants had access to adequate amounts of fertilizer, and in the past few decades they met their *nengu* requirements and could make ends meet in sustaining their households. The true intentions of the *kumi* have worked to subvert this order in the villages. Before 1735, merchants engaged in a competitive marketplace, and to a certain extent they spurred on movements against [unfair] market practices. Then, the *shin-kumi* and the *furu-kumi* repeatedly reshuffled their *tonya* and brokerages... At the same time, they conspired to devise a strategy intent on controlling the market. They have intentionally bought dried sardines at high cost from our provinces. It has been said that shippers from other provinces had also seen these circumstances in action or at least had heard about it. With rumors having spread outside of our provinces, why would the *tonya* continue to conspire? In recent years, we have seen the *kumi* divide and thus increase their supply of goods. Any fluctuation in [fertilizer] prices, however slight, again will affect the cost of our goods we produce and trade. With an increase in fertilizer costs and subsequent decrease in agricultural output, we face debt, and on top of that our own shippers cannot trade commodities with other regions. It is regrettable that contrived market prices stemming from unfair merchant practices have led to difficulties in our trade.... Moreover, even if a law releases us from *nengu* and other financial obligations, it would not be sufficient. Such a law would not even be adequate to restore normal levels of rice cultivation. Nevertheless, it is true that the machinations of the dried sardine *kumi* have created numerous hardships for thousands of peasants across our provinces, and these problems continue to cause distress for the peasants. With awe and respect, we present this petition.

The preceding text should bear no error at all. We ask with awe and respect for you to read our petition with compassion. This has been an ongoing problem between our villages and Osaka's dried sardine merchants. Lord Awa and Lord Hida had taken steps twenty-seven years and eleven months ago to improve a similar situation. At the time, both *kumi* and their associated *tonya nakama* had been ordered to cease conspiring to fix market prices. Since the merchants have once more begun to convene to align the market prices, we request for their practices to be inspected and our problems to be resolved legally. In the distant past, this issue had been non-existent. Yet, the *tonya nakama* have set the price of fertilizers at whim. We

respectfully ask for an additional investigation, as had been enacted before. We hereby send this letter to those with authority. The thousands of peasants from the provinces under our jurisdiction must be given aid. Naturally with awe and respect, we implore for you to take steps to conduct an expedient inspection of the dried sardine fertilizer market. We would like you to take swift steps to begin this investigation. We ask for a legal directive aimed at the dried sardine houses along the Osaka wards. We would be grateful for a decree to be handed down on our behalf. That is all.³³⁹

The rural appeal did lead to an investigation into the practice of Osaka's dried sardine *kabu nakama*. The wholesalers responded to the inquiries by claiming that since all merchants in the fertilizer business were engaged in the competition for peddling dried sardines to other districts and provinces, the prices should have lowered. The recent increase in costs, according to the *tonya*, stemmed from low stocks of sardines in the past few years.³⁴⁰

Nevertheless, villages and regions along the Yamazaki-kaidō, a mountain highway stretching from Kyoto to the southern coast of Settsu's Muko district, continued to feel the strain of high costs of fertilizer. The mountainside villages had little access to the Osaka waterways and thus relied on neighboring communities for fertilizers like dried sardines and pressed oil. The magistrates reacted to the conditions in the first four months of 1743 as they passed a law allowing rural merchants to sell stock to areas outside of Osaka. Furthermore, the decree temporarily prevented the buying *tonya* in Osaka's periphery from cornering the fertilizer, seed, and oil markets. The strength and shipping rights of the urban *kabu nakama*, however, rose vis-à-vis that of the rural *tonya*'s. Consequently, the Osaka dried sardine houses took advantage of their newfound power and once more encroached upon the rural producers.³⁴¹

³³⁹ *Nishinomiya Shi-shi* Volume 4, 794-6.

³⁴⁰ *Toyonaka Shi-shi* Volume 2, 134-5.

³⁴¹ *Ibid*, Volume 2, 136-7.

In the sixth month of 1743, eighty-four villages of Settsu's Shimakami and Shimashimo districts met to organize a formal protest against the Osaka *kabu nakama*. Then in the following month, twenty-seven villages from Muko and Kawabe districts as well as twenty-eight villages from the Teshima district joined in the movement. In what was to become the first inter-district kokuso, representatives delivered a series of appeals to the Osaka magistrates' offices.³⁴²

The appeal for aid from the *shōya* of the twenty-seven Kawabe and Muko districts reiterates much of the concerns from the 1740 petition. For example, it notes that the high price of dried sardines has prevented the peasants from attaining sufficient fertilizer for rice and cotton cultivation. The representatives blame the Osaka fertilizer *kabu nakama* and detail the rise in costs seemingly concomitant with the multiple reorganizations of their merchants into the *shin* and *furu-kumi*. In contrast with the 1740 petition, the representatives note that farmers and merchants from the Kantō area had received nearly twenty-thousand boxes of fish, yet the Osaka *tonya* had purchased even those shipments from distant regions. Moreover, the villagers write, the fertilizer *kabu nakama* regulate the price depending on the amount of fishing stock purchased from the villages. The kokuso concludes with a plea for compassion in a judgment asking for the market price of dried sardines to be lowered in order to alleviate the peasants from their plight.³⁴³

The Osaka *kabu nakama* again replied to the accusations of price-fixing by claiming that the market price for dried sardines had naturally risen due to low fishing yields. *Tonya nakama* representing both the *shin-kumi* and *furu-kumi* add that they had succumbed to the same economic hardships as the rural villagers and could only attain twenty percent of the

³⁴² *Nishinomiya shi-shi* Volume 2, 156.

³⁴³ *Nishinomiya shi-shi* Volume 4 796-7.

previous year's stock.³⁴⁴ The magistrates' *ginmi* discovered not only that the *kabu nakama* had deliberately regulated prices of dried sardines but that they diluted their stock by mixing sand and dried sardines in their shipments the countryside. In the tenth month of 1743, the magistrates promulgated the following law across Settsu:

A Pronouncement

To the *Shōya* of Settsu Villages

Your *shōya* sent us an appeal claiming that in recent years the price of dried sardines had gradually risen, thereby impeding agricultural production and causing distress. It was also noted that the two lines³⁴⁵ cornered the market and engaged in price-gouging. As a collective unit, your villages delivered a petition asking for the price to be lowered. At this time, we issue a decree ordering for both the *shin-kumi* and *furu-kumi* to lower their price of dried sardines. Their practice increased the price of sediment from oil and *shōchū* across the regions of Itami, Ikeda, Nishinomiya, and Amagasaki, consequently raising the costs for additional commodities. Villages elsewhere asked for decrees to stop the urban merchant lines from interfering with the market. This pronouncement, which has been sent to the four areas listed above, will bring an immediate end to the price fixing in fertilizer market. As for the catches in bays outside of the city and the province, there shall be an end to these corrupt business practices. Allow the contents of this directive to be known to the peasants of each village.³⁴⁶

Settsu's first *kokuso* thus successfully procured an edict designed to intercede on the peasants' behalf. Although the urban *kabu nakama* counteracted the movement of the Muko districts in 1740, the expanse of the inter-district 1743 petition prevented an effective counterargument from the wholesalers. According to Yabuta, the significance of the *kokuso* movement lies in the unification of cross-border regions that developed into cross-provincial streams of protest in the early nineteenth century.³⁴⁷

For our exploration of the course of *kokuso* through the end of the century, the 1740 episode laid the basic groundwork for further remonstrance by the rural cotton and oil

³⁴⁴ *Toyoanaka shi-shi* Volume 2, 178.

³⁴⁵ This refers to the *shin-kumi* and *furu-kumi*.

³⁴⁶ *Nishinomiya shi-shi* Volume 4, 797.

³⁴⁷ Yabuta 1992, 67.

producers. Further, the contents of the letter abide by format common to the language of protest in the Tokugawa Period: it immediately states the problem, describes the distressed atmosphere, provides data related to the local economic difficulties, summarizes the contents, and asks for an official decree to rectify the situation.

The following features that were incorporated into the kokuso protest bear particular attention, for they would either decrease in frequency or disappear altogether by the 1850s. First, formalities like “With awe and respect”³⁴⁸ permeated the kokuso letters in the eighteenth century. Secondly, the early inter-district kokuso spawned larger mass-oriented movements, in which multi-district and multi-province councils materialized to combat the machinations of the Osaka merchants. As the councils expanded in size to accommodate the villages that participated in the kokuso, civil society in its incarnation as *gunchū gitei* also flourished within the public sphere of remonstrance. In other words, village participation in these councils represented the early stages of what would become voluntary associations among both local officials and peasant delegates who dedicated their time to represent farmers, fishermen, artisans, and local merchants in appeals against an alleged threat from the *kabu nakama*. A sense of exigency did compel the villagers into joining the councils of the eighteenth century, but as the networks enveloped membership among neighboring districts and provinces and as the councils reconvened at the first hint of *kabu nakama* infringement, participation in the *gunchū gitei* did become increasingly voluntary.

Historical precedent also plays an integral role in these initial cases of remonstrance, for the texts allude to earlier eighteenth century decrees from that were enacted to alleviate the financial strain on the countryside. Those same decrees are elicited in the end of the 1743

³⁴⁸ This is 乍恐 or *osorenagara*

kokuso in order to provide the magistrates with a legal precedent in ordering an investigation into the purportedly unjust business practices of the urban merchant houses. Lastly, the authors situate themselves in the middle of a rudimentary form of the Tokugawa *mibunsei* hierarchy where they beseech the assistance from those in “higher” social strata for those peasants in the “lower” strata. As kokuso activity progressed into the nineteenth century, implicit references to this vertical hierarchy would vanish from the discourse between the Osaka magistrates and village councils.

