SPIRITS AND IDENTITY IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY NORTHEASTERN JAPAN: HIRATA KOKUGAKU AND THE TSUGARU DISCIPLES

by

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ABSTRACT

While previous research on kokugaku, or nativism, has explained how intellectuals imagined the singular community of Japan, this study sheds light on how posthumous disciples of Hirata Atsutane based in Tsugaru juxtaposed two “countries”—their native Tsugaru and Imperial Japan—as they transitioned from early modern to modern society in the nineteenth century. This new perspective recognizes the multiplicity of community in “Japan,” which encompasses the domain, multiple levels of statehood, and “nation,” as uncovered in recent scholarship. My analysis accentuates the shared concerns of Atsutane and the Tsugaru nativists toward spirits and the spiritual realm, ethnographic studies of commoners, identification with the north, and religious thought and worship. I chronicle the formation of this scholarly community through their correspondence with the head academy in Edo (later Tokyo), and identify their autonomous character. Hirao Rosen conducted ethnography of Tsugaru and the “world” through visiting the northern island of Ezo in 1855, and observing Americans, Europeans, and Qing Chinese stationed there. I show how Rosen engaged in self-orientation and utilized Hirata nativist theory to locate Tsugaru within the spiritual landscape of Imperial Japan. Through poetry and prose, leader Tsuruya Ariyo identified Mount Iwaki as a sacred pillar of Tsugaru, and insisted one could experience “enjoyment” from this life and beyond death in the realm of spirits. The Tsugaru nativists’ cause was furthered when their domain of Hirosaki switched allegiance from the Tokugawa to Imperial forces in the Boshin War of 1868 to 1869, and a domainal samurai from their group fought and died for the emperor. This young samurai was among 64 fallen soldiers who were honoured and deified in the shōkonsai ritual performed by Shinto priests of the group, an event which distinguished the domain as a loyal supporter of Imperial Japan. In conclusion, I describe the Tsugaru nativists’ experience of modernity, as members carried out religious reform, immortalized the domain through editing histories and poetry collections, and observed the rise of Hirata nativism in the creation of the Meiji state, only to witness its decline in a society which modernized rapidly, while embracing new and foreign intellectual influences.
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Table 1  List of Hirata Disciples in Tsugaru
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Introduction

Overview

This dissertation seeks to shed light on the following historical questions about community, the individual, and modernity: How did commoners in early modern Japan conceive of the community they inhabited in the context of their local domain, as well as the larger state? How did individuals identify themselves with these local or “national” communities? In what ways did individuals experience the transition and transformation of their surroundings from an early modern community to a modern nation?

Addressing the above questions, this dissertation examines the transition of one local community from early modern domain into a prefecture in the modern nation state of Meiji Japan, from the perspective of social and intellectual history. This study looks at a group of intellectuals who lived in Hirosaki domain, otherwise known as Tsugaru, on the northern fringe of Honshū, the main island of Japan. This interesting group of some twenty intellectuals came from various class backgrounds—merchants, Shinto priests, and samurai, and the group also

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1 This political-geographical region situated in northwestern Mutsu province, is generally referred to in early modern documents, including Hirosaki domain’s official journal, as “Tsugaru no kuni” or “Tsugaru domain,” while the same territory is likewise referred to as “Tsugaru ᵀᵉˢᵒ” or “Tsugaru territory.” The Hirata disciples most commonly referred to this area as “Tsugaru domain” or “Tsugaru territory.” In 1870, the Meiji government officially recognized this region as “Hirosaki domain,” and publicized its name along with those of over 270 domains in its official document, Hansei ichiran (Ōtsuka Takematsu, ed. Nihon shiseki kyōkai sōsho, Hansei ichiran. Nihon shiseki kyōkai, 1928-1929.). Based on this official designation, I use throughout this dissertation the name Hirosaki or Hirosaki domain to refer to the political-geographical unit of the domain located in the political state of Tokugawa Japan. However, when referring to the same area in more general cultural, social, and geographical terms, I use “Tsugaru,” the name of the region’s ruling family and, consequently, the name commonly used to refer to this territory and domain from early modern to contemporary times. When I juxtapose the local region of “Tsugaru” versus the “national” state of Japan, I use “Tsugaru” to point to the cultural, social, and geographical region imagined by the Hirata disciples and their contemporaries, over the political unit of Hirosaki domain. My reason for making this distinction is to keep consistent with the official naming of the domain, while making “Tsugaru”—conceived of and imagined by the Hirata disciples—consistent with their own writings. Therefore, I refer to the community of Hirata disciples in this region as the “Tsugaru disciples” or the “Tsugaru group,” the latter, a label employed by Kojima Yasunori. (Kojima Yasunori. “Bakumatsuki Tsugaru no minzokugaku: Hirao Rosen—Hirata Atsutane to Yanagita Kunio no aida,” Shishi Hirosaki nenpō 10 (2001), p. 12) Note, I use “Hirosaki castle town” to refer to the urban centre and capital of Hirosaki domain.
included one woman. These individuals were posthumous disciples of Hirata Atsutane (1776-1843), who was primarily based in Edo, present-day Tokyo, and who engaged in *kokugaku* or nativism, the study of classical texts to glean an ancient Japanese Way.\(^2\) Led by Tsuruya Ariyo (1808-1871) and Hirao Rosen (1808-1880), these intellectuals from the north juxtaposed two identities, one a local identity of their native Tsugaru, along with a newly emerging national identity of Imperial Japan. The conception and juxtaposition of these two “countries”—the local “country” of Tsugaru and the “country” of Imperial Japan—allow us to view how these individuals experienced the transition from an early modern Japan to a modern Japan.

In this introduction, I broadly survey scholarship to date on statehood, nation, and modernity, first looking at broader discourse on developments in Europe and Asia, then turning my focus to Japan, particularly in its transition from early modern to modern society. Within this shift to the modern, I consider the debates on statehood, whether it lies with the Tokugawa *bakufu* or the over 270 domains, and how this balance of sovereignty transitions from the Tokugawa to Meiji periods. I draw attention to Hirosaki domain, or Tsugaru region—the geographical area under study—which constitutes a local component of the Tokugawa *bakuhan* system, which demonstrates the sovereignty of both itself as independent domain, and that of the larger *bakufu* state.

I then proceed to review representative studies of recent years on Hirata Atsutane and his *kokugaku* thought and academy, highlighting the “Hirata boom” of this past decade in both Japanese and English-language research. With Atsutane’s descendants, the Hirata family,

making available over ten thousand private documents to the public, a clearer picture has been revealed of the national network of Hirata *kokugaku*, including that of its difference and diversity at the local level. Nevertheless, the northern region has until now, garnered little attention, despite the fact that Atsutane was a native of Akita, in the northeastern region, and was exiled there late in life by the *bakufu*, and the fact that he paid considerable attention to the north in his works. So, it is at this point, that I highlight my reasons for focusing on the Hirata disciples of the Tsugaru region, whose case study offers valuable insights on the questions raised above. This chapter concludes with a basic overview of the seven chapters of the dissertation’s main body to follow.

**On Statehood, Nation, and Modernity**

Among the foremost studies on statehood, nations, and nationalism is *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) by Ernest Gellner. Drawing upon Max Weber’s definitions of state, Gellner defines the “state” as “that institution or set of institutions specifically concerned with the enforcement of order.” Gellner repeatedly insists that “nations” are not “an inherent attribute of humanity,” even though that is how they may appear to us in modern times. Both nations and

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3 Gellner sums up Max Weber’s definition of “states” as, “that agency within society which possesses the monopoly of legitimate violence. The idea behind this is simple and seductive: in well-ordered societies, such as most of us live in or aspire to live in, private or sectional violence is illegitimate…” Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1983. p. 3.

4 Specialized agencies enforce this order such as police forces and courts of law, and that these very institutions represent the state. Ibid., p. 4.

5 Though Gellner is less concise on his definition of nations, he nevertheless outlines cultural and voluntaristic natures of nations in two “temporary” definitions: “1 Two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating. 2 Two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. In other words, *nations maketh man*; nations are the artefacts of men’s convictions and loyalties and solidarities.” Ibid., p. 6.
states are a contingency, and not a “universal necessity.” He notes nationalism\(^6\) maintains that “states” and “nations” were “destined for each other,” and that either the state or nation by itself without the other would be incomplete and would therefore constitute a tragedy.\(^7\) Gellner’s most valuable contribution to scholarly debate is his innovative interpretation on the dynamic between “nations” and “nationalism,” when he contends, “It is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round.”\(^8\) Within his proposed paradigm, “nations,” contrary to conventional interpretation, can only be defined in the “age of nationalism” of modern times. Gellner identifies nationalism as a “distinctive species of patriotism” which becomes dominant under specific conditions of the modern world.\(^9\) According to Gellner, key characteristics of this nationalism, as distinguished from patriotism, are cultural homogeneity, high levels of literacy, and anonymity of the populace.

Following the work of Gellner and others, Benedict Anderson joins the debate on nations and nationalism through his important work, *Imagined Communities* (1983). Anderson defines the nation as “an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.”\(^10\) He reasons that nations are “imagined communities” because all nations, regardless of how small, would be comprised of members who would never meet nor even hear about all its

\(^{6}\) Gellner offers the following definition of nationalism at the opening of his discussion: “Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent… In brief, nationalism is a theory of political legitimacy, which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones, and, in particular, that ethnic boundaries within a given state—a contingency already formally excluded by the principle in its general formulation—should not separate the power-holders from the rest.” Ibid., p. 1.

\(^{7}\) Gellner explains the importance of nations in contemporary society and the role of states in perpetuating the nation: “The nation is now supremely important, thanks both to the erosion of sub-groupings and the vastly increased importance of a shared, literary-dependent culture. The state, inevitably, is charged with the maintenance and supervision of an enormous social infrastructure (the cost of which characteristically comes close to one half of the total income of the society).” Ibid., p. 63.

\(^{8}\) Ibid., p. 55.

\(^{9}\) Ibid., p. 137.

other fellow-members, “yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” Anderson is critical of what he perceives as Gellner’s ferocious interpretation, that “Nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist.”

Anderson charges Gellner for overemphasizing the false pretenses under which nationalism operates, thus “assimilating” “invention” to “fabrication” and “falsity,” over “imagining” and “creation.” Anderson maintains that all communities larger than a village are imagined, and asserts, “Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/ genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.”

Challenging the theories of both Gellner and Anderson is Prasenjit Duara in his Rescuing History from the Nation (1995). Duara criticizes both Gellner and Anderson for over-privileging modern society as the necessary social form to generate political self-awareness, namely that, national identity is “a distinctly modern mode of consciousness.” He ultimately challenges evolutionary History (with a capital “H”) which he describes as linear and teleological, and abruptly disconnects premodern communities from modern “nations,” and opposes the view of “the nation as representing a radical discontinuity with the past.” Duara points to examples in Chinese and Indian premodern history that defy such conclusions, wherein people identified with multiple representations of communities, and contends that historical actors appropriate “dispersed meanings” as their own, in the process of mobilizing particular representations of nations or community. Duara coins the term “discent,” formed from “descent” and “dissent,” to

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12 Anderson, p. 6.
14 Duara explains Hegel’s influence on such an evolutionary History: “Hegel’s Philosophy of History (1956) remains to our day the most important foundation for understanding linear, and necessarily teleological, progressive History. For Hegel, the telos of History—the structure governing its progress—is the unfolding self-awareness of Spirit which is Reason. There are two moments in this self-awareness: that of Spirit itself embodied objectively in the rationality of religion, laws, and the State and that of the individual subject. Ibid., p. 17.
describe how a group succeeds in imposing one historical narrative over other narratives which differentiates the self from an “Other.” He cites an example in Chinese history of the mythic Yellow Emperor being appropriated as a national symbol to dominate nationalist discourse in the early twentieth century, as “the originator of the race and founder of the nation” to 1941.

In the case of Japan, the “nation,” particularly the emergence of the modern nation or nation-state, has been discussed in the historical context of the decline of the Tokugawa bakufu, and the rise of the new Meiji state. Mark Ravina, in his *Land and Lordship in Early Modern Japan* (1999), sheds light on the political authorities of local and “national” states that make up Tokugawa Japan, and notes the complex dynamics between the two, as represented by the polysemy, or multiple meanings carried by the different terms involved—*kuni* (国) which denotes country or state, and can also refer to provinces and domains, and *kokka* (国家) which denotes political body or state. The situation in Tokugawa Japan of *kuni* (国) inside of *kuni* (国), or “states within states” is, as Ravina points out, a phenomenon seen also in nineteenth-century Germany, and shows degrees of political and cultural autonomy by these local states within larger national states.

Ravina examines how demographic change and protoindustrial development influenced political change in the history of three domains: Yonezawa, Tokushima, and Hirosaki. The main focus of Ravina’s study is Hirosaki or Tsugaru domain, which he characterizes as having a proportionally large samurai to commoner population, and a relatively underdeveloped economy, which displayed minimal protoindustrial activity. The Tokugawa shogunate classified the Tsugaru clan ruling over Hirosaki domain as a *tozama* or “outside” domain, neither directly

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related to the Tokugawa family, nor possessing the ability to have its vassals serve in high positions in the bakufu. While the Tsugaru did not have ancestry noble enough to qualify as one of eighteen “country holders” or kunimochi among domainal lords, however, through courting the favour of the shogun, they garnered comparable attributes of the prestigious “country holder” rank.\(^\text{16}\) Throughout this study, Ravina demonstrates that the “tension and balance between central and local authority was a defining quality of the early modern order in Japan,”\(^\text{17}\) while Hirosaki officials acted with a sense of autonomy in sociopolitical issues, as if they were a “country” domain. Samurai and commoners, including the posthumous Hirata disciples in this domain regularly referred to Hirosaki as their “country.”\(^\text{18}\) Like Duara, Ravina sheds light on the multiple political identities, in this case the domains that made up Tokugawa Japan, and challenges linear, teleological history which places the modern nation as its subject and effaces “subnational political identities” in order to emplot Japanese history in a dominant metanarrative. Ravina explains, “domainal ‘countries’ such as Hirosaki were destroyed internally by imperialism,” and concludes, “The nation dominated politics only after politics produced the nation.”\(^\text{19}\)

This debate on political autonomy, statehood, and nation from early modern to modern Japan is furthered by the work of Ronald P. Toby, best known for his influential work, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (1991).\(^\text{20}\)

\(^\text{16}\) For instance, in 1808, Hirosaki domain’s nominal investiture was increased to 100,000 koku, and the Tsugaru daimyo were seated in the prestigious ōhiroma room for shogunal audiences. Furthermore, in 1824, the 11th Tsugaru daimyo Tsugaru Nobuyuki was granted fourth court rank (shihin), another mark worthy of a “country holder.” In late-Tokugawa to early Meiji, Hirosaki domain did not play a leading role in the Meiji Restoration, and when the domain did join the imperial forces, it was after it became clear the shogunate would face defeat. While Hirosaki domain had joined the bakufu side early in the war and had been ambivalent in domainal policy, a letter received from the court noble Konoe family related to the Tsugaru by marriage, helped the domain to change policy and turn its support to the Imperial forces. Ravina, pp. 12, 200.

\(^\text{17}\) Ibid., p. 15.

\(^\text{18}\) Ibid., p. 118.

\(^\text{19}\) Ibid., pp. 209-210.

\(^\text{20}\) In *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu*, Toby describes how, despite the Tokugawa bakufu’s foreign policy of relative seclusion often described as sakoku
In an article separate from this book, Toby presents a detailed study comparing political authority held at both the central and local governmental levels. Toby borrows from Duara’s work, offering an inverted version of the title, “Rescuing the Nation from History: The State of the State in Early Modern Japan” (2001). Toby’s article is a book review—though not in typical fashion—of two important works from the late 1990s: Ravina’s monograph examined above, and *Mercantilism in a Japanese Domain: The Merchant Origins of Economic Nationalism in 18th-Century Tosa* (1998) by Luke Roberts. Toby takes up these two major works which place priority on the domain’s position within the state, over the idea of a national state of “Japan” in early modern times, and makes his counterargument. Since the late-twentieth century, he explains, local groups in Japan made efforts to preserve local dialect and culture in an attempt to protect fragments of local identity from the “juggernaut of the modern state” that homogenizes regional differences, and thereby, in the words of Duara, attempted to “rescue [their own] history from the nation.” Toby characterizes how recent scholarship on early modern Japan give priority to domains as possessing true political authority within the Tokugawa bakuhan system, and that both Ravina and Roberts demonstrate with convincing “thick description” the political autonomy held by their two main domains of focus: Hirosaki and Tosa. For instance, Roberts depicts Tosa’s progressive merchant activities to the point of interpreting trade between Tosa and Japan’s industrial centre of Osaka, as a form of international trade.

("closed country") completed in the 1630s, that the Japanese state was in fact very much involved in diplomatic affairs in East Asia. Toby has detailed how Japan only had relations with other countries that would accept, even if in appearance only, the rules for international relations determined by Japan, and a Japan-centered *ka’i* (華夷) world order. *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991.


23 Ibid., p. 203.
Ultimately, Toby’s interpretation of nation and statehood in the case of early modern Japan is as follows: Japan was “the Nation,” the Tokugawa bakufu represented “the State,” and the local domains were basically “local or regional units within the political and discursive bounds of “Japan.” To this end, Toby reinforces the notion of central bakufu authority over local domains including Hirosaki and Tosa, and insists on the national unity and centralization under the Tokugawa shogunate. Toby disagrees with Ravina’s claim that kunimochi or “country holder” daimyo were sovereign “dominal countries,” because of the intervention they faced from the Tokugawa shogunate in Edo. As examples of the bakufu exercising authority over the domains, Toby cites the hostage system of Alternate Attendance or sankin kōtai, orders for daimyo to produce maps of their territories and submit them to Edo, and the four-class social system, implemented throughout the Tokugawa state. In conclusion, Toby asserts that broad membership in the cultural and political space of “Japan” through participation in such “National networks of meaning,” from haikai to noh lessons to private academies, enabled the country to undergo a more natural transition from early modern to modern nation, than a “domain-centered” transition as proposed by Roberts and others. Therefore, despite regional diversity and competing loyalties within early modern Japan, national discourses made possible by the above networks made “Japan,” in the assessment of Toby, a “single protonation.”