1805: The Second Peak

Kokuso of the 1760s and 1770s mirrored those from three decades earlier. In 1766, for example, villages of the Muko district petitioned for rights in the pressed oil market. In 1773, eighteen villages from the Yamato province protested against the presence of ginned cotton *kabu nakama* in their region, and in 1777 villages from Settsu and Kawachi provinces drew separate petitions for rights to sell their wares in a broader market, and not only to the *tonya* within their own districts.³⁴⁹

After the effects of the Tenmei famine (1782-7) waned, revitalized villages across Settsu and Kawachi authorized elders and *shōya* representatives to draft a series of documents on behalf of their faltering rural industries. These protests encompassed a wide range of grievances from securing trade rights in order to purchase fertilizer from various provinces to ending price-gouging and product-diluting in the oil and soy waste markets. From the second month to the sixth month of 1788, Kawachi and Settsu alternated in submitting formal letters to Osaka officials.³⁵⁰ In the seventh month, though, 836 villages from the two regions collectively summarized their grievances over the year and procured a

³⁴⁹ Aoki 1986, 625.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 627.

decree to prevent the resurgence of the Osaka *kabu nakama*. The petition's authors claim that the villages of Settsu and Kawachi did not convene to organize the protest; rather, they assert that natural forces had compelled them to work together. While this explanation for an inter-provincial mass movement was, as Yabuta writes, obviously a contrived pretense for their appeal, the 1788 kokuso did set the precedent for district councils to send rural officials for deliberation over larger forms of kokuso protest.³⁵¹

A similar spate of incidents transpired in 1794, but the series of kokuso in 1805 primarily revolved around unfair practices in the rapeseed market. At the turn of the nineteenth century, rural rapeseed markets flourished throughout village farmlands. Even in the Teshima district, where rapeseed production was relatively low compared to the Muko and Ubara districts, agriculturalists profited in the marketplace.³⁵²

In a ledger dated the sixteenth day of the twelfth month of 1801, the Ōshima daimyo estate details the rapeseed production and purchases from the past year. Of the eighty-four koku produced in the Teshima's Sudōshi village, over half was sold to an oil house in Teshima while thirty-eight *koku* of rapeseed were purchased by Osaka merchants. For the forty-three *koku* of rapeseed in Shimada village, thirty-six *koku* were sold within the district while the remainder went to Osaka. The document concludes by stating that all of the "aforementioned rapeseed has been allotted to various people working in the oil houses. The crop has all been sold."³⁵³ For villages in Teshima as well as Muko and Ubara, the majority of the rapeseed harvest was thus sold to merchants and *tonya* within their districts.

Osaka magistrates, however, enacted a law in 1804 that forbid peasants and artisans from selling rapeseeds, cotton ware, and pressed grass to non-licensed *tonya nakama* or those

³⁵¹ Yabuta 1992, 70-1.

³⁵² *Shinshū Toyonaka shi-shi* Volume 8, 85.

³⁵³ *Shinshū Toyonaka shi-shi* Volume 5, 412-3.

outside of the *kabu nakama*. As the Osaka wholesalers monopolized the rapeseed market in the Settsu and Kawachi provinces, the villagers asked local officials to intervene on their behalf in order to acquire broader distribution rights.³⁵⁴ On the fifth day of the seventh month of 1805, eighteen villages from the Ubara district submitted the first of the year's kokuso:

With Awe and Respect, a Petition

On Behalf of the Villagers from Eighteen villages from Settsu Province's Ubara District

We woefully submit this petition in response to the peasants' suffering from limited sales in the rapeseed market.

1) In 1799, an *obure* resolved restricted trade in the lamp oil market, and it continues to be in effect. We are grateful that the rapeseed market has grown since the promulgation of the *obure*. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that in recent years rapeseed sales gradually have become restricted. New *kabu* licenses from Osaka inspectors and their subordinates have permitted those in the oil marketplace to convene and regulate market prices. They have yet to stop interfering in village affairs as they drive up costs arbitrarily, and as a result the prices in the oil market have decreased. Therefore, we present our petition. These conditions have slowed our own sales of rapeseeds. Peasants thus inevitably suffer from the practices of the urban market houses. It is also unfortunate that the recent stock of rapeseeds has started to decline. Since the 1799 *obure* is still in effect, we request for Osaka's officials to provide on our behalf: a notice from the magistrates office that identifies which merchants may purchase rapeseed and cotton; and rights to attain silver from trade with marketplaces outside of those under the auspices of the *kabu nakama*. Even if this petition is accepted, we still require gold, silver, and rice in addition to various fertilizers for the summer harvest. With respect, we believe that current conditions are ideal for acquiring funds to pay for fertilizers, effectively sustaining the livelihood of the peasants. This is because the peasants depend primarily on agriculture for their livelihoods. In times when farmers are in distress, it is inexplicable that officials have not discussed the conditions with us. In reality, authorities have mentioned no word concerning the grief that has befallen our districts. In recent years, our problems in rapeseed sales in a restricted market have increased. We doubt that we will be able to sustain the summer crop. We plead for you who are situated above us to understand the conditions that we have expressed here. We are at the mercy of your compassion in our quest for help in expanding our sales in the rapeseed market. As mentioned above, if the Osaka officials were to promulgate a decree kindly on our behalf, all of the peasants of these villages would be grateful for your immense compassion. That is all.

³⁵⁴ *Toyonaka shi-shi* Volume 2, 144-5.

(Stamped with the seal of eighteen village officials)³⁵⁵

Ubara's petition sparked ten more letters of protest on behalf of villagers in the Settsu and Kawachi districts. Unlike the series of kokuso in 1794, villagers directed their efforts toward improvements in the rapeseed market with expectations that the magistrates' reforms would also affect pressed oil, grain, and other agricultural markets. For instance, in the southern villages of Nishinomiya from which the dried sardine protests originated, elders and *shōya* partook in the petitions because the practices of the *kabu nakama* infringed on their own consumption patterns. After all, for Nishinomiya villagers, should the price of rapeseed oil increase, the price of dried sardines would also climb. Thus, village delegates in a later kokuso of 1805 appended new demands seeking latitude in purchasing pressed oil.³⁵⁶

The magistrates rejected the villagers' requests for silver and other forms of compensation at the beginning of the eighth month, yet they assigned their inspectors to serve temporarily mediators for the rapeseed market. The decision did little to appease the villagers, and on the twentieth day of the eighth month, peasants from Muko and Ubara accused the oil *kabu nakama* of setting new prices for rapeseed after the urban merchants had cornered the market for the crop.³⁵⁷

By the eighth month of 1805, cotton producing villages in the Kawachi province also sensed the encroachment of the oil *kabu nakama*. As the oil merchants cornered the market for rapeseeds, the price for rapeseeds rose. Yet the cost of cotton did not follow suit, thus inhibiting the production and sales of cotton seeds and ginned cotton for villagers in Kawachi. On the twenty-seventh day of the eighth month, representatives from 565 villages in both Kawachi and Settsu drafted a kokuso letter of protest for the Osaka officials. The

³⁵⁵ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 8, 190-1.

³⁵⁶ *Nishinomiya shi-shi* Volume 2, 204-5.

³⁵⁷ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 8, 197-9 and *Hyakushō ikki jiten*, 704-5.

piece begins by outlining the average income and production for village *tonya* in Settsu and Kawachi before describing the costs associated with trade between the countryside and Osaka. The villagers target the *nakama* as the primary instigators of their strife, for the *nakama* dictate the weights and measures, delivery costs, and exchange rate for silver and oil. The petition concludes with a request for the villages to be permitted to expand their sales to markets outside of Osaka.³⁵⁸

The final petition from the 1805 kokuso slew of protests focuses on the aggregate demand for oil in the villages. In what is essentially an addendum to the previous eleven missives, the villagers appeal to the magistrates by carefully outlining the financial strain for selling oil at current Kinai rates. The sole request—rights to sell rapeseeds and cottonseeds to a broader market—appears as nothing more than a footnote in the appeal. Moreover, phrases like “With Awe and Respect,” “We would be extremely grateful,” and “Please take our plea with great compassion” that are commonplace in the kokuso parlance vanish in the appeal’s text.

Despite the direct and informal nature of the inter-provincial kokuso, the magistrates did nonetheless enact measures to assuage the rural concerns in the tenth month of 1805. Osaka officials did not overhaul the basic mechanisms of rapeseed production and sales since Edo residents also depended on the *kabu nakama* for oil. Yet, in response to demands from earlier in the year, they did command for their inspectors to cease activity in the rapeseed market.³⁵⁹ Furthermore, the magistrates released rural oil merchants and pressed oil processors from their financial obligations to the *nengyōshi* 年行司 or representatives of the *kabu nakama*.

³⁵⁸ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 8, 200.

³⁵⁹ *Toyonaka Shi-shi* Volume 2, 145-6.

For the rapeseed market, villagers eventually accepted the new status quo as designated by the decree. For the cotton industry, however, the magistrates declined to interfere with a market they deemed as historically self-supportive in the countryside.³⁶⁰ Although kokuso appeared sporadically over the next few years and eventually disappeared from the course of Settsu remonstrance until the early 1820s, the cottonseed villages continued to feel the encroachment of the *kabu nakama*. At the same time, the joint provincial council that produced the final kokuso of 1805 represented a shift in its constituents. As Yabuta notes, whereas the councils had once contained *yoriai* representatives—officials stationed on the property of Bakufu retainers earning stipends over three-thousand koku—the councils embraced representation of villages beyond the Bakufu’s direct control.³⁶¹ Hence, by the 1820s cottonseed farmers and cotton ginners in villages across Settsu and Kawachi attained equal representation in inter-provincial councils—a growing civil society for village constituents. This expanded realm within the public sphere paved the way for the 1,007-village kokuso of 1823.

1823: The Struggle against the Osaka Sanshodonya

Rising costs of cottonseed and fertilizer did not underlie the motives for villages in Settsu and Kawachi to protest against the Osaka cotton *kabu nakama*. Rather, a combination of factors including increased tariffs on rural shipping, confiscation of cotton goods, and the urban merchant houses’ cornering of the cotton market engendered the 1823 kokuso. This petition and larger movements in 1824 induced realm-wide institutional change when Abe Masahiro dissolved the *kabu nakama* in 1842.

³⁶⁰ *Hyakushō ikki jiten* 705.

³⁶¹ Yabuta 1992. 72.

It is therefore of no surprise that, as written above, the 1,007-village appeal serves as the centerpiece for studies on kokuso. Tsuda argues that the event represents a watershed moment for class consciousness and struggles; that is, the movement embodied peasant angst against urban merchant practices and strengthened their resolve to improve their position once their demands had been realized.³⁶² Hauser notes that the protest and its resolution was for the rural farmers and merchants a “vindication of their marketing activities in Settsu and Kawachi.”³⁶³ Then, to Yabuta, the 1823 kokuso served as a hallmark for rural protests, for he argues that the *gunchū gitei* or district councils not only embraced a wider representation, but that it also softened the economic impact of such appeals by funneling the rural strife from the rapeseed, oil, and fertilizer markets into a larger current aimed at striking the *kabu nakama*.³⁶⁴

From an economic and political perspective, institutional, class, and regional conflict all surface in the aftermath of the 1,007-village kokuso. Examining the texts of the 1823 protests, we can discern a separate element that distinguishes the movement from earlier kokuso: a growing number of networks that tie the rural villagers, urban merchants, and governmental officials.

The first petition materialized out of a meeting of fifty representatives from 786 villages in Settsu and Kawachi in the fourth month of 1823. In a hall in the coastal town of Azukara, the villagers wrote a letter asking for authorities to constrict the reach of the cotton merchant division of the Sanshodonya, Osaka’s market for vegetables, fish, and cotton. The delegates incorporated demands of rapeseed-producing villages as well to broaden their appeal. After the magistrates had rejected the villagers’ requests, 221 additional villages

³⁶² Tsuda 1954, 12.

³⁶³ Hauser 161.

³⁶⁴ Yabuta 1992, 109-12.

sent representatives to affix their seals to a fresh appeal, thereby producing the following
1,007-village kokuso:

A Petition to Broaden Cotton Sales within a Restricted Market

1) Both Settsu and Kawachi are filled with rice paddies, and in the fields naturally are lands where recent irrigation has been poor. For that reason, cotton production has been an inadequate source for our livelihoods in both Settsu and Kawachi. We would be extremely grateful if we would be able to: sell our goods directly to shopkeepers in distant provinces; pay our *nengu* and grain with the silver we earn; and make offerings with silver from cotton sales. Nevertheless, in recent years the Osaka cotton division of the Sanshodonya has convened with its *nakama* to establish new practices in the cotton marketplace. They have also stopped selling their stock to smaller villages in Settsu and Kawachi. At their discretion, they lower the prices of cotton, benefiting from the expense of the peasants who reap it and sell it. This creates substantial impediments during our harvest. Also, there are many problems related to the costs of acquiring fertilizer. The villagers all are united through their strife. With awe and respect, we present our hardships.

1) For cotton seed production, we made payments for the *nengu* from silver earned during the last autumn's harvest. Law instructed us, starting from the first payment of the ninth month and ending at the end of the year, to make our payments. We had once been able to comply with each payment, yet recently we have not been to fulfill our obligations. Should we be able to sell cotton to merchants in distant provinces, the market price would reflect the popular demand for cotton, but only if we could broaden our sales. In recent years, the Sanshodonya cotton branch conspired with its *nakama* to enforce strict regulations on rural sellers. Now, the *tonya nakama* have imposed fees on rural cotton merchants who attempt to ship and sell their stock to distant provinces. Until now, the rural district cotton sellers had been involved in direct shipments and direct sales to merchants from outside provinces... At the present, our cash from the trade has been unfairly taken from us. If only all rural cotton merchants and the Sanshodonya cotton merchants would revert to the mercantile practices of the past.... Yet, the villages are prevented from interacting with merchants from distant lands. In regard to the costs of cotton, the Sanshodonya cotton houses have convened to lower prices, hence troubling the peasants throughout Settsu and Kawachi. The farmers and processors seek to sell their cotton as they had before [the impositions]. And still, we understand that officials have not given any permission at all for the Sanshodonya merchants to interfere with the local markets...Concomitant with the shipping fees, we must double our expenses when we attempt sell cotton. First, tens of thousands of peasants pay their *nengu*. Then, the eight or nine houses from the Sanshodonya wholesalers take additional payments from us. Even in the waters off our own promontories, somehow they continue to tap into our cash flow and harass us...By setting cotton prices at such a rate that only the Sanshodonya merchants may sell cotton goods to distant lands and by cornering the cotton market, the *tonya nakama* have forced the peasants to incur a tremendous loss in income. These problems have only been compounded in recent years.

1) As for the production of cotton seeds, it is different than the cultivation of rice, and it involves far more manual labor. Resolving issues related to merchant and processor labor begets nearly twice as many troubles as manual labor. Still, we are burdened with harvesting enough grain with limited profits and inadequate water irrigation in the fields. It was only natural that in the distant past, provincial officials regulated the production and sale of cotton seeds.

1) As for cotton and grain-producing villages both under Bakufu control and otherwise, since the 1740s, we have been ordered to pay taxes from harvests of rice and cotton. As we have mentioned above, the restricted market and lowered prices has exacerbated this situation. With awe and respect, we submit this petition precisely because of the negative impact this has had on our villages.

As written above, the Sanshodonya *tonya nakama* have convened to set a price for cotton. Cotton prices have already fallen and sales have ceased, causing extreme difficulties for us since we are unable to meet our annual *nengu* payments to our authorities. It is even more unfortunate that peasants encounter these troubles. In 1785, our officials, acting with benevolence and virtue, banned other *kabu nakama* from engaging in similar practices. At that time, however, the Sanshodonya cotton sellers did not infringe on our local markets. Only in recent years have those affiliated with the Sanshodonya sought to attain higher monetary profits. Peasants persistently complain about the dishonesty among the urban merchants. Since conditions have become more severe in recent years, these factors have prevented tens of thousands of peasants in Settsu and Kawachi from peddling their goods in the market. Because we must send *nengu* and other payments to our officials, we plead with you to allow us to sell cotton to distant regions, and even if you should impose a tax, we would like to be able to ship directly to these lands as we had done in times past. It is clear even in our bucolic eyes that an improved livelihood will save tens of thousands of peasants. We would be grateful for your immense compassion. That is all.³⁶⁵

The Osaka cotton *kabu nakama* and their affiliates, upon investigation by Osaka officials, responded to each of the accusations in a letter to both the magistrates and provincial delegates. At the beginning of the missive dated the twenty-eighth day of the sixth month of 1823, representatives of the Sanshodonya cotton merchants deny any deliberate price-gouging by their wholesalers. They note that in addition to their houses and the rural cotton merchants, nearly four-hundred separate stores operate in the cotton trade. Therefore, they claim, it would be impossible for them alone to regulate the cost of cotton arbitrarily.

³⁶⁵ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 10, 552-3.

The Sanshodonya also call into doubt the validity of the peasants and rural merchants' rights to direct trade. After all, they write, since 1805 the villages did not make any efforts to engage in direct sales to provinces outside of the Kinai region. According to the document, those villagers who did acquire silver for cotton from other provinces aligned themselves with separate cotton *kabu nakama*, notably a merchant named Shinbei from Tennōji Village who sold ginned cotton through the Misato merchant families.

Finally, the Sanshodonya representatives refute all accusations concerning excessive tariffs and charges in inter-district shipping. They argue that the cotton *kabu nakama* accept only set payments from their buyers and record no additional profits from the cotton trade. Those merchants and farmers who ship to Osaka and its surrounding districts, they maintain, do so at their own discretion. In closing, the document's lexicon reflects the requests of the villagers as the merchants write, "With awe and respect, we request that you handle this affair with righteousness. Should you listen and accept our response, we would be extremely grateful."³⁶⁶

In the seventh month of 1823, the Osaka magistrates under authority from the Edo Bakufu recognized the villagers' demands for a broader base in selling cotton. Yet, while it expanded the villagers' market rights, it refuted the allegations regarding excessive charges for use of Osaka and Settsu's waterways.³⁶⁷ Nonetheless, the villagers interpreted the ruling to provide them with unimpeded access to waterways and shipments thereof. At the end of a note disseminated across Settsu and Kawachi, the representatives from the 1,007-village

³⁶⁶ Ibid., 554-5.

³⁶⁷ *Toyonaka Shi-shi* Volume 2, 147-9.

kokuso write that they have no more demands due to the officials' benevolence and that they are "extremely grateful" for the ruling.³⁶⁸

The 1,007-village kokuso was neither the last nor largest protest from the joint council of Settsu and Kawachi villages in the 1820s. One month after the cotton protest, 1,200 villages united to acquire rights for direct sales in lamp oil. In 1824, inter-provincial movements led to relaxed restrictions for the rural rapeseed market as well. Nevertheless, the documents from the events of the fifth and sixth months of 1823 illuminate a shift in tone and power among the principal actors in the kokuso.

For the villages, the magistrates' ruling empowered them with the latitude to interpret the edict in a manner that allows them to defy future entanglements in cotton shipping. The language in their response is not devoid of the honorifics and propriety common to the protest vernacular, yet it is indicative of newfound networks that connected the village merchants and farmers to the Bakufu-supported urban conglomerates. The response from the Sanshodonya cotton houses marked new levels of discourse for the urban merchants, as their own pleas mirrored that of the peasants'. A growing mercantile civil society that had formed in multi-provincial councils had essentially expanded to incorporate the *kabu nakama* within the realm of dissent.

The magistrates, in their capacity in the official sphere, remained outside of the burgeoning civil society, yet they did play a central role in the newfound networks of the 1820s. Osaka officials demonstrated reluctance in intervening with the cotton market since trade in Kinai as well as the Kantō regions had thrived in the Settsu and Kawachi ever since the Kawachi villagers began using the Yamato River for irrigation in 1704.³⁶⁹ To preclude

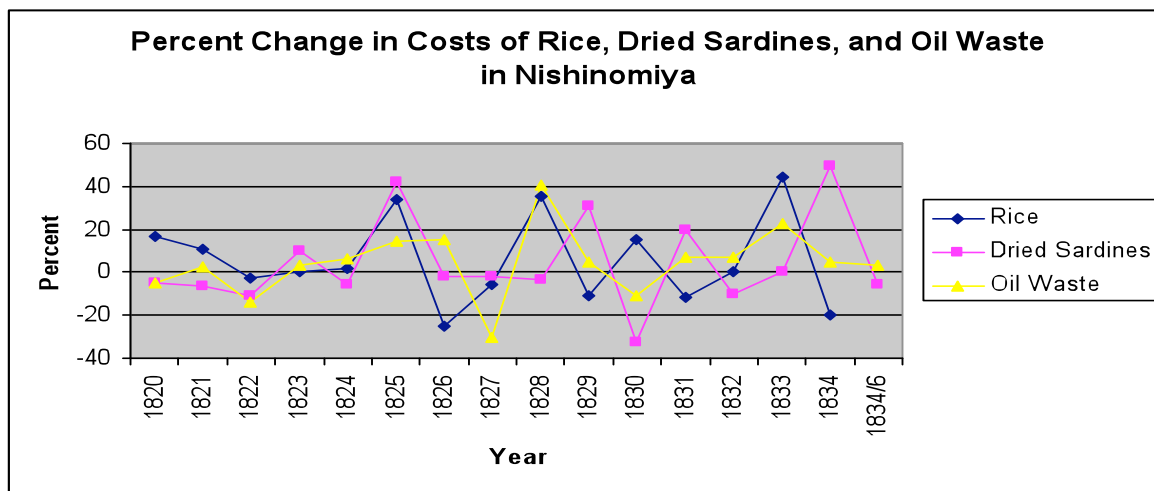
³⁶⁸ *Nishinomiya Shi-shi* Volume 4, 830.