The above debate concerns itself with prioritizing one form of statehood or community over others. Ravina, Roberts, and Toby emphasize either the bakufu, domain, or “nation”—questioning which held greater political authority. I, on the other hand, argue that statehood and community as experienced by commoners does not have to be an either/or proposition. Rather, I

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24 Ibid., 200.  
25 Ibid., p. 227.
demonstrate that states and communities in early modern Japan were multi-layered and were, accordingly, perceived and experienced as such.

A major work which tackles questions on the relationship between local, national, and global history is *Rōkaru hisutorii kara gurōbaru hisutorii e: Tabunka no rekishigaku to chiikishi* (2005), or *From Local History to Global History: Historical Study of Multiculturalism and Local History*, edited by Kawanishi Hidemichi, Namikawa Kenji, and M. William Steele.²⁶ Recognizing the growth in studies of local history of Japan as a criticism of the nation-state, along with the tendency of these local histories to display strong subjectivity, this collaborative work brings together an impressive line-up of both Japanese and Western scholars of Japan who contribute articles on nation, women, religion, rural areas, and commoners, which aim for local history which “relativizes” Japanese history in a broader context of global history.²⁷ This approach is based on the view of Japan, not as singular in culture or ethnicity, but as multicultural, within an increasingly globalized context for historical studies throughout the world. Such a perspective on Japanese and local history within Japan as diverse and displaying multiplicity necessitates scholarly examination from a more diverse stance, and this volume calls together scholars from Japan and the United States to “restructure” (*saikōsei* 再構成) the image of Japan, and even attempt to rewrite global history from the perspective of local history.

As Namikawa explains, among the major objectives of studies of local history from a global perspective is a more meaningful examination of minority groups which, through the formation of the modern state, have been integrated into the nation-state. This new historical approach considers the subjectivity of minority groups, as well as the historical process of

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 7-8.
relations between them and other parties, then elucidates these minority groups’ place within society. Namikawa clarifies that their efforts do not strive simply to understand multiculturalism alone, but rather to grasp the breadth of multiple societies and their historical reality, produced through contact between various cultures over time.

Now that I have highlighted some representative arguments on statehood, nation, and nationalism in broad terms and in the case of Japan, I now briefly outline one work that examines how kokugaku scholars conceived of community from the Tokugawa period to early Meiji. Drawing on theories by Anderson, Duara, and Partha Chatterjee, Susan Burns in *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Modern Japan* (2003), explores kokugaku discourse from the late-eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries in an effort to reconsider its significance within Tokugawa society, removed from modern conceptions of national identity in Japan. Burns abandons the traditional genealogy of the “great men” (ushi) and the “canon” of standard texts as assembled by modern scholarship, and instead, examines the discourse surrounding the Divine Age (kamiyo) narrative of Japan’s oldest extant histories *Kojiki* (712) and *Nihonshoki* (720). Her choices of nativists for comparison are unconventional—the most notable and influential among them, Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), and his seminal commentary on the Kojiki, the *Kojikiden*, along with three scholars who criticized this work, Ueda Akinari (1734-1809), Fujitani Mitsue (1768-1823), and Tachibana Moribe (1781-1849), fresh players added to English-language discussions on kokugaku. Burns argues how these scholars altered language, textuality, and history in order to form “imagined communities” of Japan that transcended status and regional differences, and actual communities in domains, cities, and villages, and did not all

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uniformly lead to conclusions about Japanese superiority or an emperor-centered nation, which were largely products of the Meiji period (1868-1912).

The theoretical nature of Burns’ argument stresses such points as “the nature of community,” as when she describes how the Naobi, Magatsubi, and Musubi deities, as treated by Norinaga, “come to be implicated in a complex meditation on the nature of community.” The juxtaposition of good and evil deities could mirror several possibilities, such as human nature and nature of society for instance, but “nature of community” could use further explanation and elaboration. Burns’ demarcation between communities before the Restoration and nations and nationalism after is abrupt, if not for its strong theoretical tone, then certainly for her eschewing of Atsutane and the Hirata school who made up a major stream of kokugaku during the period.30 While much is fresh and innovative about Burns’ approach, her study remains largely a national narrative on kokugaku, in discussions of “imagined communities” of Japan, albeit from early modern perspectives as opposed to modern-influenced views. Nevertheless, this work paves the way for new approaches toward kokugaku, in Japan’s transition from early modern to modern, which account for regional variation and the dynamics between local and national communities and identity.

**Research on Hirata Kokugaku and the “Boom” of Recent Years**

Having surveyed research on issues of statehood, nation, and modernity, including one in relation to kokugaku, I now turn my attention to representative research on Hirata kokugaku, particularly in English, as well as the developments of recent years which constitute a “Hirata

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29 Ibid., p. 90.
30 Ibid., p. 189.
boom.” Drawing on theories of Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, W.G. Gallie, and Hayden White, Harry D. Harootunian in *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism*, examines how nativist discourse functioned ideologically, by focusing, not on biographies of the nativists, but on the texts produced from the prevailing discourse.\(^\text{31}\) Harootunian argues how the creation of binaries, primarily between “visible things” and “invisible things,” and the subsequent (re-) connecting of them, consummated “part-whole relationships,” and enabled Atsutane to valorize the livelihood of his students. Within this frame of “the seen” and “unseen,” Harootunian analyzes the writings of Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801) and Atsutane, asserting that “Motoori deified humans,” while conversely, “Hirata humanized the gods.”\(^\text{32}\) Just as Norinaga is shown to have empowered daily life through poetics, Atsutane is also shown to give meaning to rural life and work through his discussion on the Way. Atsutane emphasizes the connection between “creation and folk, production and reproduction, and divine intention and human will,” and according to Harootunian, “The association between the creation and the people shaped Hirata’s political program.”\(^\text{33}\) In the early 1830s, nativism which had previously been an “urban phenomenon,” “left the cities for the countryside,” and it was through “routinizing the Ancient Way” that naturally connected the Way and “content of everyday life” of ordinary folk, that Hirata *kokugaku* became popularized.\(^\text{34}\) Ancestor veneration was emphasized as a vital link between the seen and unseen, as was the interaction between worship and labor.

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\(^{32}\) Ibid. p. 88.

\(^{33}\) Ibid. pp. 161, 163.

\(^{34}\) Ibid. p. 176.
Harootunian focuses his study of Hirata kokugaku on its valorizing effect on the large contingency of agriculturalists that made up his following of disciples. He points out that village leaders chose nativism because “it offered a systematic theory sanctioning their presumption of responsibility and local leadership.” He argues that nativism provided a way for Hirata students like village headman from Shimōsa, Miyahiro Sadao (1767-1837), Awaji scholar Suzuki Shigetane (1812-63), Shigetane’s disciple Katsura Takashige (1816-71), and Tsuwano scholar Ōkuni Takamasa (1792-1871) to “recover the village community as an autonomous and reconstituted whole”—which created a potential danger of secession from Tokugawa control.

Hirata’s message as well as those of his students helped to give greater meaning and importance to mundane, everyday life and work in the village, the villagers’ labor, and leadership in the community, because all elements were made parts of an organic whole. The autonomous village was cast as a representation of the “unchanging habitus, or mimatsurigoto.” Harootunian describes how “nativists extended the syntagm of trust from the deities down through the emperor, shogun, daimyo, and village officials, and why, at each stage, they enjoined people to repay the blessings of the kami.”

Harootunian offers the most comprehensive English-language study on the Hirata school from Atsutane to his disciples, and one of the most systematic analyses of the school on the strength of discourse theory. The dynamics of power, and the nativist strategies employed by Norinaga, Atsutane and Hirata students are described, and a convincing explanation is given for Hirata kokugaku’s popularity and spread into rural agrarian communities. From the outset, the author admits to ignoring biographies of the nativists, and questions individual agency and subjectivity, placing importance on the texts, as characteristic of discourse theory. To this end,

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36 Ibid. p. 232.
37 Ibid. p. 326.
detailed historical contexts of Edo and the rural communities where Hirata nativism spread are compromised in favour of a general sweep of their histories. Also, Harootunian concedes to ignoring past Japanese historiography on the subject altogether, because his approach is more reliant on Western theory than any preceding works in Japanese. Nevertheless, Harootunian’s bold and comprehensive claims provide a strong interpretation of Hirata *kokugaku* to be complemented or challenged for years to come, especially in light of the new texts and data on Hirata *kokugaku* made available in recent years. With a growing collection of works on Hirata nativism in agricultural communities, the field calls for more focus on alternative settings, such as local towns, as opposed to the standard rural villages that claimed much of the spotlight to date.

After Harootunian’s broad-based and theoretical study on nativism, Anne Walthall offers in *The Weak Body of a Useless Woman*, a complementary work in her detailed biographical study of a remarkable female student of the Hirata school, Matsuo Taseko (1811-94) of the Ina Valley. Walthall clearly sets out her purpose in her introduction: “Harootunian accounts for the internal logic of nativism’s powerful ideological impact on elite commoners; my retelling of Taseko’s life shows how she and her friends put nativism into practice and made it into a social movement.” Furthermore, she revisits the Meiji Restoration from a new and fresh perspective based on a peasant woman’s experience in Shinano, which challenges the male and samurai-centered views predominant in past historiography.

This work is important for multiple reasons. It provides perhaps the most detailed and insightful small-narrative look into Hirata *Kokugaku*, through a biographical study of one of only twenty-nine female Hirata students, fleshing out her life beyond that of a narrow-minded

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39 Ibid. p. 5.
nationalist she had been depicted as previously. Walthall reconstructs Taseko’s life in the village and travels to Edo in 1855 after Perry’s arrival and Japan’s opening, where she interacted with the *daimyo* of the Takasu domain, Matsudaira Yoshitatsu (1824-83), with whom she likely discussed both poetry and politics.\(^\text{40}\) Walthall provides ample historical, social, and economic context of Taseko’s environment, describing the high level of production, spread of cottage industries, capitalist endeavours of rural entrepreneurs, and urban merchants characterized by historians as “protoindustrialization.”\(^\text{41}\) Taseko’s poems lamenting the export of silk to foreign countries reflects nationalistic and xenophobic concerns of the Hirata school, and also demonstrates how their thought reacted to activity within the local economy, where the Matsuo family was engaged in farming and sericulture.\(^\text{42}\)

Taseko’s individual biography, writings, and achievements are well contextualized within the Ina Valley group of Hirata students and their study circle led by Iwasaki Nagayo (1807-?) and Katagiri Harukazu (1818-66).\(^\text{43}\) While in Kyoto for six months from 1862 to 1863, Taseko interacts with prolific Tsuwano domain nativist Fukuba Bisei (1831-1907), Ibukinoya leader Kanetane, and even played a part in giving *Koshiden* (*Lectures on Ancient History*) to Lord Sanjō.\(^\text{44}\) She was even in the capital to share in the excitement caused by the beheading of the Ashikaga shoguns’ statues by Hirata students. In her second visit to Kyoto in 1868, Taseko used her connections and influence to help *samurai* establish credentials as imperial loyal subjects, and she eventually gained a position in the household of Lord Iwakura Tomomi (1825-83).

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\(^\text{40}\) Ibid. pp. 77-78.
\(^\text{41}\) Ibid. p. 84.
\(^\text{42}\) Ibid. pp. 97-98.
\(^\text{43}\) Ibid. pp. 105, 112.
\(^\text{44}\) Ibid. p. 169.
Indeed, “The Meiji Restoration enabled her to remake her identity several times over, from peasant wife, to poet, to woman of influence.”

Walthall’s monograph is an innovative and fresh look at Hirata nativism and the late-Tokugawa and Restoration years, both for its fascinating subject, Matsuo Taseko, as well as for its small-narrative, feminist, rural perspective. This work allows us to see the Meiji Restoration in a new light, and also offers new materials and perspectives to the discussion on Hirata nativism in the West and in Japan. This focused study of an individual female peasant disciple naturally raises questions about who the other twenty-eight women were who registered with the Ibukinoya (presumably under unique circumstances themselves), and invites interest toward the experiences of the Meiji Restoration and modernization in other regions of Japan.

Employing Pierre Bourdieu’s theories of “fields of cultural production,” Mark McNally in Proving The Way: Conflict and Practice in the History of Japanese Nativism challenges the view held by modern scholars that nativism was an institutionally coherent scholarly movement, and shows that there was considerable conflict within its different schools. McNally stresses the “developmental process of a discourse” while criticizing Harootunian and Peter Nosco (Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century Japan, 1990) for asserting that, “Kokugaku was a distinct intellectual tradition from the moment of its inception in the seventeenth century; they suppress the crucial intellectual differences among the kokugakusha in an attempt to preserve the coherence of the discourse.” McNally examines nativists’ actions and thought, namely those of Atsutane, by stressing “conflict” or differences over continuity. He points out, that as a resident of Edo, Atsutane made the conscious decision to

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become a member of the Norinaga School headed by Motoori Haruniwa in 1806, rather than join the literary-focused Edo-ha, which drew its lineage from Kamo no Mabuchi.\textsuperscript{48}

After joining Haruniwa’s academy, Atsutane began research in classical literature, but gradually lost interest, especially in \textit{waka}, leading him to criticize Edo-ha and members of the Norinaga school.\textsuperscript{49} McNally describes Atsutane’s nativist contribution to what had been a Confucian debate on \textit{Kishin} (spirits) with his \textit{Kishinshinron} (1820) or \textit{New Treatise on Spirits}. McNally summarizes points of view of the various players of this debate—Yamazaki Ansai, Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725), Ogyu Sorai, Dazai Shundai, and Yamagata Banto (1748-1821)—pointing out conflict and difference in intellectual thought, albeit mostly among Confucians. A more substantial conflict is the \textit{Sandaikō} (\textit{Treatise on the Three Universal Bodies}) debate on mythology, astronomy, and eschatology with fellow Norinaga School member Hattori Nakatsune (1757-1824), which “drove a wedge” into the school, leading to antagonism which grew leading into the 1830s.\textsuperscript{50} McNally argues that Atsutane took advantage of this \textit{Sandaikō} debate and Nakatsune’s scholarship itself, to assert his most important religious teachings on the nature of the soul, the afterlife, and religious faith. Moreover, McNally offers a detailed explanation of conflicting \textit{Santetsu} and \textit{Shiushi} nativist lineages, and introduces notable Hirata students, including factional fields within the school, through its rise through the Restoration and eventual decline in the Meiji years.

McNally’s work is valuable for delineating the various trends, factions, and conflicts within the \textit{Kokugaku} school in general terms from the mid-18\textsuperscript{th} to late-19\textsuperscript{th} centuries, and questioning our understanding of it, particularly in respect to Atsutane’s scholarship. The concept of “conflict” is presented effectively at times, though in simplistic terms at others, such

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{48} Ibid. p. 78.
\item \textsuperscript{49} Ibid. p. 81.
\item \textsuperscript{50} Ibid. p. 97.
\end{itemize}
as in discussions of the *kishin* debate and of Hirata’s students, where the monograph basically introduces people and ideas dealt with in past research, with limited new data.

Fourth among the major English-language monographs devoted to Hirata nativism, Wilburn Hansen’s *When Tengu Talk: Hirata Atsutane’s Ethnography of the Other World* sets its focus on *Senkyō ibun* (Strange Tidings From the Realm of Immortals), a single text from among Atsutane’s many writings, and sheds light on the links between nativism and ethnography in his work that have received limited attention in Western scholarship.\(^{51}\) Hansen explains that scholars since the nineteenth century had overlooked these important scholarly links because of *Senkyō ibun*’s emphasis on the “superstitious” and “supernatural.”\(^{52}\) Lamenting that Atsutane’s historical importance has been largely defined by events well after his death, such as the Meiji Restoration and Pacific War, Hansen asserts clearly that Atsutane’s “largest contribution to religion in his day lay in his investigations of what we might today call folk religion/ superstition and the occult, not imperial restoration.”\(^{53}\) Hansen challenges Carmen Blacker’s interpretation of Torakichi as “an example of a folklore pattern of the supernatural abduction of children,” and argues that Atsutane abducted the young Torakichi and his supernatural stories to not only “confirm his theory of the pleasant afterworld, but, more importantly, to construct a supernatural identity for living Japanese people.”\(^{54}\)

Employing James Clifford’s anthropological thesis, Hansen identifies Atsutane as finding an “other” within, for the purpose of deconstructing the Japanese “self,” and replace it with “an imaginative alter ego he had discovered/ constructed in the mountains,” in the *sanjin*.\(^{55}\) Hansen

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\(^{52}\) Ibid. p. 3.

\(^{53}\) Ibid. p. 4.

\(^{54}\) Ibid. p. 6.

\(^{55}\) Ibid. p. 19.
colourfully reconstructs the process of Atsutane taking the Tengu Boy Torakichi into his home to speak about his experiences in the other world in a salon setting before a large audience.\(^{56}\) Hansen dramatizes the story, casting Torakichi as “an attraction” and Atsutane as “promoter” of this “great spectacle.” Also provided are relatively clear explanations of the elusive players of this narrative, the *tengu* as “a bird or beast transformed over time” or “a human who had been transformed due to some evil influence,” and *sanjin* as “human beings that live in the mountains.”\(^{57}\)

Peter Nosco is correct to point out incongruencies in Hansen’s assessment of Atsutane’s production of *Senkyō ibun*, whether he was truly “anthropologist” and Torakichi “informant” and the text “an ethnographer’s logbook,” or whether “even though Torakichi was doing most of the talking, Atsutane’s role was to let his audience know what Torakichi really meant to say.”\(^{58}\) Elsewhere too the reader may be left confused, when Hansen states, “The leading questions will demonstrate that although Torakichi was the medium, the message was coming from Atsutane.”\(^{59}\) As an alternative to apportioning clear-cut roles to the two, when it might well be impossible to do so, it could be explained that Atsutane’s strategy and method were, in fact, full of inconsistencies.