³⁶⁹ Saito 217.

any barriers for trade with the capital, though, the magistrates eventually relaxed restrictions on rural cotton trade, leaving enough ambiguity in its decree to pacify the villagers. The new networks among the rural villagers, urban merchant houses, and Osaka magistrates became a point of contention a decade later when kokuso movements protested against price control mechanisms in the fertilizer market.

1835: The Tempō Kokuso

Inter-provincial kokuso of 1823 and 1824 allayed the villagers' concerns about monopolistic practices of the Osaka cotton and oil *tonya nakama*, respectively. Yet, the prices in the dried sardine and oil waste fertilizer markets presented less stability. The graph below follows the fluctuations in the prices of koku (grain) and fertilizer from 1819 to the middle of 1834:³⁷⁰



From 1820 to 1825, the changes in cost of fertilizer and grain demonstrate a general correlation. Beginning in 1826, fertilizer prices did not react to changes in koku, as grain fell over twenty percent, oil waste rose nearly twenty percent, and dried sardines remained

³⁷⁰ *Nishinomiya Shi-shi* Volume 2, 801-3.

relatively unchanged. During the next seven years, the disparity in rice prices accounts slightly for the changes in the oil waste market. That is, the prices in oil waste followed the previous year's changes in the cost of grain. In contrast, the dried sardine market bore no such relationship. By the end of the timeframe, the change in prices for all three commodities had become so incongruent that the rural producers and merchants found no other suitable explanation but to fault the *kabu nakama* with price-setting and market-cornering. Thus, villages in southern Muko instigated a kokuso movement against the Osaka fertilizer markets.

Muko villages originally presented their case through a *tanso* (嘆訴 or a simple grievance appeal) to the Osaka magistrates through two *shōya* elders they had dispatched to the city, but the officials returned it to them without conducting any formal inquiry into the charges. In the fifth month of 1835, representatives from 952 villages in Settsu and Kawachi convened to deliver a petition to their *jitō* or daimyo estates for them to forward once more to the Osaka magistrates.³⁷¹ The introduction explicates why the villagers felt the need to resubmit the petition:

With awe and respect, we present and send this letter.

In recent years, the cost of all fertilizers has risen, thereby troubling the peasants. In a separate petition, we had presented a *tanso* to the Osaka ward magistrates. Here, we present the gist of it to you again. Beforehand, the Takagi Village *shōya* Naozaemon and Danjō Village *shōya* Gorōemon, both representatives of the rural fertilizer associations in Settsu, had been given the *tanso*. The crops at the time had yet to be harvested and were merely being sown, an extremely taxing period for us. Both men had proceeded to Osaka to deliver the message. When they had delivered it to the magistrate's representatives, they had done so at their own discretion. We hereby note that both men had been in Osaka at the time, and it is with awe and respect that we now submit another draft...

³⁷¹ Yabuta 1992, 74.

The petition then summarizes the history of fertilizer protest from Settsu and Kawachi, noting that the “peasants were united in their gratitude” for the laws enacted on their behalf. In the following section, the delegates attribute poor crop production to the drought and other environmental conditions of the previous harvests. Therefore, they write, when the price of fertilizer increased, it became impossible to maintain their livelihoods in the oil market and unfeasible to sustain themselves by reaping barley and rapeseeds. The peasants subsequently could not fulfill their *nengu* obligations and suffered thereafter. The village representatives close their letter by imploring the magistrates to conduct an investigation into the *kabu nakama* in order to determine the level in which the merchant houses had set the price for fertilizer in the Kinai region.³⁷²

The second letter of protest, having been processed through district councils and then representatives of the daimyo estates, generated a response from the Osaka ward magistrates. The officials conducted an expedient investigation into the practices of the fertilizer wholesalers, and within half a month of having received the appeal, they replied to the rural merchants and farmers:

As for the appeal from the sixteenth day of the sixth month regarding various fertilizers, we have deliberated over it and now present the following in response. We request for this text to be acknowledged and distributed, first to the representatives of the 952 villages from the twenty-five districts in Settsu and Kawachi Provinces.

Starting with the dried sardines, trade in the fertilizer market has driven up the prices of the related commodities, thereby burdening the villages. A petition from this past month noted the trouble among the peasants stemming from the allegation that the market for fertilizer had been cornered. Having investigated this affair, we promulgate an edict on behalf of the villages in the provinces of Settsu and Kawachi. We have determined that indeed the *tonya nakama* have cornered the market for fertilizers, causing the cost of these materials to rise. Thus, those who have been troubled have sent us their appeals. Upon inquiry, we have determined that there has been a breach in fair market practices. The quality and quantity of fertilizer is,

³⁷² *Nishinomiya Shi-shi* Volume 2., 799-801.

without a doubt, too inferior to warrant such expensive prices in these times. The edicts from the Tenmei years [1781-89] have lapsed, and the peasants have been troubled ever since by the *tonya nakama* trade practices. At the present, we have considered and accepted the will of the petition. Once more, we enact this edict for the general region and provinces of Settsu and Kawachi. We would be grateful for all of this to be disseminated [among the villages]. Therefore, this should be accepted everywhere.³⁷³

An investigation into extant documents surrounding the Tempō era kokuso revealed no formal exchange between the Osaka fertilizer guilds and the magistrates.³⁷⁴ It is likely that the magistrates recognized that during the time of a realm-wide famine, it was necessary to appease the primary producers of the province and bypass dialogue with the city merchants. Further, the magistrates' investigation into the allegations culminated in two weeks, unlike the inquiries into previous kokuso, hinting at an exigency in reaching a solution to the peasants' strife. Lastly, the urban fertilizer *tonya* did not belong to a major merchant line like the Sanshodonya; thus, the magistrates would have faced little organized resistance from the city *tonya*.

Of final note for the 1835 kokuso is the shift in language in the closing sentence of the magistrates' response. Borrowing from the parlance of formalized protest, the magistrates end their edict by expressing how they “would be grateful for all of this to be disseminated.”³⁷⁵ Although the officials' text refrains from subservient salutations like “with awe and respect,” this detail does reinforce the notion that the officials began to rely on the villagers to comply with their decree—cease further protest in other words—to enhance their own economic conditions during the Tempō crisis. In the early 1850s, villagers would latch

³⁷³ Ibid., 804.

³⁷⁴ For brevity's sake, I have not included the two pages of figures relating to the cost of *shochu* powder, rice, oil waste, and dried sardines. The chart at the beginning of the section, however, draws from some of data to demonstrate the drastic changes in the fertilizer market in relation to the cost of grain.

³⁷⁵ Translation of 仰渡一同画難有奉畏候

onto this newfound relationship by taking proactive measures to combat the resurrected *kabu nakama*.

1854: A Level Playing Field

Protests over the constricted conditions of the rapeseed and oil markets followed the fertilizer movements of 1835. Rapeseed kokuso initially engendered a magistrates' edict in 1835. Yet, since the market hindered the production of oil and shipments thereof to the capital, the appeals eventually induced the Edo Bakufu to intervene. Qualifying the villagers' demands, the Bakufu's edict allowed the villages to expand their market base and also lowered the price of rapeseed and oil.³⁷⁶

Abe Masahiro's Tempō reforms of 1842 dissolved the *kabu nakama* in order to breathe new life into the rural economy. Abe's reform was designed to increase trade activity for the regions around Osaka and to aid the cotton sellers across Settsu and Kawachi by allowing the producers and merchants to expand into the space once occupied by the Osaka guilds. Hence, kokuso ceased for the remainder of the 1840s with protected trade rights and disbanded *kabu nakama*.³⁷⁷

Authorities realized in 1851 that the abolition of the *kabu nakama* system did not lower the costs for cotton and oil. In the third month of the year, the Bakufu rescinded its ban and facilitated the revitalization of the licensed Osaka guilds. When the new *kabu nakama* failed to increase shipments of oil and cotton to the capital, the Bakufu reshuffled the Settsu *kabu nakama* and prevented the Settsu and Kawachi villages from engaging in direct

³⁷⁶ *Toyokana Shi-shi* Volume 2, 266.

³⁷⁷ *Kawanishi Shi-shi* Volume 2, 509.

shipments to distant provinces, thus negating the 1823 edict and severing the once expanding roots of the village economy.³⁷⁸

In the seventh month of 1854, sixty-one villages from Settsu's Kawabe and Teshima districts convened to submit a written protest on behalf of their peasants and merchants. Once the circular reached the cotton-producing villages of Kawachi, the movement transformed into an inter-provincial kokuso later that month.³⁷⁹

A Note of Request

1) The constricted market for cotton production is causing us much distress. In 1823, we presented an extensive written petition to be accepted by magistrates. It had been received and distributed through the provinces. Now, we submit another petition that addresses the troubles caused by the cotton *kabu nakama*, which once more are interfering with the market.

1) This petition addresses the distress all of our peasants have suffered from due to the unusual rise in fertilizer costs in recent years.

1) This petition addresses the distress all of our peasants have suffered from due to the constricted market in rapeseed production.

The preceding factors have had a deleterious impact on our ability to oblige with *nengu* payments, causing further trouble for us. With that, we have sent this petition. We face further obstacles in irrigating our fields for production. Therefore, as representatives of the actual afflicted villages, we have presented our pleas. And moreover, [the guilds] have repeatedly violated earlier edicts that had offset the matters we have written here. Our villages have all united to represent themselves as for the purposes of this petition and to lend their support for this appeal designed to alleviate our troubles. We present this letter of appeal to you.