Hansen’s study supports the view that Atsutane’s work was a “forerunner of *minzokugaku*, or Japanese folklore studies,” and provides us with some more convincing arguments to augment this view of mutual attempts in *kokugaku* and *minzokugaku* of “the recovery of an ideal rural Japanese culture.”\(^{60}\) However, more could be stated on this linkage,

\(^{56}\) Ibid. p. 60.
\(^{57}\) Ibid. pp. 80-81.
\(^{59}\) Hansen, p. 89.
\(^{60}\) Ibid. p. 199.
such as further elaboration of the “rural” element in Atsutane’s writings, and his network of students, outside of Senkyō ibun, Edo, or even the Other World, to which most of the discussion is limited. Also, Hansen’s claim that “the goal of Senkyō ibun was to establish a culture hero whose primary reason for existence was to render the Japanese comfort, assistance, and protection until they reached that Outer World”⁶¹ is a bold and fascinating assertion, but again without further contextualizing within Atsutane’s larger work, one is left wondering how substantial a point this is.

Hansen’s work is to be commended for tackling the immensely important issue of Hirata kokugaku’s connection with minzokugaku, a topic that has only been glossed over in Western scholarship, and still needs further substantiation in Japan and the West. His interpretation of the cryptic text Senkyō ibun helps to further flesh out the connection between the two schools/disciplines. However, Hansen’s analysis of this one text could benefit from further contextualization among his larger work. Furthermore, an examination of Atsutane and his ethnographic work, would be enhanced greatly by incorporating the new Hirata materials, especially to elaborate on the Hirata school’s recruitment practices into rural communities, and their correspondence with students in the countryside. Nevertheless, Hansen’s work lays a valuable foundation for future work on nativism and ethnography, Hirata nativism on a rural level, and further expounding of Atsutane’s complex other world view.

The past decade represents a revival period for studies in Hirata kokugaku. Unlike the prewar exaltation of Atsutane as a champion of Japanese essentialism, or postwar studies that focused on his biography, place within kokugaku, or contribution to prewar nationalistic ideology, this new revival shows a greater concern for contextualizing Atsutane within late-Tokugawa society and its broad intellectual discourse. A major catalyst for this renewed scholarly activity

⁶¹ Ibid. pp. 200-201.
has been the effort of scholars working with the National Museum of Japanese History, the site of a Special Exhibit in 2004 entitled, “Meiji Ishin to Hirata Kokugaku,” or, “The Meiji Restoration and Hirata Nativism.” With the cooperation of the Hirata Shrine and Atsutane’s descendants, they have introduced to the public several thousand pieces of new historical materials surrounding Atsutane, his head school the Ibukinoya, and his national network of students. These new materials serve as tools for producing a more nuanced perspective on Hirata *kokugaku*, and both its diversity and dynamism at the local level.

Miyachi Masato, former head of the National Museum, has led a team of scholars including Endo Jun, Yoshida Asako, Nakagawa Kazuaki, Kumazawa Eriko, and others, working to transcribe and make accessible several thousand pieces of new materials, including diaries, letters, memos, artistic images, and artifacts from the Hirata family. Items displayed at the 2004 exhibit are featured in photographs along with introductions in a catalogue produced by the museum on the occasion of this event.62 This same year also saw the publication of a *Bessatsu Taiyō* edition, entitled *Chi no nettowaaku no senkakusha Hirata Atsutane*, or “Hirata Atsutane: Forerunner of a Network of Knowledge,” a colourful pictorial with articles re-appraising Hirata *kokugaku*, edited by Maita Katsuyasu and Aramata Hiroshi.63 Such efforts to re-cast Hirata *kokugaku* in a new light are further advanced through the transcription of a series of diaries, letters, and memos by the museum in their *Kokuritsu rekishi minzoku hakubutsukan kenkyū hōkoku* or, *Bulletin of the National Museum of Japanese History*, in a series entitled, “Hirata

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kokugaku no saikentō,” or “Reexamination of Hirata Kokugaku.” This series, edited by Miyachi and the team of Hirata scholars, has continued from 2005 to 2010.

Drawing upon these developments of the past decade, Endo Jun’s *Hirata kokugaku to kinsei shakai*, or *Hirata Kokugaku and Early Modern Society*, is the first book, and among the most fruitful results from research efforts with the new Hirata documents. This work sheds new light on the thought and practice of Hirata Atsutane and his students within nineteenth-century Japanese society. Endo’s objectives in this book are: (1) to understand the religious aspect of Atsutane’s thought internally; (2) to grasp the thought and practice of Atsutane and Ibukinoya within the context of society, as he states there was previously an overemphasis of Sonnō (revere the emperor) movement and the political side without capturing the entire picture of the Ibukinoya academy; and; (3) to tie together intellectual history and social history surrounding Hirata kokugaku.

Focusing on the *Tama no mihashira* (『霊能真柱』) or *August Pillar of the Soul*, Endo discusses Atsutane’s development of his thesis on the yūmeikai realm, afterlife thought, and cosmology. Endo historicizes the matter of ancestor veneration in Japanese history and Hirata kokugaku. In connecting intellectual history to social history, Endo explores Atsutane and the Hirata school’s relationship to the Yoshida and Shirakawa Shinto houses, through Hirata disciple and Shinto priest Furukawa Mitsura, thereby adding to our understanding of Atsutane’s place within the late-Tokugawa Shinto community. Text reading practices and publishing are also examined through newly released letters exchanged with Atsutane.

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Endo adds greatly to our understanding of Atsutane and the social and intellectual network of the Ibukinoya academy, through his reading of the new documents. As evidence of this ongoing “Hirata boom,” works continue to appear which shed new light on the intellectual, social, and religious aspects of the Hirata network, both in Edo and the local scene throughout the country.66

The Objectives of This Study and Chapter Overview

I aim to make contributions to the above debates on statehood, nation, and modernity through my research on the Tsugaru group of posthumous Hirata disciples, particularly in terms of the dynamics between local and national identities. Moreover, I hope to build on kokugaku studies in the West and Japan, by bringing new players to discussions to date in Hirao Rosen (1808-1880), Tsuruya Ariyo (1808-1871), and the Tsugaru group, new materials in the form of their writings, paintings, and letters, and a new vantage point from the north in Tsugaru and Ezo. Focusing on the Tsugaru group will provide an opportunity to further examine the Meiji Restoration and experience of modernity in the context of northerneastern Japan. Five major points I hope to elucidate through my research are: (1) diversity found within “sōmō no kokugaku,” or “grassroots nativism,” as demonstrated through this community of intellectual townspeople from Hirosaki; (2) dynamics seen in the juxtaposition of two identities—a local “country” of Tsugaru and national “country” of Imperial Japan; (3) the links between kokugaku

66 Two important monographs on Hirata kokugaku were published in 2012. Although I do not review them in this introduction, I benefit greatly from their insights by citing them in the main body of this study. Nakagawa Kazuaki’s Hirata kokugaku no shiteki kenkyū (Meicho kankōkai) examines the history of the Hirata family, the academy, and disciple communities during Atsutane’s lifetime and beyond his death into the Meiji period, based on a meticulous analysis of primary materials—both texts and letters. Yoshida Asako’s Chi no kyōmei: Hirata Atsutane wo meguru shomotsu no shakaishi (Perikansha) sheds light on the spread of Hirata Atsutane’s thought among his followers throughout Japan by tracing the social history of books and publishing within the academy.
and ethnographic studies, which similarly deal with the local-national dynamic; (4) the adoption of spirituality and religiosity of Hirata *kokugaku*, and its expansion, expressed through worship, writings, and the work of the Shinto priesthood; and (5) the commoners’ experience of modernity and the transformation of local community from an early modern domain to modern prefecture in Meiji Japan.

With the above as its main objectives, this dissertation in its main body is comprised of the following seven chapters. Opening the main body, chapter two sets the stage for my discussion on Hirata *kokugaku* in Tsugaru, by chronicling the life of Hirata Atsutane, and examining his thought, academy of Ibukinoya, its posthumous succession by Kanetane and Nobutane, and the national network of disciples. I highlight the common areas of concern between the Hirata academy and Tsugaru disciples. These include: a concern for the spiritual realm of *kakuriyo*, spirits, and the afterlife; ethnographic inquiries into the lives and worldview of commoners; a concern toward the north, in terms of both security through the northern island of Ezo, as well as a shared identification with the northern region, with Atsutane’s native domain and place of exile, Akita, neighbouring Tsugaru to the south; and, finally, a strong religiosity in both thought and daily worship, augmented through the Shinto priesthood. Through these commonalities, the Tsugaru disciples help draw attention to key characteristics of Hirata *kokugaku*, some of which have been hitherto overlooked.

Chapter three begins with a history of Hirosaki domain in the late-Tokugawa period, and pays attention to changes in economy, military defense, society, education, and religious practice. I then introduce Tsuruya Ariyo, describing his role as leader and manager, and chronicle the formation of the Tsugaru group of posthumous Hirata disciples. Highlighted are this community’s devotion to poetry and study of Hirata *kokugaku*, their book purchases, and
interactions with academy heads Kanetane and Nobutane, as well as with other disciples. I compare this group’s activities and characteristics to those of Hirata communities in neighbouring Akita and Morioka domains. Based on such comparisons, I identify an autonomous nature among the community in Tsugaru, centred around its core members of townspeople, and note the religiosity expressed in thought and practice.

The fourth chapter begins with a biographical study of the life of a core member of the Tsugaru group, Hirao Rosen. I examine his artwork and writings leading up to his visit to the northern island of Ezo in 1855, the year following the official opening of Hakodate port by the Japan-U.S. Amity Treaty. I describe Rosen’s development as painter and scholar in Hirosaki castle town and Tsugaru region, and detail how he depicted his local surroundings through ethnographic records of local life and culture in image and text, years prior to serious engagement with *kokugaku* studies. Rosen’s first ever journey away from Tsugaru, “overseas” to Ezo in 1885, and his exposure to Ezo locals and European, American, and Qing Chinese visitors allow him to see and experience the “world” and Japan’s threatened position within it. This experience also enables Rosen to situate Tsugaru, or Hirosaki domain, alongside Matsumae domain, within Imperial Japan. From around 1855, Rosen directs his writings increasingly toward ethnographical and nativist pursuits, which allow for an analysis on the interplay between regional and national identities in his discourse on Tsugaru and Imperial Japan.

Chapter five proceeds to explore the dynamics between the ethnographic and nativist dimensions of Rosen’s scholarship in his three major works: *Gappo kidan* (Strange Tales of Gappo, 1855), *Tani no hibiki* (Echoes of the Valley, 1860), and *Yūfu shinron* (New Treatise of the Spiritual Realm, 1865)—completed over a ten-year period. By analyzing these three texts, I show how Rosen conceives of the strange, mysterious, and spiritual matters in the context of the
local Tsugaru environment and community, and how he locates Tsugaru into a larger spiritual landscape of Imperial Japan. The decade from 1855 onward is a period of pronounced interplay between Tsugaru and Imperial Japan within Rosen’s writing, and this culminates with his increased engagement with Hirata *kokugaku*, as represented through his enrolment as an official Hirata disciple in 1864, then his completion of his third major work, *Yūfu shinron*, in 1865.

In chapter six, I further pursue the conception of the two “countries” of Tsugaru and Imperial Japan, this time through the writings of group leader Tsuruya Ariyo. Ariyo connected the two earthly realms of Tsugaru and Imperial Japan with the spiritual realm, through gods and spirits. Surveying past scholarship on the views of sacred mountains in Japan, I first show how Ariyo depicted Mount Iwaki as a spiritual symbol of Tsugaru throughout his *waka* poetry. Second, I take up his treatise, *Iwaki san shinreiki* (*Mount Iwaki Divine Records*), and demonstrate how Ariyo asserted the gods’ (*kami*) rule and control over the mountain. Third, I analyze his major work, *Ken’yū rakuron* (*Treatise on Enjoyment in the Visible and Invisible Realms*), wherein he links life in this world with the afterlife through enjoyment, which he emphasizes as the key element to living a full life. Finally, I draw upon examples of religious practice, namely spirit and ancestor veneration, as seen in Ariyo’s *norito* liturgies, which express his views of the visible world and spiritual realm, which demonstrate his adoption and expansion of the religiosity of Hirata *kokugaku*.

Chapter seven is devoted to the history of the Restoration years in Hirosaki domain and northeastern Japan, particularly the Boshin War of 1868 to 1869, and the ensuing *shōkonsai* ritual to “call back” and venerate soldiers who died in battle for the imperial cause. I chronicle Hirosaki domain’s role in the Boshin War fought between the Imperial forces against the defenders of the Tokugawa bakufu, in which they switched allegiance from the latter to the
former. The Hirosaki army contributed to the imperial cause in the Battle of Noheji, in which Hirata disciple Yamada Yōnoshin fought and died, and in the sixth month of 1869, Shinto priests from the Tsugaru group, Osari Nakaakira and Ono Iwane, performed the *shōkonsai* ritual to honour the sixty-four fallen soldiers including Yōnoshin. A close look at the role of the Tsugaru disciples in this civil war shows how they participated in Tsugaru’s role within the newly emerging Imperial Japan of early Meiji.

The eighth and final chapter of the main body illustrates how the Hirata disciples in Tsugaru observed and experienced modernization in the early Meiji period, particularly the transformation of their local “country” of Tsugaru within a rapidly changing modern Imperial Japan. I begin by chronicling developments in Hirosaki, in its transformation from domain to prefecture, highlighting the role of Tsugaru Tsuguakira, the final daimyo and first governor, and the rise of Western learning in the region, as represented through transformations to domainal school Keikokan, which transitioned into the modern academy Tōōgijuku. The astonishing growth of the Hirata academy in the first years of Meiji, and its sudden halt in expansion following 1871, represent a history of early attempts to make Shinto the central ideology of the Meiji state, countered by sudden and increased adoption of Western thought and institutions in the modernization process. The death of Tsugaru group leader Tsuruya Ariyo, also in 1871, signalled a decline in collective activity for the Hirata disciples in Hirosaki. I show how these drastic changes in society are experienced by Hirao Rosen, as well as the Shinto priests of the group, through their role in the religious reforms of the state. A historian and poet from the group, Shimozawa Yasumi made efforts to immortalize the history of the Tsugaru ruling family and Hirosaki domain, through histories and poetry anthologies commissioned by the final daimyo Tsuguakira.
Chapter 2  Hirata *Kokugaku* and Its National Network

Overview

This chapter examines the life of Hirata Atsutane, his *kokugaku* thought, the Ibukinoya academy including its posthumous succession by son Kanetane and grandson Nobutane, and the network of Hirata disciples throughout Japan, all in anticipation of my discussion of Hirata *kokugaku* and the disciples in Tsugaru. Several points of commonality or parallel can be identified between Atsutane and his academy and the Tsugaru disciples: some of these links may be considered fortuitous, while others can be attributed to the Tsugaru disciples’ concern with particular features of Hirata *kokugaku*. Therefore, in discussing Hirata *kokugaku* and the national network, I highlight these common points or characteristics, which include: a concern for the invisible *kakuriyo* spiritual realm, spirits, and the afterlife; ethnographic studies of the lives and worldview of commoners; a shared awareness of foreign threats from the north through the island of Ezo; the northern connection, with Atsutane’s native domain and place of exile, Akita, neighbouring Tsugaru to the north; and strong religiosity through daily practice and ties with the Shinto priesthood. These commonalities between Hirata *kokugaku* and the Tsugaru disciples accentuate some of the significant features of the two sides, while also suggesting some reasons for the reception of Atsutane’s thought among the Tsugaru community.

**Hirata Atsutane: Early Years**

Atsutane may be the most celebrated native son of Akita city and prefecture. Ten monuments are erected throughout the city in his memory, marking places of his birth, residence,
death, and site of the local academy, *Fūrai gijuku* (風雷義塾), established by his posthumous disciples. Atsutane is enshrined along with disciple and *kokugaku* scholar Satō Nobuhiro (1769-1850) in Iyataka shrine, which is located in Chiaki Park, the former grounds of Akita domain’s Kubota Castle where the ruling Satake family resided, and the two are also featured in the school song for Akita High School. Atsutane is taken up in many local histories, and is often credited for influencing Akita domainal policy in supporting the Imperial forces in the Boshin War of 1868 to 1869, as well as for championing the Japanese spirit which propelled the country in its achievements at home and abroad in the modern period, however insular this view may be, with many such writings appearing in the prewar and war years leading up to 1945.

Hirata Atsutane was born on the 24th day of the eighth month in 1776 (An’ei 5) in Machinaka-chō, Nakatani-chi, in the castle town of Kubota in Akita domain, Dewa Province (出羽国久保田城下中谷地町中丁), located in present-day Tohoku region. A monument to mark Atsutane’s birthplace at the family home stands on the site of the Former Seventeenth Infantry Regiment at a children’s park just west of Akita Station. Atsutane was born the fourth of six sons to Akita domainal samurai Ōwada Seibei Sachitane (大和田清兵衛祚胤、大番組頭 with a stipend of 100 *koku*), who also had two daughters. Atsutane was named Masayoshi (正吉) at birth. The Ōwada family claimed descent from Prince Katsuhara (葛原親皇), son of Emperor Kammu (737-806), and Atsutane himself wrote that he was the “31st generation descendant” of

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67 This shrine was first erected as Hirata Shrine in 1881 (Meiji 4) in Yatsushashi of Akita by some Hirata disciples, led by Kotanibe Jinzaemon, in order to worship the spirit of their master. Later, in 1909 (Meiji 42), the Akita Prefecture Educational Board purchased and refurbished former prefectural shrine Hachiman shrine, and transferred Hirata Shrine there. At the same time, Satō Nobuhiro was jointly enshrined and the shrine was renamed Iyataka Shrine. In 1917, Iyataka Shrine was transferred to its current location in Chiaki Park. Shiozawa Kiyoshi. *Iyataka jinja* shi. Akita: Iyataka jinja, 2009. p. 7.