Again, please validate our aforementioned requests. We hereby present to you a list of those representing our districts in the meeting. That is all.³⁸⁰

The magistrates responded to the petition the following month. In the notice, they ask for the villagers to provide them with a more detailed analysis of the rural financial strife, and the representatives complied with a longer missive describing the villages' solvency and the rural producers' loss of income. Akin to the kokuso from 1835, the note refers to specific historical incidents and merchants who are troubled by the reemergence of the *kabu nakama*

³⁷⁸ *Toyonaka Shi-shi*, Volume 2, 267.

³⁷⁹ *Kawanishi Shi-shi* Volume 2, 510.

³⁸⁰ *Kawanishi Shi-shi* Volume 5, 502-3.

in Osaka. The appeal ends with the statement that the magistrates should be “fully aware that because the villagers are prevented from selling their crops and wares in an expanded market, there are impediments for the villagers in paying their compulsory *nengu* and other taxes. But if the rural districts and Osaka work together, there will not be such disarray.”³⁸¹

Osaka authorities made their final decision on the thirteenth day of the eighth month. The decree did little to restructure the cotton and oil *kabu nakama*; however, using the 1823 edict as a precedent, it did recognize the villagers’ rights to sell cotton and oil to distant provinces and thus widen their market. The villagers thereafter withdrew their demands and accepted the declaration.³⁸²

The last kokuso of this study mirrors the proactive political consciousness that grew in the villages after the Tempō period.³⁸³ No longer content in reacting to the practices of the *kabu nakama*, village councils convened to petition authorities to restrain the activities of the trade guilds before their livelihoods were affected. Moreover, the text itself takes on a direct form in the petitions to central administrators: while villagers incorporate the early modern protest lexicon such as “with awe and respect,” and “we would be grateful for your wide compassion,” they elect to avoid language of propriety at the conclusion of the piece. They instead elect to emphasize the necessity of mutual cooperation between the central and peripheral political units in order to enhance the cotton trade.

Granted, by the end of the 1840s central authorities determined it was expedient to accept the peasants’ requests and not involve urban conglomerates in additional dialogue. Further, resuscitated village markets and replenished stocks of cotton and fertilizers during

³⁸¹ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 18, 278.

³⁸² *Kawanishi Shi-shi*, Volume 2, 512-3.

³⁸³ The previous chapter of this dissertation argues for an active political culture at the village level following the riots of Ōshio Heihachirō and Yamadaya Daisuke.

the post famine years gave enough latitude for villagers to expect officials to react in their favor. In the end, though, Osaka magistrates legitimized mercantile civil society of the inter-provincial councils by catering to the rural bodies' demands rather than imposing decrees or restrictions on the *kabu nakama*.

Conclusions

If discussions of civil society generally neglect the marketplace due to the inherent individual agency and instead focus on volunteer associations,³⁸⁴ the inter-district and inter-provincial *gunchū gitei* tending to kokuso appeals certainly present the strongest link between civil society and the marketplace within Settsu's public sphere of remonstrance. First, the councils tend primarily to the strife of producer market. Second, the arc of kokuso protest follows the general pattern of dissent in late Tokugawa Settsu, for kokuso petitions serve as an outlet for the rural masses to air their dissent with conditions in their villages. Third, kokuso of the 1830s and 1850s foreshadow the role central authorities would play in the public sphere by the fall of the Bakufu. Most importantly, Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi's interprovincial *gunchū gitei* signify the growth a voluntary association of sorts where rural officials, merchants, artisans, and agrarians would gather to rectify the economic ills that befell their village.

Fluctuations in prices of fertilizers spawned the initial episodes of kokuso protest in the eighteenth century, yet the grievances ultimately represent the plight of the rustic producers, processors, and merchants. The costs of fertilizers like dried sardines and sake sediment did dictate the market of cotton and oil, and the villagers' end goal centered on profiting from their harvested and processed goods. Moreover, the village councils refrained

³⁸⁴ Berry 139-40 and Nosco 334.

from engaging in any consumer-based protest like boycotting Osaka conglomerates or limiting distribution of the goods to the *kabu nakama*. Their deliberations circumvented the urban marketplace and solicited assistance from city officials to counter the machinations of the city wholesalers. Thus, embedded within the marketplace, kokuso nonetheless fall within the rubric for the late Tokugawa public sphere.

In addition, the evolution of the kokuso protests follows the course of rural remonstrance in the Settsu province. Kokuso initially reacted to market conditions that had been exacerbated by purportedly unjust practices from urban merchant houses. As the kokuso councils enveloped an increasing amount of villages, districts, and then provinces, villagers grew conscious of their ability to induce changes that would enhance their livelihoods. The 1,007-village kokuso of 1823 signaled the height of kokuso protest with prolonged dialogue between the villages and Sanshodoya cotton merchants with the magistrates. Yet, it was during the Tempō famine that villagers began to expect swift resolutions made on their behalf, and the authorities complied. Finally in the 1850s, villagers began to take proactive measures to preclude the resuscitated *kabu nakama* from infringing on mercantile interests.

Changes in the written vernacular of kokuso petitions also reflect the overarching stream of protest in the province. As the above examples demonstrate, the frequency of honorifics and supplications substantially decreases from the first appearance of kokuso in the 1740s to the final incidents of the 1850s. The later kokuso texts contain fewer redundancies in written demands and conditions, mirroring the direct approach taken by Osaka's peripheral units in cases of discontent following the Tempō period. The magistrates

incorporated the lexicon of rural dissent in their own decrees, as they understood that alleviating unrest and appealing to the villagers benefited their own economic conditions.

Aligning inter-district and inter-provincial councils with civil society begets the question of the role economic interest in these voluntary associations. Certainly a collective vested interest in enhancing the village marketplace compelled the peasants into devising kokuso. Still, the contour of kokuso protest mirrored that of social contention through the nineteenth century. In addition, the post-famine episodes underscored the proactive nature of village dissent that ran through Settsu from 1838 through the 1850s. Pigeonholing kokuso protest in the realm of economic interests thus oversimplifies the importance of the voluntary associations that unified social strata in efforts to counter the *kabu nakama*.

Multiple streams of thought and not simply economic interested accounted for the growth of mercantile civil society embedded in the kokuso phenomenon. Rural economic strife inevitably invokes a discussion of the moral economy. As James Scott writes in *The Moral Economy of the Peasant*, when peasants sense that their sustenance levels are threatened, they feel morally entitled to oppose those who have compromised their basic livelihoods, an argument that echoes basic Confucianism where the agriculturalists must be appeased to maintain order in the realm.³⁸⁵ Scott's theory may also apply to kokuso during periods of famine and drought, but it becomes problematic in accounting for less severe times. As the chart from the 1834 kokuso indicates, even the market for grain—the backbone of the early modern Japanese economy—did not account for the variation in fertilizer costs. Moreover, the villagers' perceived moral and legal entitlement rarely

³⁸⁵ Scott 10.

materializes in the kokuso petitions.³⁸⁶ Conversely, the stated desire to comply with *nengu* payments and other tributes—the villagers’ imposed fiscal responsibilities—permeated the kokuso texts.

Political consciousness naturally plays an invaluable role in unearthing kokuso thought. In the study, *Hyakushō ikki no rekishiteki kōzō* (Historical Structure of Peasant Uprisings), Fukaya Katsumi argues that the peasants’ grasp of their place in the Tokugawa social hierarchy imbued them with the power and political duty to confront their administrators whenever their governors rule without benevolence or compassion.³⁸⁷ Rhetoric of the kokuso indeed implores the magistrates, through their “immense compassion,” to act on behalf of “troubled peasants” against the unrighteous practices of the city wholesalers. Yet, kokuso do not merely serve the plight of the peasants; the petitions, even while stressing the calamities of the “peasants,” convey to Osaka authorities the concerns of the rural merchants and processors in addition to that of the farmers.

A shift in referents—from peasant/lord to periphery/center—helps to mold our understanding of kokuso thought. Yabuta’s work, especially his comparison on kokuso, *kunibure*, and *kokueki*, introduces this conflict through the rapport between the inter-district/provincial councils and the Osaka magistrates. His thesis that through kokuso protests the rural councils formed new networks with the Osaka authorities does apply to the majority of kokuso in the Settsu area. For those incidents in the Tempō and Bakumatsu years, however, the relationship becomes more intricate.

This complexity stems from a change in the roster of protagonists, antagonists, and intermediaries. For the magistrates, the delineation of actors was simple: monopolistic

³⁸⁶ Phrases like 天之子, for example, are prevalent descriptors for the commoners and peasants in Ōshio and Yamadaya’s circulars, yet, to my knowledge, are not mentioned in kokuso.

³⁸⁷ Fukaya 111-4.

practices of Osaka *kabu nakama* spurred the villages to react to the encroachment upon their livelihoods. Initially, for the villagers as well, the roles were straightforward: they relied on Osaka officials to mediate their disputes with the urban conglomerates. In the 1830s, though, the players had been recast.

When the rural councils began to engage the magistrates with more direct language and higher expectations for swift judgments in the 1830s, the *kabu nakama* ceased to function as principal antagonists as villages were rewarded with pronouncements designed on their behalf. By the 1850s, inter-provincial councils anticipated the magistrates' rulings to balance routinely in their favor. Additionally, as the *kokuso* from 1854 reveals, the villages dispensed with the numerous supplications and formalities once identified with *kokuso* protest, thereby replacing the guilds with the magistrates as the targets of their petitions.

The thought underlying *kokuso* of the late Tokugawa period ultimately encompasses both an inherent expectation and a political cognizance that allowed Osaka's villagers to produce decrees designated to enhance the local economy. As the nineteenth century political, social, and environmental climate gradually weakened the Bakufu and by extension the Osaka city magistrates, the villages grasped that they could mold potential reforms to improve their socio-economic conditions. In the 1850s, when the Bakufu resurrected the *kabu nakama*, *gunchū gitei* councils immediately drafted *kokuso* petitions to counteract any signs of economic infringement from the urban guilds. Villages throughout Settsu and Kawachi latched on to the final *kokuso* of early modern Japan not only to enhance their economic livelihoods, but also to participate in a mercantile civil society that by the end of the Bakufu rule enveloped the producers, *kabu nakama*, and even the provincial authorities.

Conclusion: Breaching the Confines of Settsu's Public Sphere

Introduction

With Osaka serving as its urban center and twelve districts forming its interlocking social and economic networks, Settsu was the hotbed of discontent in the late Tokugawa period. The frequency and magnitude in which the province's residents of all social classes engaged the public sphere through protests, riots, religious movements, print literature, civil society, and the marketplace set it apart from provinces elsewhere in early modern Japan. Even in the capital of Edo or the intellectual academies of Mito one fails to see such an array of actors immersed in the public sphere through eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even more, the actors within the official sphere played in integral part, a dual role in fact in which they originally contained the public sphere's growth and then later fostered it.

Settsu's menagerie of remonstrance during the final decades of the Tokugawa period defined and expanded the public sphere. At a broader level, Settsu contention had repercussions throughout early modern Japan, with violent outbreaks in the late 1830s echoing Ōshio and Yamada's. Moreover the cases at the end of this study laid the groundwork for the Bakufu to become an agent in shaping the province's public sphere during the final years of the shogun's reign.

In this chapter, I first aim to identify the threads that tie the episodes together in Settsu. Then, I will explore ramifications of Ōshio's riot on Ikuta Yoroze's failed rebellion and discuss what impact they had on the role of thought and civil society in the public sphere. I next discuss a case in the Kai province in which assent comes into play in the public sphere. Finally, I investigate late Tokugawa Fuji worship to underscore the more discernable role the official sphere had on the public sphere immediately prior the fall of the Bakufu.

The Components of the Late Tokugawa Public Sphere of Remonstrance

An active political culture for the public sphere's largest set of constituents—the peasants—marked the culmination of the sphere's growth in late Tokugawa Settsu. In the early nineteenth century, agrarians engaged provincial authorities from both within and without their village in reaction to financial hardships and perceived local and regional corruption. During the same period, peasants also demonstrated a clear conservative sentiment toward non-financial matters, especially conflicts that aimed to preserve the integrity of the village social strata. Rural petitions relied on central authorities to disseminate edicts to rid the villages of problematic elements, thus recognizing the magistrates or Bakufu representatives as the final adjudicators.

In these early decades, peasants refrained from violent protest, although they did lodge appeals through illicit channels. It was during the Tempō famine that Settsu peasants resorted to destructive acts of protest to voice their discontent. Village signposts from the late 1830s to the mid 1840s incited anti-authoritarian activity by organizing bands of protestors into committing *uchi-kowashi*. Peasants also abandoned their homes to flock to the city to engage in further acts of remonstrance.

A reawakening of cultural and historical interest sparked Settsu *chōnin* or townsmen to partake in the public sphere during the early 1800s. At the turn of the century, authors produced works that depicted the life of the Shogun's inner court, and Osaka booksellers distributed the texts to their clientele. Bakufu authorities issued decrees to outlaw such material on the grounds that they subverted the social order, yet merchants continued to sell the texts until the magistrates persecuted offenders with heavy fines and house arrest.

Illicit travel served as another channel through which townsmen participated in the public sphere. By abetting pilgrims on their way to Ise shrines and by embarking on *okagemairi* journeys to graves of fallen Sengoku warriors, *chōnin* drew the ire of Bakufu officials and city magistrates. In contrast to the increased restrictions and penalties associated with the sale of prohibited literature, though, the Bakufu issued *machibure* with such infrequency that by the 1830s officials allowed the townsmen to embark on their journeys, provided that the pilgrims tended to the family members who remained in their homes.

For Settsu, urban townsmen thus served as the principal proprietors of the cultural components in the public sphere of remonstrance. Of more importance to the development of the sphere was the Bakufu's decision to allow residents of Osaka to maintain forbidden practices, which had never been officially rescinded, well into the 1850s. Officials had sensed that their grasp on cultural production had loosened vis-à-vis the merchants', and therefore they released their grip over restricted travel and modes of cultural production.

Ōshio Heihachirō and Yamadaya Daisuke would change the course of Settsu remonstrance in 1837. Both men were born in the samurai class, which until their respective incidents had belonged to the official sphere as Osaka magistrate officials, Bakufu representatives in *jinya* outposts, or Daimyo retainers in outlying domains. Moreover, the samurai carried out the role as the principal antagonists in village-level protest. After all, peasants addressed their petitions to the magistrates and, with the exceptions of inter-village friction and *kokuso* episodes, protested against samurai officials in the majority of their grievances. At the height of the Tempō famine, however, Ōshio and Yamadaya embedded themselves within the contentious region of the public sphere when they led their riots.

Ōshio Heihachirō conducted his uprising in the first month of 1837 when he gathered his students and relatives together on a mission to restore order to the city of Osaka and all of early modern Japan. During the preparations for his riot, he made a deliberate effort to amass support from each corner of Settsu, and by the time Osaka magistrates attempted to counter his movement, he had garnered assistance from hundreds of peasants and commoners, scores of *hinin* and *eta* outcastes, and even fellow samurai during his path of self-destruction. Although Ōshio failed in reaching his goal of “saving the people,” he maintained an undeniable impact on the public sphere. His *ran* centered the realm of protest in urban Osaka and represented the breakdown of class barriers that typified movements in the province prior to Ōshio’s uprising.

Four months later, Yamadaya Daisuke left Osaka to lead a movement in Settsu’s northernmost district of Nose. There, Yamadaya galvanized nearly three thousand peasants into joining him on a march to Kyoto, where he intended to deliver an appeal to the Emperor. The episode commenced as an *osso*, or an illicit forced petition. Yet, once Yamadaya decapitated an outcast affairs manager who refused to lend support to the group, the movement transformed into a riot that, like Ōshio’s, reached its conclusion with the death of its ringleader. In pronouncing himself as an “ally of Ōshio’s,” Yamadaya fostered a sense of continuity between the two movements. Yamadaya furthermore transferred the realm of discontent back to rural Settsu, where it would remain through the end of the Tokugawa period.

The two samurai-led incidents represented the emergent individual contributor to the public sphere of remonstrance. Both Ōshio and Yamadaya grasped the atmosphere of discontent—Ōshio from his work as a *yoriki* with the Osaka magistrate’s office and

Yamadaya from his life in Osaka during the Tempō famine—and they manipulated the sentiment of Settsu’s commoners and peasantry to suit their own goals, regardless of how vainglorious or righteous these objectives had been presented. During the Osaka *ran*, the magistrates responded with exigency to the outbreak of fires in the city’s wards. Even though the officials were compelled to retreat from the scene after their horses had been startled by the rioters’ clamor, the magistrates did suppress the rioters the following day. For the Nose incident, officials from Kyoto and Osaka as well as Edo agents stationed in nearby *jinya* convened and established an effective perimeter around Nose and its neighboring district of Kawabe to prevent Yamadaya from leaving Settsu. Bakufu and city magistrates bided their time until most of Yamadaya’s men abandoned the march, and then they proceeded to surround a small village temple in Kinenomiya where the group was encamped.

Members of the official sphere hence served as the antagonists for the actors in the public sphere during these two incidents, yet to a certain extent, officials had allowed Yamadaya’s movement to wax and wane until they knew containment was possible. Governors naturally had the responsibility to react to and quash violent and illicit modes of protest. Still, from the two samurai movements in 1837, we also can detect the Bakufu’s awareness of its own limitations in controlling the public sphere.

Settsu felt an immediate impact from these two movements. For Osaka residents, outbreaks of violence and protest would cease in the aftermath of the Osaka riot. Investigations continued for a year to determine the extent of Ōshio’s influence in both Settsu and early modern Japan. For participants in the Nose incident, officials exhibited a degree of latitude for the participants and their villages, for it became impossible to implicate and try every one of the nearly three-thousand people who had joined Yamadaya’s cause.

Ōshio and Yamadaya interjected individual agency into the public sphere, for their actions during the course of the riots superseded their stated goals and belied the underlying thought for the movements. Nevertheless, individual agency was a short-lived phenomenon in Settsu dissent. Osaka residents mostly refrained from further remonstrance for the remainder of the Tokugawa Period. Violent protest in the villages abated after the Tempō famine had subsided, while petitions and appeals continued with their pre-famine frequency. What did emerge from the ashes of the 1837 incidents was a sense of empowerment among the rural peasantry.

After recovering from the strife of the 1830s, villagers engaged their officials in a manner that differed from pre-drought decades. Villagers understood that, following Ōshio and Yamadaya's mass movements, provincial officials no longer could contain dissent, and the nature of their appeals reflected cognizance. No longer content in expressing dissent insofar as their own livelihoods were threatened, peasants took proactive measures to counter potential threats to their social and economic stability. Episodes of remonstrance included curtailing and preventing finance mismanagement and deterring possible corruption among the village and district elites. Lists of new codes and changes in managerial succession became commonplace in the post-famine lawsuits and petitions. The villagers still presented their reforms to provincial authorities, but the letters served more as a formality than a plea for central officials to preside over village dissent. By the time of Commodore Perry's arrival in Edo, Settsu's peasantry had thus perceived and actualized their ability to induce change on their own without legitimization from central governors.

Finally, the kokuso protests mirrored the general contour of late Tokugawa remonstrance in Settsu. The crux of the preceding chapter emphasized how inter-district and

inter-provincial councils that materialized to combat the unjust practices of Osaka *kabu nakama* embedded the marketplace within civil society from the early 1740s to the 1850s. For the *kokuso*, individual choice did not dictate fluctuations in prices of oil, fertilizers, and cottonseeds. Rather, the councils relayed concerns on behalf of their constituents in order to lower the costs of commodities that affected the cotton-production industry in the Osaka area.

Still, we may detect the evolution of a subject political culture into a proactive one within the arc of *kokuso* activity. Whereas 1837 served as the watershed year for peasant and samurai dissent, 1823 represented the peak of the *kokuso* protests with 1,007 villages from Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi entrenched in a battle against the Osaka *kabu nakama*. In the following decade, the Tempō crisis precluded the protests as virtually no merchants and villagers profited from the drought and famine. Mizuno Tadakuni's Tempō reforms dismantled the licensed guilds in order to stimulate the economy, but the measures faltered and consequently facilitated the resurrection of the *kabu nakama*. Then, at the first sign of potential threats to the village economy, representatives from the Kinai provinces reconvened to prevent Osaka's Dōjima businesses from once more interfering with the rural cotton market. Osaka magistrates and the Edo Bakufu again played a complex role in the public sphere, for the officials at first adjudicated over the villagers' grievances and issued decrees in response to the protests. When confronted with new *kokuso* protests in the late 1840s and early 1850s, the magistrates relented to the demands from the villagers and restricted the trade guilds' reach into the neighboring villages.