68 Verse two of the school song for Akita High School begins, “Fragrant is the soil of Akita, where two giant spirits Atsutane and Nobuhiro were born.” (篤胤信淵ふたつの巨霊 生まれし秋田の 土こそ薫れ)
Kanda myōjin (神田明神), the spirit of the Heian military general Taira no Masakado (?–940) and, therefore, he often signed his name Taira Atsutane in his writings.

Atsutane had an exceptionally unhappy childhood, according to a letter Atsutane wrote in his later years addressed to his adopted son Kanetane. He was “farmed out and fostered” by a poor, low-ranking samurai family, with whom he “endured a lot” until he was six. He was given over for adoption, but his adoptive father died, after which he was sent home again, only to be abused by his parents and brothers and endure “abnormal” pain. Later he was adopted yet again, this time by a wealthy acupuncturist, but once this couple bore their own child, the young boy was returned home. Atsutane explains that at home he worked hard but was still abused by his brothers, and was self-taught and learned nothing from his parents. The young boy also suffered from a birth mark on his face, which, he explains, his parents interpreted as an omen that he would kill his brothers to steal their inheritance. This birth mark appears to have been a source of considerable despair for Atsutane throughout his life.

The young Atsutane began Chinese studies (漢学) in 1783 (Tenmei 3) at age eight, under the tutelage of domainal Confucian scholar Nakayama Seiga, according to Daigaku kun goichidai ryakki (『大壑君御一代略記』) or A Sketch of the Life of Daigaku, a timeline of Atsutane’s life created by Kanetane. This likely means Atsutane had learned basic Japanese reading and writing by eight, and started Chinese characters after that. After imparting Chinese studies (漢学) education to Atsutane, Nakayama Seiga most likely taught the young boy the

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69 Kamata Tōji, “The Disfiguring of Nativism: Hirata Atsutane and Orikuchi Shinobu.” Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami. Eds. John Breen and Mark Teeuwen. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i, 2000. pp. 295-96. Atsutane wrote this letter from his place of exile Akita in 1842, but never sent it out. This was a year after he was exiled to his hometown.

70 See Kamata for a discussion on how Atsutane’s facial disfigurement led to his fascination with the other realm, and added to his conviction of the gods.

71 Hirata Kanetane. Daigaku kun goichidai ryakki. SHAZ. Vol. 6, p. 591.
classics (経書). As a disciple of Yamazaki Ansai’s academy, Seiga then probably instructed his pupil in Yamazaki-style Neo-Confucianism. When Atsutane was eleven, he was sent to live with his uncle Yanagimoto to study medicine and become a physician. There he was given the name Gentaku (玄琢). Young Atsutane came of age with his genpuku ceremony at age fifteen, and received the name Taneyuki (胤行). Thus, Atsutane’s early education included basic Japanese studies, Chinese studies including Confucianism, medicine, and presumably, martial arts.

Atsutane left Akita domain for Edo on the eighth day of the first month in 1795 (Kansei 7) at age twenty, to pursue further studies, where he remained until age 66. While in Edo, Atsutane is said to have taken on several menial jobs, including those of cart puller, firefighter, home tutor, and kitchen assistant. After completing his duties in the kitchen, Atsutane enjoyed his free time studying. Around this time, he was discovered by Itakura Lord of Suo from Matsuyama domain, Bitchū province, who had been on duty as an inspector (metsuke) at Tokiwa bridge (常磐橋) over Nihonbashi river. Itakura introduced Atsutane to his vassal, Hirata Tōbei Atsuyasu (平田藤兵衛篤穏) and was eventually adopted into the Hirata household. The following year in 1801 (Kyōwa 1), Atsutane at age twenty-six married Ishibashi Orise, age twenty. In the ensuing year, the couple had a son, Jōtarō (常太郎), but he died after one month. Spring of 1801 was also when Atsutane first read Motoori Norinaga’s writings, and took up a desire to study “Ancient Learning” (古学 Inishie manabi), which referred to kokugaku. In 1805 (Bunka 2), Orise gave birth to their daughter, Chie, who later took on the name Ochō (おてう), and eventually the name Orise after her mother. The couple had their second son in 1808 (Bunka

5), whom they named Hanbei (半兵衛), and later renamed Matagorō, but he too died early in 1818 (Bunsei 1) at age eleven.

As seen thus far, Atsutane’s family life was full of hardship, beginning with his childhood which was reportedly marred by sorrowful events, into adult life which included the tragic death of his first wife and two sons. Atsutane’s first wife Orise is known to have supported her husband, not only upholding household matters, but also taking on clerical matters and negotiations for publishing, earning the designation of “good wife, wise mother” (ryōsai kenbo) from biographer Watanabe Kinzō. In his major work on human souls and the afterlife, Tama no mihashira (『霊能真柱』) or August Pillar of the Soul, completed in 1812 (Bunka 9), Atsutane expresses his desire, after death, to invite his wife Orise and fly together as spirits before his Master Norinaga’s spirit and to serve him. Atsutane admits his first wife died that year due to illness caused by overwork to support his “studies on the Way.” Atsutane married a second wife, who left after a mere two months, perhaps unable to endure the financial hardships of the Hirata home. Later, Atsutane married for a third time, and one can see his appreciation toward his first wife expressed through his gesture of re-naming his third wife and daughter Ochō, Orise.

Atsutane’s third wife was the daughter of a tofu shop owner in Koshigaya in Musashi province. She was adopted into the household of a wealthy local oil merchant, Yamazaki Chōuemon (山崎長右衛門) in order to marry Atsutane. A fervent Shinto believer, Chōuemon became a disciple of Atsutane in 1816 (Bunka 13), and in the following year he loaned Atsutane the capital to publish Tama no mihashira (August Pillar of the Spirit), and Koshiseibun (Ancient History Reconstituted) and Koshi chō (Meaning of Ancient History) one year later in 1818. In the

73 Watanabe, p. 21.
74 Hirata Atsutane, Tama no mihashira. SHAZ, Vol. 7., pp. 180-181. Atsutane makes this same admission in a letter written in his later years to adopted son Kanetane, that Orise’s death was probably brought on, in part, from overwork in assisting him in his scholarship. Watanabe, p. 21.
winter of 1818 (Bunsei 1), Chōuemon arranged his adopted daughter to marry Atsutane. Although not highly educated, this third wife renamed Orise raised Atsutane’s daughter and supported her husband’s scholarship through writing, composition, and accounting (算盤). With help from her affluent household, she supported Atsutane’s dire finances. She helped to gather capital, assisted with selling print blocks (板木), and negotiated with book sellers (書肆), woodblock cutters (板木屋), paper dealers, and book binders. This third wife Orise accompanied Atsutane to exile in Akita, supported him, and took care of matters after his death. It is during their marriage that Atsutane adopted a son, Kanetane (銕胤), who came from Niiya domain in Iyo province, and was the eldest son of vassal Midorikawa (碧川). On the 23rd of the fifth month in 1822 (Bunsei 5), Kanetane officially registered as Atsutane’s disciple.

**Beginnings of Hirata Kokugaku**

Atsutane authored his first treatise *Kamōsho* (『呵妄書』) in 1803 (Kyōwa 3) at age twenty-eight, refuting claims by Confucian Dazai Shundai (1680-1747) in his *Bendōsho* (On Distinguishing the Way) on the Way and Japan, which asserted that the Way did not exist in Japan before the arrival of Buddhism during the reign of Emperor Kinmei (509-571) in the sixth century. In *Kamōsho*, Atsutane asserts the existence of the divine and ancient Way of Japan, addressing the broad-ranging discourse on Shinto or “Divine Way” (神道) from perspectives of Confucianism, Neo-Confucianism, Buddhism, divination, and kokugaku in Norinaga’s and Mabuchi’s writings. Atsutane cites Shundai’s criticism that, “people today believe Shinto is the

way of our country, and compare it to the Confucian and Buddhist ways and consider it a way.

This is a terrible mistake.”\(^77\) Atsutane then responds:

Shinto is the great way of our country, and because it is the way [by which] the emperor governs the realm, it is beyond comparing with Confucian and Buddhist ways. Though it is too awesome to utter in words, from the exalted emperor to the commoners below, to discard Confucianism and Buddhism and to solely believe in and revere Shinto is furthermore not a mistake.\(^78\)

This early text shows Atsutane challenging Shundai’s criticism of Japanese claims to having a way that precedes and surpasses Confucian and Buddhist ways imported from China and India.\(^79\) Atsutane demonstrates he is aware of the competing intellectual discourses and well read on a wide variety of texts, including Norinaga’s *Kojikiden*, which he cites for its definition of *kami* (deities). In response to Shundai’s interpretation of contemporary worship in Shinto as derived from Buddhist influence, Atsutane offers a rebuttle which culminates with his urging the people of Japan to discard the contrived “filthy teachings of foreign countries.” He then declares, “to first learn the antiquity of the Imperial country, know the precious ways of the Imperial country’s gods, and with the pure ‘true heart’ (*magokoro*) to revere, approach, and worship the gods.

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\(^78\) Ibid.

wholeheartedly is the way of the Imperial country.”\textsuperscript{80} These are some early expressions of Atsutane’s kokugaku thought.

Atsutane concludes Kamōsho with an inscription “Lord of Masugenoya” (眞菅舘のあろじ), referring to his place of residence, and signs his name Taira Atsutane. The following year in 1804 (Bunka 1), Atsutane began his medical practice and commenced lectures at this residence, the Masugenoya (眞菅乃屋).\textsuperscript{81} Then the following year on the fifth day of the third month in 1805, Atsutane sent Motoori Haruniwa a letter requesting formal enrolment into the Motoori academy, the Suzunoya, or “House of Bells” in Matsusaka. In this letter, Atsutane explains his devotion to learn the Way, and how, after discarding Chinese writings, he studied Norinaga’s teachings with faith and dedication. He then declares, “Last spring, incredibly, I saw the old man [Norinaga] in a dream. We established a master-disciple relationship. I wanted to understand [the meaning of] this further, and realized somehow that he had passed away. It was his spirit that had seen into the depths of my heart.”\textsuperscript{82} Haruniwa replied that he was impressed with Atsutane’s devotion, and granted approval for this disciple’s enrolment into the academy. Atsutane commissioned “Image of Encounter in Dream” (Muchū taimen zu 「夢中対面図」) to capture this dream, and Haruniwa wrote on it a message of praise and description of the encounter in response to Atsutane’s request.\textsuperscript{83}

Atsutane took a hands-on approach in interpreting history and mythology. Norinaga considered the Kojiki (古事記) or Records of Ancient Matters to be the authoritative text for studying ancient history and the Divine Way, esteeming it superior to Nihon shoki (日本書紀) or The Chronicles of Japan.

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid. p. 155.
\textsuperscript{81} In 1807 (Bunka 4) at age 32, Atsutane opened his medical practice, changing his name to Gensui (元瑞).
\textsuperscript{82} McNally pp. 165-66.
\textsuperscript{83} Maita Katsuyasu, Aramata Hiroshi. Eds. Bessatsu Taiyō: Chi no nettowaaku no senkakusha, pp. 22-23.
or Chronicles of Japan, for its unity of “matter and word and heart.” Atsutane, on the other hand, drew upon a wide variety of texts to uncover the Way. One core example of this is his Koshiseibun (『古史成文』) or Ancient History Reconstituted, a fifteen-volume ancient history from the Divine Age to Empress Suiko (reign 593-628 CE), “rewritten” or rearranged by Atsutane, which draws from various texts such as the Kojiki, Nihon shoki, Kogo shūi (『古語拾遺』) or Gleanings of Ancient Tales, Fudoki (『風土記』) gazetteers, and norito (『祝詞』) liturgies. Only the first three volumes, those devoted to the Divine Age have been published, that in the year 1818 (Bunsei 1). This work is written in the style of the Kojiki, using Chinese characters in a combination of Japanese Man’yō gana readings, as well as classical Chinese (kanbun). Atsutane perceived a large disparity in accounts of ancient history between the various texts mentioned above, as well as Norinaga’s Kojikiden and other writings, and he therefore resolved to combine facts from the various sources and to produce one uniform and authoritative source. This work demonstrates Atsutane’s sheer conviction in his own reconstitution of history, especially when considering that he wrote large commentaries Koshiden (Lectures on Ancient History) and Koshichō (The Meaning of Ancient History) on his work the Koshiseibun. Upon completing Koshiseibun, Atsutane declared this was his most representative work, stating, “Ah, what people would know Atsutane by, that may just be this Seibun.”

**Spirits, the Kakuriyo Realm, and Ethnographic Studies**

Arguably Atsutane’s biggest contribution to kokugaku discourse is his comprehensive articulation of the visible and invisible realms, human spirituality, and spirits, building on

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previous conceptions of cosmology. Atsutane drew upon theories of both his teacher Norinaga, as well as Norinaga’s disciple, Hattori Nakatsune (1756-1824) who was also a native of Matsusaka. Nakatsune authored *Sandaikō* (『三大考』) or *Treatise on the Three Universal Bodies*, a treatise on the creation chapters of the *Kojiki* that asserted the sun was heaven, the earth this world, and the moon the Yomi world. *Sandaikō* features ten diagrams depicting the creation of heaven and earth, along with various divinities. Norinaga esteemed his disciple’s treatise highly, editing it in part before its completion in 1791 (Kansei 3), then published it as part of his *Kojiki den* at the end of volume seventeen. Motoori Ōhira criticized Nakatsune’s treatise, but Atsutane supported much of it, incorporating its ten cosmological diagrams in altered form, and asserting his own stance in *Tama no mihashira*.

Atsutane completed *Tama no mihashira*, one of his major treatises, early in his scholarly career in 1812 (Bunka 9), then published it one year later. Norinaga had concluded that, “everyone in the world, whether noble or base, good or bad, must one and all go to the land of Yomi when they die,” ⁸⁵ and did not further pursue the question of eschatology nor inquire into the afterlife, as had been the case with Shinto theologians. ⁸⁶ To Norinaga, the destiny of all people to the “exceedingly filthy and bad land” of Yomi which lies beneath the earth, is a terribly sad fate that cannot be avoided, and Nakatsune also adopts this view of Yomi that this is where souls are destined to go after leaving their corpse in this world, except that he equates Yomi with the moon, as the dark land of night wherein no light shines. ⁸⁷ However, Atsutane, in the opening of *Tama no mihashira*, clearly asserts that “scholars engaging in ancient studies (古学 inishie manabi) must first chiefly solidify their Yamato heart,” and that “in desiring to solidify broad

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⁸⁶ See Nosco, *Remembering Paradise*, Ibid.
and lofty that Yamato heart, knowing where one’s soul will settle is foremost.” Atsutane made the soul’s destination after death a central question of his scholarship and, consequently, made discussions of eschatology central to kokugaku.

Atsutane refutes Norinaga’s claim that all souls of the dead go to the Yomi underworld after death, stating that his teacher was mistaken, “owing mainly to his insufficient examination of the evidence.” Atsutane maintains that all souls after death go neither to Yomi nor to heaven; rather, it is clear the souls of the Japanese, “from the purport of ancient legends and from modern examples that they remain eternally in Japan and serve in the realm of the dead governed by Ōkuninushi-no-kami.” Atsutane cast Ōkuninushi-no-kami—traditionally viewed as an “earthly god” (kunitsu kami) who ruled over the Central Land of Reed Plains (Ashihara no nakatsu kuni)—as lord of the kakuriyo realm whom souls of the dead were to serve. He continues on to describe this spiritual realm of yūmeikai or kakuriyo (幽冥界) as dark and, therefore, invisible from the visible world, though inhabitants of the spiritual realm can see the visible arahaniyo inhabited by the living, and souls of the deceased dwelt near gravesites and shrines from where they could watch over and protect their descendants they left behind. Perhaps reflective of Atsutane’s concern for “practicality” (jissensei) and daily life, he notes that in the invisible realm “the way of clothing, food, and housing are also provided,” just as in “life” in the visible world. As Mark McNally observes, while “direct contact” between the visible

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90 Ibid. p. 45.
91 Hirata Atsutane, Tama no mihashira, p. 170.
arahanjyo realm and invisible kakuriyo realm is difficult and rare, religious acts in this world, such as ancestor worship, made it possible to affect one realm from the other.\(^{92}\)

After establishing his ideas on spirits, spirituality, and the spiritual realm with his *Shin kishinron* (『新鬼神論』), *Kishin shinron* (『鬼神新論』), or *New Treatise on Spirits*, *Tama no mihashira*, and *Tama dasuki* (『玉禰』), or *Precious Sleeve Cord*, between 1805 and 1820, Atsutane followed up these foundational works with his ethnographic accounts of the spiritual realm, through collecting the oral accounts of commoners, beginning with *Senkyō ibun* (『仙境異聞』) or *Strange Tidings from the World of Immortals* in 1821. Through *Senkyō ibun*, Atsutane made further inquiry into the spiritual realm through the testimonies of a Tengu boy named Torakichi. Tengu are said to live in high mountains, travel to and from the kakuriyo realm, possess extraordinary spiritual power, and conduct superhuman feats.\(^{93}\) As described by Wilburn Hansen, Atsutane records in his *Senkyō ibun* results from his interviews of Torakichi about his experiences of travelling to and observing the kakuriyo spiritual realm.\(^{94}\)

1822 was another fruitful year in Atsutane’s ethnographic studies, as he completed *Katsugorō saiseiki* or *A Recorded Account of Katsugorō’s Rebirth*, a documentation of young peasant boy Katsugorō’s alleged rebirth from his previous life, also as a peasant boy Fujikura, who had died of smallpox at age six to a different peasant family in the same Tama county of Musashino province in 1810 (Bunka 7). Katsugorō testifies to his encounter with the Ubusuna kami Kumano avatar (産土神熊野権現) in the *yūmeikai* spiritual realm, before his rebirth into his new life in this world. Atsutane’s fruitful ethnographic inquiry through testimony from the child informant Torakichi, encouraged him to next interview this Katsugorō regarding his

\(^{92}\) McNally, p. 122.  
\(^{93}\) Watanabe, p. 171.  
\(^{94}\) Hansen, p. 200.
experiences of the afterlife and invisible realm, which buttressed his theories asserted in his earlier foundational texts. Then in that same year of 1822, Atsutane completed Kokon yōmikō (『古今妖魅考』) or Thoughts on Supernatural Beings Past and Present which responds to Hayashi Razan’s Jinja kō (『神社考』) or Treatise on Shrines, and urges the people of Japan to worship the kami and revere the kakuriyo spiritual realm, and to reject Buddhist notions of paradise.

Among the most characteristic features of Hirata kokugaku, are his religious faith and the spiritual dimensions he accentuated in kokugaku thought. Atsutane is responsible for the “positivization” (sekkyokuka) and “religionization” (shūkyōka) of Shinto, for taking the emphasis away from “passivity” (judōtai) seen in the literary studies of the Motoori school, and emphasizing actual “practice” (jissensei) in faith and daily life, according to Matsumoto Sannosuke.95 Tahara Tsuguo also contrasted the “scholarly, static characteristic” (gakumonteki,seiteki) of Norinaga’s kokugaku to Hirata kokugaku’s “religious tendency” (shūkyōteki keikō) and Atsutane’s “evangelistic character” (dendōshateki).96 Tahara observed that Atsutane saw his contemporary age as one of decline for Buddhism and revival for Shinto. Whereas Norinaga conducted his scholarship in the rural castle town of Matsuzaka in Ise province, and remained for the most part in his hometown to which scholars from across Japan came to enrol in his academy as his disciples, Atsutane, based in the shogun’s capital and urban centre of Edo, travelled through eastern Japan, in part to actively recruit disciples of a broad social spectrum from throughout the country. The growth of Atsutane’s academy during and beyond his lifetime to well over four thousand registrants into the early Meiji years is a result of the “evangelistic”

practice of Atsutane, Kanetane, and Nobutane traveling the countryside and actively recruiting disciples.

Large-scale publication and dissemination of Atsutane’s writings served as a major vehicle for expanding the Hirata academy, and perhaps the best example of this is his Maiasa shinhaishiki (『毎朝神拝詞記』) or Morning Order for Worship, a norito liturgy for worshipping twenty-five series of deities and shrines. Atsutane opens Maiasa shinhaishiki with the following instructions: “Awake early in the morning, wash your face and hands, rinse your mouth, purify your body, first face toward the land of Yamato, and clap your hands twice.”

Atsutane then instructs one to reverently worship from afar the Heavenly Pillar and Earthly Pillar deities, also known as the wind gods Shinatsuhiko Shinatsuhime no kami, and additionally referred to as Tatsuta no kaze no kami, which rule over the wind and weather. Secondly, Atsutane instructs one to “Next face the heavenly sun, clap both hands, bow in reverence,” and to reverently worship from afar the solar deity Amaterasu, the Imperial Musubi gods, and all the eight million gods, beginning with the Great god Izanagi.

Atsutane’s concern for deity and ancestral worship at the local level is seen in articles twelve through fourteen, wherein he gives instruction to reverently worship ones local shrine, the tutelary god of that place, and the altar to the gods in ones home. I will elaborate more on this in chapter six, in my discussion of Tsuruya Ariyo’s norito and religious practice within the Tsugaru group. Atsutane is known to have purified himself each morning and worshipped the heavenly and earthly deities and ancestors, reciting this liturgy. He wrote Tama dasuki (Precious Sleeve Cord), a ten-volume commentary on the Maiasa shinhaishiki, to expound the

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97 Hirata Atsutane, Maiasa shinhaishiki. SHAZ, Vol. 6, p. 4.  
98 Ibid. p. 5.  
100 Watanabe, p. 209.
divine way for his disciples. *Maiasa shinhaishiki* was the most-highly published and widely disseminated of Astutane’s writings, with an estimated 13,976 copies published by 1875 (Meiji 8), followed by *Ōharae no kotoba seikun* (『大祓詞正訓』) at 11,191, and *Tama no mihashira* at fifth, with around 10,050 copies.  

Looking Northward

Atsutane’s concern for the invisible realm of spirits did not take his attention away from current events of Japan and the world, nor from matters of national security. Atsutane was aware of the foreign threat from the north, particularly toward the northern island of Ezo, around the turn of the nineteenth century, as accentuated in recent research by scholars working with the new Hirata materials.  

In 1792, a Russian expedition led by Lieutenant Adam Laxman arrived in Nemuro, seeking commercial trade with Japan. English warships were also entering Japan’s coastal waters, and in 1796 and 1797 William Broughton surveyed the waters around Ezo and the Kuriles. Such activities heightened the Tokugawa shogunate’s sense of crisis toward these areas and led to increased military defence, including the transfer in 1802 of all of Eastern Ezo from the jurisdiction of Matsumae domain to the bakufu. Several intellectuals called attention to the issue of Japanese security, but the Bakufu discouraged such public discussion. *Kaikoku heidan* (『海国兵談』) or *The Military Defense of a Maritime Country* by Hayashi Shihei (1738-93), called for Japan’s military armament to defend against Russia’s southward advancement. This work was printed in 1791 (Kansei 3), but the bakufu prohibited it that same
year, burning his book and printing blocks, and punished Shihei with house arrest in Sendai, where he died the following year.\textsuperscript{104}

As Miyachi highlights, Hirata Tōbei, who adopted Atsutane in 1800, was a Yamaga-style military strategist, and undoubtedly exposed Atsutane to discussions of foreign crisis and Japan’s military preparedness from early on in his days studying in Edo.\textsuperscript{105} Evidence of Atsutane’s awareness of the foreign threat and Japan’s military preparedness is seen in his \textit{Chishima no shiranami} (『千島の白波』), or \textit{White Waves of the Kuriles}, begun in 1808 and completed in 1813. Atsutane states in the very opening, “This book resulted from the commotion caused last year in the year of hinoe tora, when the Russians unexpectedly arrived in Ezo,”\textsuperscript{106} pointing to the 1806 and 1807 Russian incursion of the northern island and the panic it caused as the first motivations to compile this work. \textit{Chishima no shiranami} is a 10-volume compilation of official documents related to foreign vessels visiting the country’s coasts since the mid-eighteenth century, including the Russian incursion mentioned above, and the incident surrounding the English vessel Phaeton forcibly entering Nagasaki harbour in 1808 (Bunka 5).

Atsutane, who demonstrated an awareness and concern for the northern threat through Ezo, also undertook Russian language studies around this period, as evidenced by documents made public recently. \textit{Roshiya go}, or \textit{Russian language}, is a two-volume booklet containing roughly 1,800 Russian words rendered in both Russian and the Japanese \textit{katakana} syllabary, which Atsutane compiled for personal study.\textsuperscript{107} He also possessed \textit{Oroshiya moji} or \textit{Russian

\textsuperscript{105} Miyachi, “Ibukinoya to yonsennin no montei tachi.” p. 104.
\textsuperscript{106} \textit{Chishima no shiranami}, SHAZ, Supp. 5, p. 1.
letters, transmitted by former castaway to Russia, Daikokuya Kōdayū (1751-1828), and hand-copied by Atsutane in 1808. *Roshia moji renshū chō*, or *Manual for practicing Russian letters* which contains a pronunciation guide for Russian letters is another text for Russian language studies from Atsutane’s collection. As Iwai Noriyuki observes, although Atsutane did not achieve mastery of the language to the point of translating diplomatic notes by Russian naval officer Nikolai Khvostov which he appears to have made early attempts at, he nevertheless demonstrates acquisition of the Russian alphabet and some words. In his day, Atsutane also acquired an impressive collection of available materials on the Russian language, geography, history, and society.

Atsutane’s memories of the north—of his native domain of Akita in Dewa province, along with neighbouring Mutsu province from his formative years to age twenty—evidently remained with him, and even informed his scholarship, as seen in some of his major works. Atsutane offers commentary in *Tama no mihashira* on the Divine Age passage of Ninigi no mikoto, grandson of the solar deity Amaterasu, and his famous descent from the High Plain of Heaven (Takamagahara) down to the Central Land of Reed Plains (Ashihara no nakatsukuni) on

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108 Daikokuya Kōdayū, originally from Ise, was a sailor who was shipping rice to Edo in 1783 (Tenmei 2), when he was shipwrecked and washed ashore on Kamchatka in the Aleutian islands, and spent close to a decade in Russia. In 1792, he accompanied Lt. Adam Laxman and was returned to Japan. He wrote of his experiences overseas in *Hokusa bunryaku* (『北槎聞略』) of 1794 (Kansei 6), edited by Katsuragawa Hoshū.


earth, which he reconstructed in *Koshiseibun*. Atsutane argues that an oft-debated term “ukijimari” refers not to a “floating island” which Ninigi no mikoto crossed on his descent to earth, but serves simply as a pillow word to decorate the more substantial word of “sori” in “soritatashi,” which, he interprets as “the force of descending, from heaven to this land, through forcefully parting the way, parting the way…” (「天よりこの国に。稜威の道別き道別給ひて。降坐す御稜威の。」). Atsutane then offers a correlating allegory from his native Akita in explaining the action of Ninigi no mikoto parting the thick clouds to make his way in his descent from heaven:

> There is something called a sled (sori 槴), one rides in countries with heavy snowfall. Just as I rode and observed while I lived in Akita of Dewa, riding this object and [observing] the act of parting the way, parting the snow and pushing through, [I saw] how well it corresponded with the expression, “forcefully parting a way through,” referring to something that advances with force. Therefore, that term “sori” (曾理) is a term applied from the intensity of the momentum of parting one’s way through a snowy path.

In this way, Atsutane makes reference to images of a sled (sori, 槴) back in Akita domain in the winter time, forcefully sledding along, pushing the deep snow to the side, as it clears for itself a path, “parting the way, parting the snow and pushing through” with force. He associates the “sori” of the sled in northern Akita with the “sori” (曾理) of “soritatashi” (曾理發), to interpret this term, again as “the force of descending, from heaven to this land, through forcefully parting the way, parting the way,” in understanding Ninigi no mikoto’s descent to earth, an event in the

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111 Atsutane comments on Ninigi no mikoto’s descent aboard a “floating bridge of heaven” (ameno ukihashi), arguing this was more a “floating” boat, than a fixed bridge between heaven and earth as asserted by Hattori Nakatsune in his *Sandaikō*. Hirata Atsutane, *Tama no mihashira*, SHAZ, Vol. 7, p. 150. Though Atsutane is commenting on his own “reconstituted” version of this scene from ancient history in *Koshiseibun*, Donald L. Philippi translates the corresponding passage from the *Kojiki* in the following way: “Then AMATU-PIKO-PO-NO-NINIGI-NO-MIKOTO was commanded to leave the Heavenly Rock-Seat. Pushing through the myriad layers of the heavens’ trailing clouds, pushing his way with an awesome pushing, he stood on a flat floating island by the Heavenly Floating Bridge, and descended from the heavens to the peak KUZI-PURU-TAKE of Mount TAKA-TI-PO of PIMUKA in TUKUSI. Philippi, Donald. L. Trans. and notes. *Kojiki*. University of Tokyo Press, 1968. p. 141.

Divine Age history which leads eventually to his descendant emperors’ rule over the Central Land of Reed Plains.

Earlier, in the same *Tama no mihashira*, Atsutane makes another reference to northern Japan as a part of his commentary on an early passage of *Koshiseibun*. The Divine Age scene begins with a single object suspended in space and floating.\(^{113}\) From within that object, sprouts up something like reed-shoots. From these, deities came into existence for the first time. Their names were Umashi ashikabi hikochino kami. Next was Ameno sokotachi no kami. These two pillars of deities are again single deities, and they hid themselves.\(^{114}\) Based on the fact that these deities (*kami*) sprouted (*moe*) from the floating object, Atsutane speculates:

> What I wonder according to this is whether “kami” (カミ) is derived from the word “kabimoe” (reeds sprouting カビモエ). That is, because this deity is the first deity to be formed, I believe that “kami” refers to not only these deities, but to other deities broadly. It is said that on the far reaches of Mutsu province, even now *kami* (gods) are referred to as ‘*kamui*’ or ‘*kamoe*.’ This is a case of ancient language being preserved there by chance.”\(^{115}\)

Based on this divine age passage wherein two deities Umashi ashikabi hikochino kami and Ameno sokotachi no kami are formed from the floating reed-shoot like objects, Atsutane conjectures that the term “kami” meaning deity or god comes from “*kabimoe*” which means “reeds sprouting,” and he makes reference to the “far reaches of Mutsu province,” where “*kami*” are called “*kamui*” or “*kamoe*” even in contemporary times, suggesting that this language had survived from ancient times, possibly derived from the original “*kabimoe*.”\(^{116}\)

A reference to language in the north is seen also in *Koshiden*, in which Atsutane provides commentary on his *Koshiseibun*. In the very first of 165 articles in the *Koshiseibun*, Atsutane

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\(^{113}\) The corresponding passage from the *Kojiki* is as follows: “Next, when the land was young, resembling floating oil and drift-like a jellyfish, there sprouted forth something like reed-shoots. From these came into existence the deity UMASI-ASI-KABI-PIKO-DI-NO-KAMI; next, AME-NO-TOKO-TATI-NO-KAMI. These two deities also came into existence as single deities, and their forms were not visible.” Philippi, p. 47.


\(^{115}\) Ibid. p. 100.

\(^{116}\) It should be noted that “*kamui*” is also the Ainu word for deity.
comments on the etymology of “musu” from the deity name of Takamimusubi no kami, the second of the three creator deities that existed even before the creation of heaven and earth, the first deity being Amenominaka nushi no kami and the third Kamumimusubi no kami.\footnote{Also rendered as Kamimusubi no kami.} “Musu” rendered with the Chinese character 産 (umu, san), refers to birth, giving birth, or fertility, and Atsutane makes the point that this word has been abbreviated from its previous, fuller reading of “Umusu,” a reading which he says existed in his day in certain provinces. He continues with another reference to his native Akita with the following footnote: “In Akita of Dewa, 蒸 [“musu” or “fukasu” which means “to steam”] is read “umusu”. Around the summer time, when it is terribly hot, they say, “today it is terribly “umushite” (“steaming”) and such.”\footnote{Hirata Atsutane, Koshiden, vol. 1, SHAZ, Vol. 1. p. 101.} Here we see another example of Atsutane drawing upon memory of his native Akita and the language there preserved from ancient times to help him make sense of ancient history and language of the divine age.

While there is no denying Atsutane paid attention to locales in the Kanto region, including shrines in Kashima, Katori, and Ikisu, here I have drawn attention to Atstuane’s view also of the north, which has hitherto been overlooked in English-language scholarship.

\textbf{Atsutane’s Later Years}

In 1823 (Bunsei 6) at age 48, Atsutane, now established as a well-published scholar, made his lone visit to Kyoto, where he offered his writings to the imperial court. Leaving Edo on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} day of the seventh month, Atsutane travelled the Tōkaidō highway, accompanied by recently enrolled disciple Ōta Toyotarō Tomoyasu (太田豊太郎朝恭) and servant Matahira (又
On the third day of the eighth month, they paid respects at Atsuta shrine, then entered the capital three days later on the sixth. In Kyoto, Atsutane entrusted his books to Yoshida school Shinto priests, Mutobe Tokika and his son Yoshika (1806-65), who delivered them to Emperor Ninkō (1800-46, reign: 1817-46). Atsutane offered selected copies of some of his major works which included Koshiseibun (『古史成文』Ancient History Reconstituted), Koshi chō (『古史徴』Meaning of Ancient History) and its opening volume of Koshi chō kaidaiki (『古史徴開題記』Meaning of Ancient History Commentaries), Jindai gokeizu (『神代御系図』Divine Age Genealogy), Tama no mihashira (『霊能真柱』August Pillar of the Spirit), and Koshiden (『古史伝』Lectures on Ancient History). Mutobe Yoshika, who later became a Hirata disciple, reported to Atsutane that the emperor was indeed impressed and had stated, “His exceptional efforts and [scholarly] interests are fine.” Atsutane was overjoyed to know that his main objective for visiting Kyoto had born fruitful results.

For his first and only time, Atsutane visited Nudenoya, an academy in Kyoto started by Norinaga disciple Kido Chidate (城戸千楯) who taught on Norinaga’s teachings, focusing primarily on poetry and prose. At Nudenoya, Atsutane met Hattori Nakatsune who was residing in Kyoto at the time. Nakatsune’s Sandaikō of 1791 had been an influential treatise for Atsutane’s theories on the spiritual realm articulated in Tama no mihashira of 1812, and the two spoke in length, especially about their resolve to pursue studies on the Ancient Way as opposed to that of poetry and prose, in line with the desires of their Master Norinaga. Atsutane

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119 Hirata Kanetane, Daigaku kun, p. 608.
120 Daigaku kun, p. 608.
121 Hirata Kanetane, Daigaku kun, p. 608.
122 McNally, p. 167, Watanabe, p. 79.
123 Watanabe, p. 69, McNally, pp. 56-57.
124 Watanabe, p. 290.
125 See McNally, pp. 168-170.
left Wakayama on the 25th day of the tenth month, visited Yamato, where an ancient capital had been located, and “paid respects to the old and precious shrines.” On the first of the eleventh month, he worshipped at the inner and outer shrines of Ise shrine.