Osaka's function as an early modern metropole and Settsu's diverse array of residents thus promoted the growth of the public sphere of remonstrance. From the aftermath of

Ōshio and Yamadaya's riots, villagers found a stronger voice in articulating their reforms to both local and provincial authorities. Likewise, the magistrates understood that the path to least resistance led toward catering to and later legitimizing a level of newfound autonomy in the village polity. The following section explores the impact of Settsu remonstrations elsewhere in early modern Japan. First Ikuta Yoroze's Kashiwazaki riot echoes the dissolution of civil society as an impetus for action. Then, an 1837 conflict in the Kai province helps pinpoint the village transition into a proactive political culture. Lastly, a glimpse into late Tokugawa Fuji worship signifies the Bakufu's complete submersion into the public sphere.

Echoes of Ōshio: Ikuta Yoroze's Kashiwazaki Attack

Like Ōshio Heihachirō, Ikuta Yoroze (1801-1837) was an active member of Tokugawa civil society. He was born to a middle-ranked warrior family in the Tatebayashi domain, where he excelled in his *hankō* (藩校 or domain school) and impressed his instructors with his knowledge of the Confucian classics.³⁸⁸ His training sparked his interest in Japanese history, and he committed his later years in the school to reading and interpreting the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, veering away from the traditional Confucian analytical perspective.³⁸⁹

At the age of seventeen, Ikuta turned toward poetry and he began composing *waka* (和歌 or five lined poems with a 5-7-5-7-7 syllable structure). His pieces conveyed a certain measure of dissatisfaction with his domain but also indicated a yearning that matters could

³⁸⁸ Itō 9-12.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 20-2.

improve if social conditions of the *han* were to change.³⁹⁰ In 1823, Ikuta sought spiritual and intellectual inspiration outside of Tatebayashi and traveled to Kyoto and Osaka, where he was introduced to Hirata Atsutane's branch of Kokugaku philosophy. After studying with Hirata in Edo, Ikuta took temporary residence in the city of Ota to assist instructors in imparting lessons of nativism.³⁹¹

Ikuta returned to Tatebayashi in 1828 only to reach a higher level of frustration with the domain. Later that year, he submitted to domainal officials a list of suggested reforms in his memorial *Iwa ni musu koke* (岩二生ス苔 or the Moss Growing on the Rock)³⁹², and he proceeded to banish himself from his home, a rash decision since Tatebayashi officials were prepared simply to censure Ikuta and wait for him to continue his teachings.³⁹³ Ikuta returned to Edo, where he taught at Hirata's private academy, the Ibukiya. During recesses from his teaching, however, Ikuta traveled south to Ise and preached the necessity of studying the Japanese classics over Chinese texts. His lectures became a platform from which he encouraged Kokugaku as a means of radical reform within the *bakuhan* system and as a cause for the reinstatement of the Emperor as central power. Hirata distanced himself from his former pupil, and Ikuta left Edo to teach elsewhere without the sponsorship or support from his former master.³⁹⁴

Ikuta did make repeated efforts at reconciliation with Hirata, returning in 1832 to compile texts at the Ibukiya. At the beckoning of officials from Ota, however, he left Edo to help rebuild a *terakoya* (寺子屋 or temple school) in the smaller city. Nevertheless, he felt

³⁹⁰ Ibid., 24-33.

³⁹¹ Ibid., 33-4.

³⁹² A transliteration of the memorial can be found from pages 10 to 48 in the fifty-first volume of the *Nihon shisō taikō*, "Kokugaku undō no shisō" or "The Thought of Kokugaku Movements"

³⁹³ Itō 117-20.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., 259.

constrained by the school's curriculum, and he moved one final time to Kashiwazaki in 1836. Ikuta established his own private academy, the Oenjuku, where he offered courses on native learning and the study on ancient texts. As his desire to be more active and vociferous in his teaching surpassed his will to instruct in the academy, he started training his brightest students to succeed him at the Oenjuku.³⁹⁵

Four months after Ōshio's riot, on the thirtieth day of the fifth month of 1837, Ikuta coordinated an attack on a *jinya* in his home domain. Alongside six samurai companions, Ikuta set sail from the Maze Harbor in the Echigo domain and arrived in the middle of the night at the town of Arakawa. Throughout the night the group attacked several wealthy farmers of the village and burned their properties. Armed with the group's only weapon, a wooden spear, Ikuta and his militia attacked a *jinya* at Kashiwazaki the next day. Because the rioters were outnumbered nearly one hundred to seven, Ikuta and his friends were soundly defeated. While five of his men were immediately executed at the fort, Ikuta pierced his own chest with his spear and soon died. The sole survivor of Ikuta's party fled to Edo, where he was captured and slain. As in Osaka, in a span of a few days, anyone remotely associated with the Echigo riot was detained and put on trial in Edo. Three days after the rebellion, Ikuta's wife was imprisoned in Echigo, where she strangled her two children and committed suicide by biting her tongue and choking on her blood.³⁹⁶

Juxtaposing Ikuta's riot with Ōshio's leads us to three hypotheses concerning the relationship between those active in late Tokugawa civil society and the public sphere. First, the economic and environmental conditions of the late 1830s engendered an ideal

³⁹⁵ "Ikuta Yorozu" in *Ōta Sh-shi* Vol. 4. Ōta: Ōta-shi, 1978, 747.

³⁹⁶ This account comes from Ito i-v. English languages sources, including Harry Harootunian's *Things Seen and Unseen*, Conrad Totman's *Early Modern Japan*, and Marius Jansen's *The Making of Modern Japan*, all refer to Itō's brief account of the riot.

environment in which intellectuals who aimed to enhance their society could instigate a movement that materialized their goals into concrete action. Second, an “Ōshio effect” spurred ideologues into violent acts of remonstrance under the guise of rectifying Tokugawa society’s ills. Or third, individual scholars felt that their range of influence was restricted to the walls of their private academies and that illicit contention became a means to leave their mark on society.

Most likely, a combination of all three suppositions explicates the role of civil society in the public sphere of remonstrance. Private academies fostered an atmosphere in which individuals like Ōshio and Ikuta could adapt the intellectual traditions of Tokugawa Japan into their own trains of thought that were conducive for reform. Yet, with limited membership and a minor range of influence, the philosophers realized that they had to breach the walls of their institutions to appeal to a broader audience. As the first intellectual to lead a riot, Ōshio undoubtedly stoked the fires of dissent among other early modern Japanese philosophers like Ikuta and served as a driving force for violent protest. For late Tokugawa Japan, civil society accounted for part of the sphere of remonstrance, but the strands of intellectual ideas rooted within the private academies did not completely justify the decisions of the ideologues to embark on a path to self-destruction.

The 1837 Kai Petition: Assent and Dissent in the Public Sphere

The turning point for the villages’ transition from a subject political culture into a proactive one appeared not in Settsu but in Kai, a province along the eastern Tokkaidō highway where Yamanashi Prefecture is located today. Three months after Yamadaya’s uprising, villagers in Kai found themselves embroiled over the actions of a newly appointed

magistrate clerk named Hayama Magosaburō. Initial petitions from the autumn of 1837 indicate that peasants opposed Hayama's fiscal and judiciary policies. Soon thereafter, however, another group of villagers threw their support behind the official in what would be a rare instance of assent coming into play within the early modern Japanese public sphere. The convergence of the streams of dissent and assent would lead villagers into taking proactive measures in identifying and managing local corruption.

The Ichikawa magistrate office dispatched Hayama to outlying villages in order to investigate those who were implicated in an uprising in 1836 and to identify others who removed their names from village registers, presumably to avoid paying *nengu*. In the ninth month of the 1837, an elder from the Miyabara village drafted a petition on behalf of thirty-six villages and traveled to Edo to lodge his complaint in the form of a *kagoso* (駕籠訴 or a petition forced into the palanquin holding a high official).³⁹⁷

The petition notes that Hayama distributed relief funds to stations around the villages with an interest rate of thirty-three percent. When Hayama returned to the villages to collect the loans, the note claims, he exacted on those unable to repay the loans excessive punishments, such as parading offenders in handcuffs around the villages. In other cases, the piece alleges that Hayama threatened villagers with imprisonment and banishment should they fail to compensate for their previous loans.

The complaint next accuses Hayama of compelling villagers into corvée labor to construct fountains and gardens at his residence. This ostentatious display of wealth further irked the villagers, for they mentioned that village officials had divvied the tasks of local management, but Hayama made it clear that he would make unilateral decisions for the

³⁹⁷ *Hyakushō ikki jiten* 398.

welfare of the farmers. Finally, the petition insinuates that after Hayama instructed village officials to wear cotton coats, he colluded with merchants to set a high cost for the material in such a way that it became fiscally impossible for the rural governors to maintain their positions.³⁹⁸

On the twenty-seventh day of the following month, however, representatives from nearly eighty villages in Kai's Koma district appealed for the magistrates to extend Hayama's work in the province. After detailing benefits the villagers received from relief funds during the famine, they address Hayama's impact on rampant crime in the area:

Since the outbreak of violence last year, all across the province bandits have been stealing from us at night. Therefore, the magistrates have dispatched inspectors to control these men. Help came from Hayama Magosaburō, who has been on patrol in our villages. With the innumerable misfortunes that have beset our own governing offices, we are truly grateful at this time for the compassion and diligent work of such an official.³⁹⁹

Primary sources do not reveal Hayama's fate as magistrate inspector, yet we can surmise that the Ichikawa authorities permitted Hayama to continue his duties among the villages that voiced their approval for him. Moreover, as Suda Tsutomu writes in an entry on the episode in the *Hyakushō ikki jiten* (Encyclopedia of Peasant Uprisings), the divergent reaction to Hayama's work stemmed from additional factors such as sustained agricultural production and whether or not the villagers partook in the *uchikowashi* from the previous year.⁴⁰⁰ The dispute over Hayama's authority in Kai nevertheless presents a peculiar case for late Tokugawa Japan in which dissent and assent conflate within the public sphere. More importantly, the fact that villagers aired their support for an official that others found corrupt provides a distinct moment for the onset of a proactive political culture, one in which the

³⁹⁸ *Hennen hyakushō ikki shiryō shūsei* Volume 14 609-11.

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 613.

⁴⁰⁰ *Hyakushō ikki jiten* 398.

peasants no longer await a verdict from central authorities but rather take steps to resolve the conflict themselves.