Then on the fourth of the eleventh month, Atsutane paid respects at the grave of Motoori Norinaga on Mount Yamamuro on the outskirts of Matsusaka, about eleven years after he completed his seminal work *Tama no mihashira*, in which he had expressed a desire in the next life to pay respects with his wife before Norinaga’s spirit and to serve him. From there, he visited the Suzunoya academy and met Norinaga’s sons and scholarly successors, Motoori Haruniwa and Ōhira in Matsusaka. Atsutane received from Haruniwa a brush which had been used personally by Norinaga, and Atsutane later used it to write a portion of a polished draft (清書) of his *Koshiden*. Ōhira introduced Atsutane to Norinaga’s posthumous disciple, Ban Nobutomo (1773-1846). The two developed a friendship which later soured, through a series of events which included each accusing the other of plagiarism and dishonest scholarship. From Matsuzaka, Atsutane and his company returned to the Tōkaidō highway, and on the twelfth day, he stopped by Sunpu, before heading home to Edo. On the 19th day of the 11th month, Atsutane finally returned home after an eventful journey which lasted close to four months.

A month after returning from his travels which featured a visit to the imperial court in Kyoto, in the twelfth month of 1823, was appointed instructor to the Yoshida lineage of Shinto priests. Atsutane and his academy developed strong ties with the major schools of Shinto priests:

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126 Hirata Kanetane, *Daigaku kun*, p. 611.
127 A memorial was erected next to Norinaga’s grave on Mount Yamamuro, with the inscription of Atsutane’s *waka* poem, appearing in his *Tama no mihashira* of 1812: “No matter where my corpse may turn into soil, my soul is bound for the resting place of the Old Man” なきがらは 何処の土に なりぬとも 魂は翁のもとに往か なむ’, *Tama no mihashira*, p. 180.
128 Watanabe, p. 65.
129 Hirata Kanetane, *Daigaku kun*, p. 611.
130 Watanabe, p. 109.
the court noble (公家) Yoshida house; and the Shirakawa house, descendants of the Jingikan (Office of Divine Affairs) leader Jingihaku. In 1665, the Tokugawa bakufu granted position and authority to the Yoshida family to control shrines and the priesthood, making it the leading Shinto family for a period, until the eighteenth century when its role and authority which had been high in the Daijōsai or Rite of Great Tasting, following the Rite of Imperial Accession, declined.\(^{131}\) The Yoshidas were court nobles (公家), and conferred deified names and licenses of priesthood (神職の裁許状) mainly to small and mid-sized shrines.\(^{132}\) In 1791 (Kansei 3), they established an office in Edo in an attempt to extend their influence into Eastern Japan, and accordingly, regarded Atsutane in Edo as a key figure for this expansion.

From the latter half of the eighteenth century, the established Yoshida and emerging Shirakawa houses competed for control over shrines and Shinto priests in the Kantō region and Edo, and their rivalry is reflected also in their solicitation of ties with Atsutane and the Hirata academy which expanded increasingly from late-Tokugawa into early-Meiji. Atsutane was appointed instructor for the Yoshida school in the twelfth month of 1823 (Bunsei 6). Kanetane records that Atsutane was appointed by Lord Yoshida of Third Rank 吉田三位殿 to “thoroughly teach the core of Ancient Way studies” to priests of the Yoshida school.\(^{133}\) However, after 1829 (Bunsei 12), Atsutane became distanced from the Yoshida house and moved steadily closer to the Shirakawas, who in 1840 (Tenpō 11), appointed him an instructor for their house.\(^{134}\) Two years after Atsutane’s death in 1845 (Kōka 2), the Shirakawa family conferred upon him the deified name “Kami and Great Man of the August Pillar of the Soul” (神霊真柱大人). Then in 1853 (Kaei 6), the Shirakawas conferred upon the entire Hirata family the deified name “Kami of

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\(^{131}\) Endō, Hirata kokugaku to kinsei shakai, pp. 166-167.
\(^{132}\) Meiji ishin to Hirata kokugaku, p. 29.
\(^{133}\) Hirata Kanetane, Daigaku kun, p. 612.
\(^{134}\) Endō, p. 209, Meiji ishin, p. 30.
generations of the Hirata family” (平田家代々霊神). This official deification of Atsutane, and to a lesser extent the Hirata family, by the Shirakawa house had a major impact on the Ibukinoya’s expansion and religious following by disciples in local communities, as seen in such local communities as the Ina Valley, Akita, and Tsugaru.

In 1840 (Tenpō 11), a bakufu official questioned Atsutane concerning his writings beginning with Tenchō mukyū reki (『天朝無窮暦』), or Eternal Calendar of the Heavenly Court, as well as his social standing. Then, on New Years day in 1841 (Tenpō 12), Atsutane at age 66 was suddenly summoned by a domainal official to the Akita lord’s residence in Edo. He was ordered to cease both his writing activities and publishing, and was expelled from Edo to his native domain of Akita.135 Though Atsutane was startled by these sudden orders, he hurriedly gathered his belongings and left Edo with wife Orise and servant Ichitarō (市太郎), without raising objection.136 Once arriving in Akita, he and Orise lived for a while in the Ōwada family residence in a small room of eight-straw mats. They endured a considerably more meagre lifestyle with strained finances due to a suspension in income from publishing, even compared to their time in Edo when they were never particularly affluent. Then in the fourth month of the following year, Akita domain granted Atsutane a residence in Nakakame (中亀). He died here on the eleventh of the ninth month in 1843 (Tenpō 14). His farewell waka poem (辞世の句) reads:

Omou koto no
Hitotsu mo kami ni
Tsutome oezu
Kyō makaru kana
Atara kono yo wo
Not even one of the things
I wished to complete
before the Gods, was I able.
I may die today
and alas, part from this world.

135 As Watanabe states, the real reasons for and process that led to Atsutane’s expulsion to his native Akita domain are unclear. Watanabe, p. 349.
136 Ibid.
Despite all his achievements in scholarship, and his expounding on the gods and Ancient Way, Atsutane in his last days of illness, expressed personal dissatisfaction and his desire to have accomplished more for the gods. Undoubtedly, he was wishing to return to Edo to resume his writing and publishing.

**Hirata Kokugaku Network: Ibukinoya, Kanetane, Nobutane, and the Disciples**

Even during Atsutane’s lifetime, his adopted son, Hirata Kanetane (銈胤), assisted his father in managing the Hirata academy, publishing, and dealing with the growing discipleship. Kanetane enjoyed scholarship from an early age, and was drawn to Atsutane’s work and took it up. He met Atsutane on the 16th day of the fifth month in 1822 (Bunsei 5), then became his disciple seven days later on the 23rd. Less than two years later, on the seventh day of the fourth month in 1824 (Bunsei 8), Kanetane married Atsutane’s eldest daughter Ochō (おてう).

Kanetane became adopted son and successor to Atsutane, who had lost his two natural sons to early deaths. After Atsutane agreed to adopt Kanetane, family headship of his home went to Kanetane’s younger brother. Kanetane authored *Norito seikun* (『祝詞正訓』), or the *Correct Readings for Norito*. He was ordered to serve in the Kyoto liaison office of Akita domain from the eleventh month of 1862. There, his son Nobtunae met prominent court noble Iwakura Tomomi (1825-1883), then later Kanetane also met Iwakura and gained his favour, with whom he developed strong ties which continued into the Meiji period. Kanetane’s wife Ochō would go on to bear seven children. The support and assistance from the two women, mother Orise and daughter Ochō, were instrumental to their respective husbands Atsutane and Kanetane in their scholarship and management of the Ibukinoya. Ochō was very intelligent, and is known to have
memorized passages from Atsutane’s writings. In her last years, she took on the name of her mother, and became another Orise.

Kanetane’s eldest son was born on the 13th day of the ninth month in 1828 (Bunsei 11), and was named Nobutarō (延太郎), and later renamed Nobutane (延胤). Nobutane carried on the scholarship of his grandfather and father, and during the Meiji Restoration participated in national affairs. Nobutane also played a significant role in Akita domain, which defied the pressure from other Tohoku domains to turn its loyalty toward the Imperial court. He eventually served the Imperial court, and from 1868 (Meiji 1) served as Office of Divine Affairs Jingi officer (神祇権判事), then from the following year as Jingi officer assistant, proselytizer, and reader to the emperor (神祇大祐兼宣教権判官兼侍読). Nobutane died early, before his father, on the 24th of the first month in 1872 (Meiji 5), at age 45, and his death which occurred at a time of sharp decline in disciple enrolment proved to be a blow to the academy by its losing a chief administrator.

Thanks to Kanetane’s and Nobutane’s devotion to their work primarily as administrators for the Ibukinoya, Atsutane, posthumously deified as “Kami and Great Man of the August Pillar of the Soul” (神霊真柱大人), remained recognized as the original teacher and Great Man (大人ushi) of the Ibukinoya even after his death. As his adopted son and successor to the academy, Kanetane acted not as another scholar in his own right, but served primarily to solidify and expand the Ibukinoya academy and its network nationwide. He assisted Atsutane as his secretary, in preparing and editing manuscripts for publication. Kanetane also gathered funds needed to

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137 Watanabe, p. 32.
publish many of Atsutane’s works. Atsutane, Kanetane, and Nobutane traveled from their base in Edo to rural communities to deliver lectures, then recruit disciples from among the audience.

The location of the Hirata academy changed periodically along with the family’s residence. In the spring of 1804 (Bunka 1), Atsutane at age 29 named his house Masugenoya (眞菅乃屋), where he began his medical practice and started lecturing to his students at his residence. From this time he began to attract disciples. In 1807 (Bunka 4), Kanetane records in his timeline that, “for the sake of scholarly work (学業), he took his daughter Chieko and moved residence to a place called Moriyama chō,” located in Kyōbashi (京橋守山町). For the next few years the Hirata family moved multiple times within Kyōbashi. In 1813 (Bunka 10) they changed residence to Kitahachichō hori kajimachi (北八丁堀鍛冶町), and three years later in the spring of 1816 (Bunka 13) the family returned to Kyōbashi in Sanjū ma hori 三十間堀. In the fourth month of 1816 (Bunka 13), Atsutane worshipped at three shrines in Kashima, Katori, and Ikisu (鹿嶋・香取・息栖), and while visiting the Hachiman shrine in Obama village, he discovered the “Stone flute of heaven” (天之石笛). He was moved by this discovery, and his disciples later compiled Amano iwa fue ki (『天之石笛記』) or Records of the Stone Flute of Heaven, and Atsutane was compelled to change the name of his home and academy from Masugenoya to “Ibukinoya” or “House of Divine Breath.” He also took on for himself the name “Daigaku” (rendered as 大角, and later also as 大壑) or Large Horn.

In 1820 (Bunsei 3), the Hirata family next moved to Yushima Tenjin Otoko zaka shita (湯島天神男坂下), where they would remain for 15 years as the Ibukinoya continued to expand.

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139 McNally, p. 211.
141 Hirata Kanetane, Daigaku kun, p. 602.
142 Maita, “Network,” p. 44.
Here they were located in the vicinity of the Neo-Confucian Shōheikō Academy administered by the Hayashi family, descended from Hayashi Razan (1583-1657), and supported by the Bakufu. In the 12th month of 1835 (Tenpō 6), the Hirata family moved their residence from Yushima Tenjin to Negishi Shinden (根岸新田), where Atsutane lived for six years before his expulsion from Edo to Akita. Then in the third month of 1868 (Meiji 1), Kanetane and his wife Orise (Ochō) and their family moved from Edo to Kyoto. The following year in 1869 (Meiji 2), Kanetane returned to Edo, but once again relocated to Kyoto in the 11th month of that year. In the tenth month of 1871 (Meiji 4), Kanetane and his wife received a letter from their daughter-in-law which reported that Nobutane was near death. Concerned for their son, Kanetane and Orise returned to Tokyo, and this following the “Offense against National Affairs Incident,” which proved a major crisis for the academy and heralded its decline that year.

I will now examine some representative local communities of Hirata disciples. By the time of Atsutane’s death in 1843, the Ibukinoya academy had grown throughout Japan with 550 disciples, and the academy expanded in the late-Tokugawa, peaking at 4,283 disciples by the early years of Meiji. A center of Hirata students, Shimōsa province of present-day northern Chiba and Ibaraki prefectures had over 200 enrolled students around the time of the Restoration, and was described by Itō Tasaburō as Atsutane’s most trusted group of disciples. Miyahiro Sadao (1797-1858), who was once disowned by his father for excessive drinking and corruption, later turned himself around into an industrious village headman (nanushi) of Matsuzawa village in Katori district. The self-proclaimed “Potato-digging headman” (芋堀名主) is known for developing new fields, repairing roads, and growing medicinal herbs. Atsutane visited and

143 Watanabe, p. 259, p. 439.
144 Meiji ishin, nenpu, p. 72. I discuss the “Offense against National Affairs Incident” in greater detail in chapter eight.
146 Itō, p. 12.
Lectured in this region in 1816 (Bunka 13), immediately recruiting 44 disciples. Atsutane later sent Kanetane here several times to collect funds for publishing. Prominent figures such as Suzuki Masayuki (鈴木雅之) and Inō Hidenori (伊能穎則) also emerged from this group.

Miyahiro Sadao enrolled in the Hirata academy in 1826 (Bunsei 9) at age 30. During Atsutane’s lifetime, 110 disciples joined from the Shimōsa region, making up roughly one fifth of the total discipleship before the master’s death. The Ibukinoya diary records that Sadao frequently visited the Hirata academy after his enrolment.

From that year, the Hirata family came to publish Sadao’s Nōgyō yōshū (『農業要集』), or Essentials on Agriculture, which teaches agriculturalists about the practice and profitability of planting. This was the first of multiple agricultural manuals the Hirata family published, an enterprise for which Kanetane visited Matsuzawa, and Sadao visited the Ibukinoya. 185 copies of this text were sent to Matsuzawa, and later 337 more by hikyaku carrier. Orders for such agricultural manuals reached as many as several hundred, from among the agricultural communities of Hirata disciples, as was the case with Sōmoku tane erami (sic. 『草木撰種録』), or Records of Plant Seed Selection, which explains plant gender and argues for a large harvest from planting female seeds. As the Hirata family developed its publishing practices, Sadao provided the capital, and also served as facilitator from 1833 for publishing orders which Atsutane accepted. Sadao’s Kokueki honron (『国益本論』), or Thesis on National Profit of 1832, argues for the increase of national profit, the necessity for peasant education in this process, and the importance of revering and worshipping kishin (鬼神) spirits who bring about prosperity, but whose wrath would be incurred when angered, resulting in misfortune. 147

contends that Atsutane popularized *kokugaku* among agriculturalists across rural Japan through “routinizing the Ancient Way,” by connecting the Way and the everyday life of commoners.\footnote{Harootunian, p. 176.} As a result, in his writings and leadership as village head of Matsuzawa, “Miyahiro’s central concern was to find ways to cement the relationship between [divine] service and work.”\footnote{Ibid. p. 297.}

The hotbed of Hirata disciples was Shinano province or present-day Nagano, which had over 630 students. The Ina Valley was an especially good example of *kokugaku*’s penetration into an agricultural village, which was the single largest Hirata disciple community with 386 members.\footnote{Walthall, Anne. “Nativism as a Social Movement: Katagiri Harukazu and the Hongaku reisha,” *Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami*. Eds. John Breen and Mark Teeuwen. Surrey, Great Britain: Curzon Press, 2000. pp. 209-211.} After Commodore Perry’s arrival to Uraga Bay in 1853, Katagiri Harukazu (1818-?), a peasant from Yamabuki domain collected temple bells in hopes of melting them into cannons, and organized and drilled a unit of soldiers of local samurai and peasants. These training sessions would be held monthly into the 1860s. In 1857 (Ansei 4) Harukazu went to Edo to study martial arts, where he met Kanetane and became a Hirata disciple. From 1862, Harukazu began sponsoring locals as new disciples of the academy, eventually leading to the enrolment of 54 total disciples from Yamabuki domain. Harukazu’s study group founded in 1865, the *Mameo no tsudoi*, or “Circle of Sincere Men,” was also instrumental in expanding this disciple community. This study group gathered once a month on the 11th—the day of Atsutane’s passing—to worship his portrait, hold a festival, recite prayers, then discuss and debate on the ancient Way and read the Master’s works.\footnote{Itō 1982, p. 219.} Anne Walthall demonstrates how Hirata *kokugaku* was closely linked with military preparedness in late-Tokugawa Yamabuki domain. The Ina Valley disciples are

“国益の本もとは教道にあり。天下の人民立てば、鬼神之に感じて、民に福を下す。苟いやしくも人民道に乖そむば、鬼神之に怒て、民に禍を下す。’”\footnote{訳　人民道に乖ければ、鬼神之に怒て、民に禍を下す。’}
also responsible for launching the publication of *Koshiden*, or *Lectures on Ancient history*, Atsutane’s *magnum opus*. Furthermore, Harukazu led the erecting of the *Hongaku reisha* shrine in 1867 which worshipped the four “great men” of *kokugaku*, Kada no Azumamaro, Kamo no Mabuchi, Norinaga, and Atsutane.

Walthall narrates the fascinating story of how Matsuo Taseko (1811-1894), a highly-educated peasant woman from the Ina Valley, participated in the politics of *sonnō jōi* (revere the emperor and expel the barbarians). Taseko was one of only twenty-nine female disciples in the Hirata academy, and the combination of her high-level education and notable socio-historical circumstances make her life and thought invaluable for its insights offered on the Meiji Restoration. As Walthall puts succinctly, “Poetry had given her a voice, national affairs gave her a subject, and the Hirata school gave her an institutional framework within which to be heard.”

Akita domain—Atsutane’s hometown and place of exile late in life—also became the site of a major Hirata disciple community, known to have provided considerable financial support to the main school, especially for publishing, through book purchases and donations. Roughly 330 disciples from Akita had enrolled in the academy by 1872 (Meiji 5), with over 60 of them enrolling before Atsutane’s death in 1843 (Tenpō 14), and another 265 following his death. Ōtomo Naoe (大友直枝／吉言) became the first person from Akita to enrol as a disciple in Edo in 1812 (Bunka 9) and became the 39th disciple overall to register with the academy. Naoe was a Shinto priest of multiple shrines in Kimura, Hachizawa, Hiraka County (平鹿郡八沢木村) in Akita domain. Naoe studied in the Motoori school and with Imperialist scholar Gamō Kunpei

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156 These shrines were:  元式内社, 波宇志別神社, 塩湯彦神社
(蒲生君平 1768-1813), with his tuition subsidized by the Akita dominal lord Satake Yoshimasa (佐竹義和 1775-1815). Trained in kokugaku, Naoe was an instructor of Japanese studies (和学) at the Satake dominal school Meitokukan (明徳館), training students in that institution as well as other Shinto priests. Kirihara Yoshio describes Naoe’s relationship with Atsutane as one of peers, more than master-disciple, based on their correspondence. Both Atsutane and Naoe were disciples of Norinaga as well as physicians, Naoe being an optometrist. A head of shrine households (社家大頭) in Akita, Naoe carried out administrative responsibilities within the local priesthood, and wielded considerable influence in the local Shinto community.

The second person from Akita to become Atsutane’s disciple was one of the most prominent individuals among the Hirata disciples—Satō Nobuhiro (佐藤信淵 1769-1850). Nobuhiro was born in Nishimonai, Ogachi county in Dewa province, and was active as an economic strategist (経世家) through the first half of the 19th century. When he was young he traveled the northern provinces of Mutsu and Dewa, and Kantō region with his father. Following his father’s death, in 1784 (Tenmei 4) Nobuhiro went to Edo where he studied Dutch Learning, astronomy, geography, calendar making, mathematics, and Confucianism, and afterwards pursued further travels and study, becoming active, especially in writing on military strategy and national defence. Becoming Atsutane’s disciple in 1829 (Bunka 12) was a decisive step in Nobuhiro’s scholarly career, as he would be influenced by the kokugaku thought of his teacher. That same year, he sought further instruction in Shinto by becoming a disciple of

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157 Gamō Kunpei was an imperialist scholar, born in Utsunomiya, who surveyed imperial tombs and based on this compiled Sanryō shi (『山陵史』 History of Imperial Tombs)
158 Kirihara, p. 40.
160 Ibid. p. 602.
Yoshikawa Genjūrō (吉川源十郎). During the Bunsei era (1818-30), Nobuhiro wrote most of his major works, Keizai yōroku (『経済要録』The Essence of Economics), Kondō hisaku (『混同秘策』Confidential Plan of World Unification), Tenchūki (『天柱記』Record of the Heavenly Pillar), Yōzō kaikuron (『鎔造化育論』Essays on Creation and Cultivation), and Nōsei honron (『農政本論』The Essentials of Agricultural Politics). Nobuhiro addressed major problems of his day, related to agriculture, economy, politics, and security through his writing. Influenced by Atsutane’s Tama no mihashira, Motoori Norinaga’s Kojikiden, and Hattori Nakatsune’s Sandaikō, Nobuhiro’s kokugaku writings such as Tenchūki assert his ideas on cosmology and on the divine will of Musubi gods shaping the study of agro-politics.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I offered a biographical sketch on Hirata Atsutane’s life, while outlining his thought and major works. In preparation for my discussion on Hirata kokugaku’s reception in Hirosaki by the Tsugaru group of disciples, and their activities and intellectual engagement, I highlighted in Atsutane’s life and thought, some important features that find parallel in the case of the disciples in Tsugaru. In the early years of his scholarship from 1805 through to 1820, Atsutane formulated his views on spirits, spirituality, and the invisible spiritual realm of kakuriyo, through such works as Shin kishinron and Kishin shinron and Tama no mihashira, drawing on ideas of Norinaga and Hattori Nakatsune. Shortly thereafter, Atsutane followed this up with ethnographic works based on commoners’ accounts of the spirit world, in Senkyō ibun in 1821 and Katsugorō saiseiki in 1822, as if to confirm his theories on eschatology and cosmology with the cases of real life informants.
Atsutane who was a native of Akita domain, Dewa province in northeastern Honshū, was conscious of the north in his scholarship. This is evident in his awareness of the threat from Russia on national security through the island of Ezo, as demonstrated through his *Chishima no shiranami*, as well as his Russian language study materials. One can also see that Atsutane’s memories of local culture and language in Akita and the north assist him in understanding ancient history and the divine age as examined in some of his seminal texts. Furthermore, Atsutane’s religious tendency added strong elements of religious thought and practice to *kokugaku* scholarship. A good example of this is his *norito* liturgy, the *Maiasa shinshaishiki*, his most published and widely disseminated document, which served as a medium for transmitting the religiosity of Hirata *kokugaku* to disciple communities throughout the country.

I offered a general overview of the administration of the Ibukinoya academy by Atsutane and his son Kanetane, and grandson Nobutane, as well as an introduction to representative disciple communities in Shimōsa, Shinano, and Akita. I will now proceed to my discussion of Hirata *kokugaku* and the Tsugaru disciples, and demonstrate their parallels with Atsutane, as outlined above, and will characterize and orient the Tsugaru group within the larger Hirata discipleship.
Chapter 3  Hirata *kokugaku* in Hirosaki Domain

Overview

The previous chapter examined the life and thought of Hirata Atsutane, his academy, the Ibukinoya, its posthumous succession by Kanetane and Nobutane, and some representative communities of Hirata disciples throughout Japan. In order to provide socio-historical context for my discussion of Hirata *kokugaku* in Hirosaki domain, the present chapter begins with an outline of the history of this domain in late-Tokugawa times, examining developments and changes in economy, military defence, society, education, and religion. I introduce Tsuruya Ariyo and detail his role as leader and manager of the Tsugaru group which forms around him from 1857. I document the group’s pursuit of poetry and Hirata *kokugaku*, book purchases, and interactions with Kanetane and Nobutane in the Ibukinoya and other Hirata disciples. This group is also compared to Hirata disciple communities in neighbouring Akita and Morioka domains. Furthermore, I identify an autonomous nature among this group, centered around Ariyo and other townspeople pursuing poetry, as well as religious practice as a strong element of their activities.

History of Late-Tokugawa Hirosaki Domain

Hirosaki domain made up the northwestern part of Mutsu province in premodern times, and occupies the western region of current-day Aomori prefecture, positioned at the northernmost tip of Honshū, the main island of Japan. From the Tokugawa period (1600-1867)
until the present day, agriculture has been at the centre of the Hirosaki economy. There were four major ports in Hirosaki: Tosa, Fukaura, Ajigasawara, and Aomori, and with the exception of Aomori, all of them face the Sea of Japan. Accordingly, the domain traded primarily along the western route, “nishimawari,” leading to Osaka and Kyoto, as opposed to the eastern route, “higashimawari,” leading to Edo. The major waterway separating Hirosaki from the northern island of Ezo, present-day Hokkaido, is the Tsugaru Strait, referred to from ancient times as the “path of the sea” (umi no michi). The Ushū highway (羽州街道), the major highway of the Mutsu Dewa provinces of the northeastern region in premodern times, also ran through Hirosaki. Typically, this region including Tsugaru plain, an area surrounding Mount Iwaki (1,625 metres), experiences short summers and long cold winters, and because of its position situated on the Japan Sea coast, receives large amounts of rain and snowfall.

Hirosaki domain (弘前藩) is commonly referred to as Tsugaru domain (津軽藩) or Tsugaru territory (津軽領), after the family that established control over the region in the late sixteenth century and successively ruled the domain throughout the Tokugawa period. According to Tsugaru records, Tsugaru Tamenobu (1550-1607), a descendant of the Fujiwara family, claimed authority over the Tsugaru plain, waging a battle to wrest control from the rival daimyo house, the Nanbu family. From 1571 to 1585, Tamenobu managed to drive the Nanbu from

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161 While I focus my discussions in this paper on agriculture to the latter half of the Tokugawa period, it should be noted the Hirosaki region has a rich history of rice cultivation. The 1981 excavations of the Tareyanagi remains uncovered irrigated rice paddies from the Yayoi period (fourth century BCE to third century CE), two millennia ago, believed to have been the northernmost rice fields from that era. The discovery of rice and farming tools from the ninth to tenth centuries, suggests rice cultivation was also practiced during the Heian period (794-1185). Hasegawa Seiichi. Tsugaru Matsumae to umi no michi. Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2001. pp. 54-56,60.
165 Ibid.
166 Ibid. 116. The records of the Nambu house tell a different story: Tsugaru Tamenobu had belonged to the Nanbu line, and left his family because of conflicts with his older brother. Tamenobu is depicted as a defector and his actions are not lauded. Ibid. p. 117.
major castles in the region, and by 1585, many vassals from Nanbu defected to the Tsugaru house. In 1589, Tamenobu aligned himself with the powerful warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537-1598), and a year later was awarded the family name Tsugaru, and given control of three districts of Tsugaru plain. Tamenobu’s association with Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542-1616), first shogun of the Tokugawa regime, helped to advance his position and landholdings.

At the Battle of Sekigahara of 1600, the Tsugaru house, originally a vassal of Hideyoshi, supported Ieyasu and fought alongside Ieyasu’s Eastern Army, contributing to its victory. Thereafter, Ieyasu awarded Tamenobu, a formal investiture (omotedaka) of 47,000 koku of land, and the Tsugaru daimyo were classified as tozama “outside” lords, because they were not originally vassals of the Tokugawa, but fought for Ieyasu at Sekigahara.\(^\text{167}\) The Tsugaru clan’s support for Ieyasu and the Eastern Army can be confirmed through Sekigahara kassen byōbu, the magnificent eight-fold screens of the battle, given in 1610 by Ieyasu to his adopted daughter, as part of her dowry before giving her away in marriage to Tsugaru Nobuhira.\(^\text{168}\) In 1805, the Tokugawa shogunate increased the Tsugaru clan’s land holding to 70,000 koku, and to 100,000 koku in 1808, although the domain’s actual holdings in 1700 reached almost 300,000 koku.\(^\text{169}\) The increases in 1805 and 1808 were the shogunate’s rewards to Hirosaki domain for its military service in defending Ezo against the Russians.

The arrival in 1792 of a Russian envoy led by Lieutenant Adam Laxman (1766-1806) to Nemuro in Ezo (current-day Hokkaido) marks an important step in the modernization process for northern Japan and Hirosaki domain. Lieutenant Laxman came to Nemuro seeking trade relations with Japan, and in the fifth month of the following year, the Tokugawa shogunate sent

\(^{167}\) Ibid. A koku is a unit used for measuring rice grains, amounting to roughly 180 litres. Land during premodern times was measured, not in area, but by its agricultural yield.


\(^{169}\) Ravina, p. 117.
inspectors (*metsuke*), Ishikawa Tadafusa and Murakami Yoshiyaya to meet with the Russian envoy. The daimyo of Matsumae domain in Ezo, representing the shogunate, rejected Laxman’s request, stating that trade was only conducted through Nagasaki and issued a permit for a Russian vessel to enter Nagasaki port. The shogunate ordered Morioka (also known as Nanbu) and Hirosaki domains to dispatch troops and provide security for this meeting between the Matsumae daimyo and Edo inspectors and Russian envoy, and so Morioka sent 379 men, while Hirosaki sent 281. Then expanding the role of the two domains further, the shogunate in the eleventh month of 1799, ordered Morioka and Hirosaki to provide security for East Ezo, through stationing troops in Hakodate, which would include two or three administrators and 500 foot soldiers (*ashigaru*). Furthermore, it is from 1804 that the shogunate ordered Morioka and Hirosaki domains to carry out the long-term security of East Ezo.

In the following year, the Tokugawa shogunate and northern domains faced their first test on the northern island and were given a scare that alarmed local residents of the threats from the north. In 1805, Nikolai Rezanov (1764-1807), director of the new Russo-American company, arrived in Nagasaki with the permit issued by the shogunate to Laxman, and demanded to the shogunate the opening up of commercial relations. These demands were flatly rejected. Angered by the Tokugawa regime’s hard policy, Russian officers in subsequent years led retaliatory raids on Japanese posts in Etorofu and Ezo, which were met with fire from Japanese cannons along the Hirosaki coast toward the oncoming Russians. The Russians then countered...
with the most technologically advanced firearms, causing the capsizing of Japanese ships. 700 died on the Japanese side. These events starting from Rezanov’s arrival in Nagasaki to the conflicts in Ezo and Hirosaki have been called the “Black ship incident of the north,” by Hasegawa Seiichi, who compares them to the arrival of U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry to Urage Bay in Edo in 1853, which pressured the Tokugawa shogunate to abandon their sakoku (isolationist) policy, and eventually open up the country to commercial and diplomatic relations with the West.\textsuperscript{176} Despite Hirosaki’s relative distance from Edo, its inhabitants from early on in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were exposed to warnings of impending invasion from Europeans and Americans. The dangers posed by security tasks were not limited to military conflict alone. The harsh winter conditions of the region and poor food supply leading to malnutrition were in many cases just as fatal factors as the battles, if not more. Many casualties resulted from working in Ezo security, bringing hardship to those assigned soldiers.\textsuperscript{177}

In return for their services of security in Ezo, the Tsugaru daimyo received two-month reductions in the sankin kōtai, alternate attendance travels to Edo.\textsuperscript{178} In 1822, the shogunate transferred defense of Ezo from Hirosaki to Matsumae domain in Ezo, but still required Hirosaki to maintain a hundred soldiers for dispatch in situations of emergency.\textsuperscript{179} Thereafter, in order to defend its own coastline, Hirosaki domain prepared naval fortifications, purchasing hundreds of guns and cannons, and even attempted small-scale manufacturing of arms. The financial burden of military modernization grew heavy, and the government eventually passed the burden onto its retainers: in 1864, the domain issued an order to retainers receiving stipends over 100 koku to provide a gun for every 100 koku of income. In this way, Japan’s encounters with the Russians in

\textsuperscript{176} Hasegawa, *Hirosaki han*. p. 155.
\textsuperscript{177} Ibid. pp. 159-60.
\textsuperscript{178} Ravina. p. 152.
\textsuperscript{179} Ibid.
1792 and 1805, and subsequent military confrontations forced the bakufu as well as local
domains assigned to the security mission to become aware and vigilant of imposing threats.
Maruyama Masao has argued, “This movement for coastal defense or kaibōron was simply the
first step in the emergence of a premodern nationalism.”180

I shall next discuss the changing demographics of Hirosaki domain and the challenges the
local leaders faced in balancing domaiall finances. Throughout the Tokugawa period, the
Tsugaru family maintained a band of vassals on a proportionately small peasant population.181
Mark Ravina, who has compared the demographics and political leadership in Yonezawa,
Hirosaki, and Tokushima domains, cites data from the early Meiji period that indicates in
Hirosaki 4,338 retainers were supported by a commoner population of 229,006, equal to 1.89
retainer stipends supported by every 100 commoners.182 This ratio was lower than in Yonezawa
(6.77), but higher than in Tokushima (1.06). While these figures represent the demographics of a
relatively stable period after 1868, there were times of instability during the Tokugawa years
when this demographic balance was strained.

In the second half of the Tokugawa period, Japan suffered two major famines caused by
natural disaster: the Tenmei famine of the 1780s and the Tenpō famine of the 1830s. The Tenpō
famine resulted from unusually cold weather and strong rains that destroyed crops throughout the
countryside.183 Hirosaki was especially hard-hit by the Tenpō famine, as peasant starvation and
flight caused major depopulation. According to reports of the famine, in 1831, the year preceding
the start of the Tenpō famine, tax revenue collected by the domain amounted to 156,500 koku,

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182 Ibid.
183 Ibid. p. 147.
but two years later plummeted to 22,323 koku, one-seventh the original figure.\textsuperscript{184} Over a seven-year period from 1832 to 1838, 35,616 people died in Hirosaki and another 47,043 left the domain and fled to other places.\textsuperscript{185} Such a sharp demographic plunge, a decline in population of over 80,000 people, posed great challenges for the Tsugaru regime.

The Tsugaru regime was well aware that fluctuations in commoner population affected the domain’s finances, and so throughout the Tokugawa period, it made efforts to increase the agriculturalist population, including resettling samurai as farm workers and inviting immigrants from other regions.\textsuperscript{186} Maintaining a large agricultural population was a priority in Hirosaki politics. Rice grain production remained the largest source of revenue, both consumed locally and exported, while grains and lumber were also major exports.\textsuperscript{187} From early to late 19th century, the government in Hirosaki continued to encourage high grain production, because it could not rely on commercial taxes due to underdeveloped commodity products. In 1815, taxes exacted on crafts and industries other than sake totalled less than one percent of the domain’s income, and despite government promotion, Tsugaru nuri, a famous local lacquerware, collected limited revenue.

As Ravina has described, Hirosaki domain’s efforts at stabilizing its finances were based primarily on increasing population and food grain production, namely through large-scale shinden kaihatsu or the development of new agricultural fields, on a level unprecedented in Japan under Tokugawa rule.\textsuperscript{188} Over the duration of the Tokugawa period, Hirosaki domain

\textsuperscript{184} The following year in 1834, revenue stabilized again at 158,256 koku, but in 1836 and 1838, figures peaked in the 40,000 koku range, about one-third, and never reached 100,000 in the other years. Hasegawa, \textit{Hirosaki han}. p. 209.

\textsuperscript{185} Fleeing the domain was merely one expression of commoner dissatisfaction with the conditions in Hirosaki. Protest through breaking and damaging of property (uchikowashi) occurred in Aomori town, against wealthy farmers, merchants, and town officials who hoarded grain and were considered the root of the fiscal problems. There was also distrust toward the lavish personal spending by the daimyo. Ibid. pp. 209, 211-12.

\textsuperscript{186} Ravina, 1999. p. 118.

\textsuperscript{187} Ibid. p. 119.

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid. p. 120.
increased its number of villages as well as percentage of arable land many times over. While in 1600, there were 133 villages in the domain producing 47,000 koku, a cadastral survey in 1872 reveals these numbers multiplied to 836 villages yielding 340,000 koku: the domain’s arable land rose 623%, while the number of villages increased by 528%. Many of these land reclamation projects were responding also to the aforementioned crop failures and famines, namely of the 1780s and 1830s. As Hashimoto Hitoshi describes, while many domains during the Kansei Reforms (1787 to 1793) mobilized samurai to work the land, Hirosaki was the only one to fully implement this policy of employing samurai labour in land development and reclamation. This was a defining characteristic of Hirosaki’s rigorous efforts to increase agricultural production and stabilize samurai’s finances.