The Bakufu as Contributor to the Public Sphere: Late Tokugawa *Fuji-ko*

Throughout the Tokugawa Period, the Bakufu had attempted to regulate religious travel by banning many pilgrimages altogether. Officials began recognizing by the eighteenth century that there were inherent limitations in their ability to dissuade commoners and samurai from embarking on journeys to sacred sites, and in time they relaxed their former restrictions. In Settsu, magistrates ceased to deter Osaka and village residents from journeying to graves of fallen warriors and from producing literature once deemed as subversive to the Tokugawa order. Authorities in essence fostered new avenues of action within the public sphere by upholding the edicts that forbade illicit travel and publications but never enforcing them. In order to understand the official sphere's ultimate submersion into the public one, we must redirect our gaze away from Settsu and toward the communities at the base of Mount Fuji.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Bakufu promulgated ten decrees that outlawed *Fuji-ko*. Edo expressed concerns that organized pilgrimage groups ascending the mountain would perform rituals that may lead people to emulate Jikigyō Miroku (1671-1733), who committed ritual suicide at the peak.⁴⁰¹ As an increasing number of pilgrims left their domains and provinces to travel to Fuji, the Bakufu reified its stance through periodic decrees such as the following one from 1814:

An Official Decree from Edo to Town and Village Officials

⁴⁰¹ Earhart 222-3.

The cult of Fuji worship continues to exist. The following rumors of its members abound throughout the land. Those of low status don pilgrims' robes. They hold in their hands bells, Buddhist rosaries, and other items. They come from all types of households and families. They address themselves to the gods of the mountain. And furthermore, they recite incantations and prayers for the infirmed. They bring forth their cult charms and amulets. In addition, they commit unpardonable acts...⁴⁰²

With the onset of the Tempō famine in the 1830s, the Bakufu had ceased issuing edicts outlawing *Fuji-ko* and instead tended to financial and social concerns.⁴⁰³ This presented Fuji villages and religious officials with the opportunity to devise their own regulations regarding who may set foot on the mountain and when. For male pilgrims, access to the mountain depended on safe climbing conditions and weather patterns. For female pilgrims, interpretations of *nyonin kinsei* (女人禁制 or the practice of banning women from pilgrimages) determined the time as well as elevation that women could climb Fuji. By the late 1850s, as Miyazaki Fumiko writes in her 2005 “Female Pilgrims and Mt. Fuji,” religious and local authorities from Fuji villages rationalized their employment of *nyonin kinsei* not only from religious or philosophical grounds, but also from a cognitive effort to allay financial and political distress among the mountain's communities.⁴⁰⁴

Edo again altered its approach to *Fuji-ko* in the late Tokugawa period when a foreign envoy consisting of Harry Parkes (the English foreign minister to Japan from 1865 to 1883), his wife, and nine others expressed a desire to ascend to the mountain's peak.⁴⁰⁵ Officials drafted a five-day itinerary for the travelers and sent it to the villagers. In response, village representatives delivered a memo to the Bakufu headquarters that delineated the cost of providing access to foreigners in an off-season ascent to Fuji's zenith. In the memo, the

⁴⁰² Tokyo University 204-5.

⁴⁰³ One exception transpired in 1839 when a Bakufu official stationed near the mountain intervened to tighten restrictions on women climbers (Miyazaki 361).

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 365.

⁴⁰⁵ Cortazzi 147.

villagers estimated the amount of food provisions, additional supplies, and fees for the mountain priests and guides for the group. Any additional expenses would be sent to Edo officials in the form of a written receipt, according to the missive.⁴⁰⁶

The Bakufu allayed the villagers' concerns in a response explaining that they would dispatch two laborers from the Chief Inspector's division to guarantee a smooth journey for Parkes' delegation. Yet, Edo officials reminded the villages that Japanese officials would accompany the foreigners, and that the all parties would require porters and horses to traverse the countryside and the mountain trails. In total, thirty-four Japanese delegates from the foreign magistrate's office, thirty-seven assistants to these delegates, sixty-two porters, and thirty-two horses would participate at some point in the journey to the base of the mountain.⁴⁰⁷

Miyazaki notes that the envoy's successful ascent initially stewed controversy among the mountain's base villages and religious authorities. Westerners did not spend as much as non-foreigners in rural shops or inns, thereby presenting obstacles to local livelihoods. Then, having been commanded to allow Lady Parkes to step foot on the mountain in a year not reserved for female climbers, religious officials debated whether or not to recognize the journey as an exception to the tradition of *nyonin kinsei* or use it as a means to grant women full access to the mountain. Although the provincial magistrates did not officially recognize a set of appeals from Yoshida village's priests to open the mountain to women, Miyazaki writes that the 1867 ascent revealed that "forces bringing about a relaxation of *nyonin kinsei* at Mt. Fuji had reached a culmination prior to the Meiji Restoration."⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁶ Fuji Yoshida City I 288-91.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., 286.

⁴⁰⁸ Miyazaki 381-2.

For the early modern public sphere, the Bakufu accomplished much more than easing the restrictions on women climbers. It essentially cemented its role as the final contributor to the sphere by accepting its own limitations and releasing its grip on religious travel in the nineteenth century. Edo authorities became less an obstacle or antagonist for Fuji pilgrims in the early nineteenth century, and by the end of its rule, it transformed into a source of assistance for villagers to turn to for clarification on *Fuji-ko* matters. In the final decade of the Shogunate reign, Edo officials embraced both the aesthetic and religious allure of Mount Fuji. Moreover, in assisting foreigner dignitaries who wished to ascend to the mountain's rim, the Bakufu emerged as a valuable contributor to the final stages of the early modern public sphere.

Once the opponent of religious travel across early modern Japan, the Bakufu now became a chief proponent of the same type of illicit journey that had defined the religious sector of the public sphere. The Bakufu, by legitimizing the religious movement, in effect redefined the boundaries of the public and private spheres. The public sphere had grown to the extent that the Bakufu understood its inability to contain the activities within it, and therefore the authorities paved new avenues for individuals to join the private sphere and partake in religious pilgrimages without the threat of censure.

Conclusion

This thesis has demonstrated that early modern Japan's public sphere expanded during the late Tokugawa period to embrace all social strata, whether they were recognized in the *mibunsei* or not. Within the sphere, the nature of protests transformed from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the arrival of Matthew Perry in 1853. Dissent

materialized in conservative and reactionary movements from the peasant and commoner classes until the 1830s when the character of remonstrance veered toward illicit and violent contention. Ōshio Heihachirō and Yamadaya Daisuke's respective riots in 1837 injected individual agency into the public sphere, a component that would soon be replaced by a proactive political culture in Settsu's countryside. Even in the midst of provincial investigations into the riots of 1837, legitimate forms of protest from the countryside persisted, with an increasing number of proactive movements materializing to curb governmental and mercantile corruption as well as to enhance villager livelihoods.

The preceding chapters have also identified strands of thought that motivated the movements. Notions of reciprocity, stronger political awareness, and communal interest accounted for action among Settsu's peasantry. Additionally, a combination of intellectual philosophy and self-interest characterized the samurai-led uprisings of 1837. Lastly, interest in regional history and fallen Sengoku era generals led townsmen and commoners to partake in illegal cultural activities.

The question to which we finally turn is what allowed the public sphere to expand it as it did through the nineteenth century. The body of this dissertation has explored a growing a paradoxical force in the discursive arena: the Bakufu and its agencies. A principal antagonist for a substantial number of incidents of remonstrance, the Bakufu nonetheless played a considerable role in molding the public sphere. Sources from the turn of the nineteenth century to the end of the Bakufu rule indicate that officials had understood the impossibility of stifling every movement it had forbidden. In the early 1800s, Edo promulgated *machibure* that delineated legitimate and illicit forms of protest, thereby creating new outlets for the public to vent their opinions. In response to an increasing

number of *kokuso* appeals, Osaka magistrates catered to the Kinai villages in restricting *kabu nakama* activities. Furthermore, after the Tempō famine, city magistrates cooperated with villagers and rural officials to eliminate potential corruption among the governing classes and to sustain a qualified level of village autonomy by recognizing changes originating from within the villages' own political machinery.

Activity within Settsu's public sphere of remonstrance indeed had repercussions for the public sphere in the rest of early modern Japan. Ōshio and Yamadaya's movements incited other samurai into anti-authoritarian activity and at the same time led ideologues into abandoning civil society for a direct approach to action. Following the riots of the Tempō famine, villages also realized that provincial or domainal authorities could no longer serve as the final arbitrator for rural conflict and instead turned toward their own machinations to enhance their conditions. Finally, the Bakufu came to embrace and contribute to the public sphere, initially allowing its subjects to engage in banned travel and cultural production and ultimately establishing a dialogue with villagers to accommodate its own needs. Thus, the Bakufu and by extension the official sphere breathed new life into a public sphere of discontent by fostering its growth through supporting practices that only fifty years beforehand it had striven to abolish.

The public sphere of 1850s Settsu had grown to the extent that the boundaries between the public and official realms no longer were as defined as they were one hundred years beforehand. As the Tokugawa shogunate and its provincial authorities formed new outlets for the public to vent their dissent, the sphere engendered an inclusiveness that stretched well beyond early modern Japan's literate and elite. More notably, the Bakufu itself emerged as a driving force for public sphere's growth in the final years of its rule. By

the final years of the Shogun's reign, civil society also expanded beyond the walls of private academies and into voluntary associations comprised of peasant, rural merchant guilds, and village officials.

Settsu's public sphere in final form had achieved a level of fulfillment could no longer be confined within Habermas' idealized public space. Social, cultural, and economic concerns all converged within the sphere to empower the provinces masses vis-à-vis the administrators and the wealthy. Nor could the late Tokugawa public sphere be confined within a rhetorical public space in which one issue dictates public discourse; after all, multiple streams of through accounted for dissent in Osaka and its surrounding communities. Early modern Settsu's public sphere by the 1860s had transformed into a black hole of sorts, a sphere with undefined boundaries drawing in agencies like the Bakufu that had no option but to become part of the public arena as its own sphere began to collapse. If, as Habermas assumes, a new unfettered public sphere represents a fundamental element of a democratic society,⁴⁰⁹ then it is of no surprise that Japan's early modernity approached its end with agencies from the official sphere being drawn into the public one.

⁴⁰⁹ Habermas 34-8.

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