While Hirosaki inhabitants had experienced the “Black ship incident of the north” in the early 19th century, news of the arrival of U.S. “black ships” into Uraga Bay in 1853, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, nonetheless created a stir among the Hirosaki populace. Even in the late-Tokugawa period, information traveled quickly, as Kanagiya Matasaburō (金木屋又三郎), a successful merchant living in the suburbs of the castle town, wrote of this event in his journal days after it happened. After the shogunate signed peace treaties with the U.S. and England, in the twelfth month of 1853, it also signed a treaty with Russia, officially opening relations with

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189 Ibid.
191 Ravina also gives a detailed account of the reform measures taken to control the excessive personal expenses of the daimyo. The domain’s debt rose considerably, with the daimyo’s expenditures comprising a third of the domain’s budget by 1815, during the reigns of the ninth and tenth daimyo, Tsugaru Yasuchika (r. 1791-1825), for his efforts at promotion to court chamberlain (jijū) aided by his retainer Kasahara Hachirōbei, and his son Tsugaru Nobuyuki (r. 1825-1839), who spent recklessly on entertainment: women, food, and clothing, particularly on his sankin kōtai excursions to Edo. Efforts at reform were put down, until the reign of the eleventh daimyo, Tsugaru Yukitsugu (r. 1839-1859), who carried out an extensive reform program and exercised frugality on both a personal and public level. Ibid. Ravina, pp. 147-50.
192 Hasegawa, Hirosaki han, p. 215.
that country. Shortly afterwards, the shogunate placed all of Ezo under its jurisdiction, establishing the Hakodate magistrate in 1854, and in the following year, assigned the task of Ezo security to the domains of Sendai, Morioka, Akita, Hirosaki, Aizu, and Tsuruoka. In this way, Commodore Perry’s arrival, representing a watershed moment in the historiography on Japan’s modernization, proved to be an event of national and regional significance, as Hirosaki domain’s responsibility increased in issues of national security.

As with much of the country, the opening of nearby ports contributed to commercial development in Hirosaki domain. In the third month of 1854, the Japan-U.S. Treaty of Kanagawa was signed, opening the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate. Four years later in 1858, the signing of the Japan-U.S. Treaty of Amity and Commerce ultimately opened ports in Hakodate, Kanagawa, Nagasaki, Niigata, and Hyōgo, along with the cities of Edo and Osaka to foreign trade. Not only were Hirosaki and Morioka fulfilling the security mission in Ezo, they were also placed in charge of providing provisions and material supplies to Hakodate and Ezo, while merchants from Aomori, Hirosaki, and Noheji were assigned to work for the Hakodate magistrate. In 1856, the shogunate had assigned successful merchants of Aomori town as purveyors to promote future travel and trade between Hakodate and Aomori.

During this time, kelp (kombu), cooked sardines, dried abalone, and dried cuttlefish constituted the main exports traded out of Hakodate. The Hakodate magistrate sought, above all else, rice in large quantities from Aomori. Merchant Kanagiya Matasaburō recorded the arrival of American ships into the Hakodate port, and owned maps of the port town that included

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193 Ibid.
194 Ibid. In order to fund this very costly security mission, the shogunate assigned each of the domains to a section of land in Ezo, and profits from the land served as revenue.
195 Ibid. p. 217.
196 Ibid. p. 218.
images of foreign ships as well as English writing. Hasegawa observes that Kanagiya showed great interest towards foreign countries, and further notes that as Kanagiya and other merchants began to see Americans and Europeans as trade partners and not mere enemies, their prejudices toward them also declined gradually. It was these capitalist merchants who were most receptive to open trade and interaction with foreigners, more than the farmers who were bound to the land, or the samurai to the Tokugawa authority.

While the treaties with Western countries and official opening of ports contributed to the rise of commercial activity, this point should not be oversimplified. Commerce and trade around the Tsugaru Straits were conducted with China, as well as domestically within Japan since ancient times, and was already well-developed in the early half of the Tokugawa period. Herring fishing in Ezo and Hirosaki had grown into a large industry. Since the Genroku period (1688-1704) when the shogunate promoted increased consumer production, dried fish became a popular commodity. Herring came to be used widely as fertilizer for agriculture, with rising levels of both demand and supply, and the Esashi region of Ezo entered its most prosperous period of production, attracting labourers in herring fishing from Hirosaki, Morioka, and Akita, who came known to be “Yan-shū (ヤン衆).” It is estimated that in 1849, about 1,400 residents of Hirosaki domain traveled to the herring-rich area of Matsumae, and after the opening of Hakodate port in 1854, many women also crossed the Tsugaru Strait to work in Hakodate and Esashi in food preparation, dining services, and prostitution. Nevertheless, such records suggest

197 Ibid. pp. 219-20.
198 Ibid. p. 220.
200 Hasegawa, Hirosaki han. p. 191.
201 Ibid.
that while there was an active fishing industry and business before the opening of the ports, the process was sped up considerably in 1854.

Characteristic of politics and commercial activity in the Tokugawa period, efforts were made to control migrant labourers in the 1860s. While large volumes of herring were fished in both Ezo and Hirosaki, the fact that a large percentage of Hirosaki inhabitants were crossing over to Ezo for commercial activity caused concern for domainal officials. During the eighth month of 1864, it is reported that 644 men and 492 women (a total of 1136) from the towns of Hirosaki were working as migrant laborers in Ezo, comprising 7.3% of the population of the domain.\(^{202}\)

The domainial leaders attempted to limit the number of residents traveling to Ezo as migrant workers for three main reasons: (1) the domain needed to secure enough residents to deploy for naval defense; (2) they feared that many migrant workers adopted bad habits of pleasure-seeking while outside their domain, which they would carry back home and influence hard-working peasants; and (3) they were also concerned that those going to Matsumae would carry their own rice which would become commodities for smuggling, causing an increase in local rice prices.\(^{203}\)

In this way, we see that commercial development in Hirosaki owed to stimulation and activity both domestically and from abroad, through the abandonment of the sakoku isolationist policy and opening of Japan’s ports to the West.

Education and scholarship in the Hirosaki domain, were supported generously by the fourth daimyo, Tsugaru Nobumasa (津軽信政 1646-1710), who ruled from the late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries. Nobumasa was a daimyo known for his enthusiasm for learning, and expended considerable energy and resources on studies of Confucianism and military science (heigaku), believing a ruler should be educated and disciplined in order to fulfill his

\(^{202}\) Ibid. p. 195.
\(^{203}\) Ibid. pp. 196-97.
Nobumasa invited Confucian scholar and military strategist, Yamaga Sokō (山鹿素行 1622-85), and other prominent scholars to lecture in his domain, and supported the education of samurai in both literary and military ways (bunbu ryōdō), and from his reign, lectures inside the castle (jōchū kōshaku) became a tradition in the domain, albeit irregularly. In the tenth month of 1794, Hirosaki domain issued an official notice concerning the establishment of a new school, as preparation and construction had already begun on a 26,400-square-metre lot just outside the gates of Hirosaki castle. During the rule of ninth daimyo Tsugaru Yasuchika (津軽寧親 1765-1833), on the ninth day of the seventh month of 1796, an opening ceremony marked the inauguration of the new school, Keikokan (稽古館). The new school stimulated education among the daimyo’s vassals, as well as among commoners. Subjects taught here ranged from Confucianism (Four Books and Five Classics), military science, history, law, astronomy, writing, and general martial arts. The school began with 300 students, grouped by age: over age 20, over 15, and over eight.

In 1799, due to the domain’s security duties in Ezo security and the resulting strain on domainal finances, funding for this school fell drastically, and in 1808 the Keikokan was once closed, and was replaced with a school set up within the castle. Subjects became limited to Confucianism, mathematics, and writing, and there was a drastic decline in lectures and lecturers. In 1858, a medical school was reopened, and in 1862 a vaccination hall was set up. In 1859, a

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204 Nobumasa enrolled as a disciple in Confucianist Yamaga Sokō’s (1622-1685) school and took up studies in Ancient Learning (kogaku), inviting Sokō to give lectures in Hirosaki. In 1670, Nobumasa also enrolled as a student of Yoshikawa Koretaru (1616-1694) a Shintō scholar and founder of Yoshikawa Shintō. Ibid. p. 80.
205 Ibid. p. 173.
206 The following year in 1797, another school, Kōdōkan, was established in Hirosaki domain’s quarters in Edo for the domain’s samurai and their children residing there. Ibid.
207 Ibid. p. 174.
lecture hall for Dutch Learning (Rangaku) was established, and from as early as 1866, studies of the English language were also incorporated into the education. While the main objective of the Keikokan was the education of retainers’ children, the school also produced its own “Keikokan calendar” and published many books.\footnote{Ibid. pp. 174-75.}

Hirosaki was a place of diverse religious belief and practice, and much of this centered on Mount Iwaki—an object of worship and sacred site for pilgrimage. Visible from anywhere in the Tsugaru region, Mount Iwaki from ancient times has been reverently and affectionately called “O Iwaki sama” (お岩木様) or “O yama” (お山).\footnote{Ibid., p. 184.} Mount Iwaki Shrine (岩木山神社 Iwaki san jinja) has been a prominent shrine where the holy mountain was worshipped. Shugendō ascetic training has been practiced in connection with Mount Iwaki.\footnote{Ellen Schattschneider has produced a very insightful ethnographical study on mountain asceticism and Akakura Mountain Shrine on the lower slope of Akakura Mountain—the north-east face of Mount Iwaki—based on her anthropological fieldwork in Aomori. Ellen Schattschneider. Immortal Wishes: Labor and Transcendance on a Japanese Sacred Mountain. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.} From premodern times, agriculturalists determined when to begin planting crops, based on the amount of snow on Mount Iwaki’s summit, while fishermen looked to the mountain to orient themselves on the coastal waters and carried on board an ofuda (お札) or talisman from Mount Iwaki Shrine for protection.\footnote{Moriyama Taitarō. Nihon no minzoku, Aomori. Daiichi hōki shuppan, 1972. p. 167.}

Buddhism was widespread in the region, and bodhisattva statues of Kannon (Avalokitesvara) and Jizō (Ksitigarbha) were worshipped by individuals regardless of their faith.\footnote{Hasegawa, Hirosaki han, p. 182.} In the Tsugaru region, commoners took part in pilgrimages to visit 33 holy sites (reijō) set up in various places, and the main focus of worship was the Kannon. Pilgrimages were conducted outside the domain as well. The Ise pilgrimage was popular throughout Japan,
attracting participants from even the Tohoku region and there even existed a Shikoku circuit of 88 holy sites based on Shingon Buddhist tradition. Furthermore, Hirosaki residents crossed over into Morioka domain to partake in Shugendō mountain climbing, and many ventured out of the domain to visit various temples and shrines. A myriad of deities, including those from Buddhist and Shintō traditions were widely worshipped, making for a diverse cosmology of various divinities in the region.

In the late years of Tokugawa rule, arose a sense of fear and distrust toward the current government, and commoners called for change through Yonaoshi movements to “change the world.” After the Hakodate port was opened in 1854, many locals feared foreign invasion and unstable market prices for rice. Increasingly, rice was imported into the domain at low prices, while contrastingly, locally-produced rice rose to five times its usual price. Other disturbing incidents included a large-scale destructive fire in Ohama, a monk’s arrest for allegedly poisoning water in a communal well, peasants expressing displeasure at the samurai of the domain, and many murders. On the 15th of the seventh month in 1867, many dancers barged into a merchant’s shop and caused riots, one of many attacks on merchants’ businesses, presumably linked to “eejanaika” commoners’ uprisings in 1867. As Hasegawa observes, the act of a mass of people dancing and attacking wealthy merchants, resembles the Yonaoshi movements nationwide, save for the plaques that were seen in other parts of Japan but absent in Hirosaki during this time.

215 Ibid. p. 221.
216 Ibid. pp. 221-22.
217 Ibid. p. 223.
Tsuruya Ariyo and the Tsugaru Disciples

Having outlined major changes and developments in Hirosaki domain toward the end of the Tokugawa period, I now examine the beginnings of Hirata kokugaku in Hirosaki domain. In 1820 (Bunsei 3), the ninth daimyo Tsugaru Yasuchika, made a formal request to Atsutane to give lectures in Edo. Atsutane expressed great joy at this gesture in a letter to his disciple and father-in-law, Yamazaki Atsutoshi, a wealthy merchant from Koshigaya in Musashino province:

As I have made you listen all too much to hardships, I will also let you hear of pleasant matters. There was a request from Lord Tsugaru in Edo to give a lecture. This is an extremely joyous thing.

Atsutane in this letter to trusted disciple Atsutoshi expresses his joy in receiving this request from the Tsugaru daimyo. Atsutane continues on in the letter to express his pride and joy that Lord Naitō, Lord of Suo (Suo no kami) urged him to write on the “meaning of Ancient Learning” (古学の趣意), and that the Lord of Mito, Lord of Etchū, Hanawa, Shōheikō Academy head Hayashi Daigaku no kami and others elsewhere highly esteemed his Koshi chō kaidaiki (『古史徴開題記』), or Meaning of Ancient History Commentary, stating that these praises are “truly good evaluations from the realm.” Watanabe notes Atsutane’s pleased reaction to the

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218 While I focus here on the beginnings of Hirata kokugaku in Hirosaki domain, there are other examples of individuals from the domain studying kokugaku. Mayama Sukemasa (間山祐真 1763-1825) was a domainal samurai sent on domainal order to Kyoto to study kokugaku under Hino Sueki. Sukemasa returned to the domain and served as assistant head (添学頭) of the Keikokan domainal academy. He authored Tsugaru gun chūko hi zu kō (『津軽郡中古碑図考』). Kariya Ekisai (狩谷棭斎 1775-1835) was a notable kokugaku and textual scholar (考証学) with roots in Hirosaki domain, though active primarily in Edo. Ekisai studied under Motoori Norinaga in Matsuzaka, and is known for his investigations and commentaries on classical texts. He authored such works as Senchū Wamyō ruishō shō (『箋注倭名類聚鈔』) and Nihon ryōiki kōshō (『日本霊異記攷証』).


220 Ibid.
favourable evaluations of his works, many of which were published in 1820, the year he wrote this letter.

The *Ibukinoya journal* (*Ibukinoya niki*) records continued activity between Atsutane and the Hirosaki authorities. The entry for the 23rd day of the fifth month records, “For the first time, visited Lord Tsugaru of Hirosaki, Minister of the Western Capital Offices, Yasuchika (HIrosaki kō Tsugaru ukyō no daifu Yasuchika), of Honjo (本所) in Edo accompanied by Ishihara Kisaemon (Head of Hanawa Hokiichi’s academy, Ishihara Masaaki).” The journal records two days later on the 25th: “Offered two packages of *Seibun* and *Chō* to Lord Tsugaru.” As Nakagawa Kazuaki points out, the same journal records that letters and payment for these books were received from Lord Tsugaru’s officials in the following month. So we see that from 1820, Atsutane had dealings with Tsugaru Yasuchika who, in 1796, had opened the domainal school Keikokan and strongly supported domainal education. This was the first of a number of significant instances where Hirosaki domainal authorities demonstrated interest in Hirata *kokugaku*, and later examples will be discussed in the following chapters.

I now proceed to trace the early formation of the Hirata disciple community in Hirosaki domain. Townsperson, poet, and scholar Tsuruya Ariyo (鶴舎有節 1808-71), whose original name was Takeda Itsuyoshi (武田乙吉), was the first from Hirosaki domain to register as a Hirata disciple in 1857 (Ansei 4). From a young age, Ariyo served the house of the wealthy merchant of Hirosaki castle town, Ikō Hachitarō (伊香八太郎). Ariyo studied *haikai* poetry, writing, and Chinese writings every night from the prominent local *haikai* poet Utsumi Sōha (内海 草坂 1761-1837). It was under Sōha’s tutelage, that Ariyo met his lifelong friend and

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221 Seibun and Chō refer to *Koshi seibun* and *Koshi chō*, respectively.
scholarly peer Hirao Rosen. After Sōha died, Ariyo learned from Mitsuya Kubutsu (三谷句仏).

Ariyo became a prominent poet of three-verse, 17-syllable haikai and five-verse, 31-syllable waka poetry. He produced numerous haikai and waka collections, including such printed haikai collections as Kamikaze chō (『かみかせ帖』 Book of Divine Wind), Haikai shūyōshū shohen (『俳諧拾葉集初編』 Haikai Collection First Volume), Renku tsuke ai haikai shūyōshū (『連句付合俳諧拾葉集』 Linked Verse and Haikai Collection), Hana senfu (『花せんふ』 Flower Collection), Hana no i shū (『華廼井集』 Flower Well Collection), and Hō shinshū (『芳新集』 New Collection of Fragrances). His Iwaki san sanbyaku shu (『岩木山三百首』 Three Hundred Poems of Mount Iwaki) gathers three hundred waka poems on Mount Iwaki, which I discuss in greater detail in chapter six.

According to a timeline of the life of Shimozawa Yasumi (下澤保躬), who later also became a Hirata disciple, Yasumi, along with Inomata Shigenaga (猪股繁永), Ariyo, Saitō Norifumi (斎藤規文), and others took up “Imperial studies” (皇学) and the “Way of poetry” (歌道), and entered the tutelage of Shintō priest of Kumano Okuteru Shrine, Osari Nakaakira (長利仲聴) in 1855.223 This indicates that these individuals engaged in “Imperial studies” as a group even before the Tsugaru disciples’ registration with the Hirata academy, and official formation of their group. The Hirata family’s Kingin nyūgaku chō (『金銀入覚帳』), or Gold and Silver Inlay Memo Book, records Ariyo’s deposits of three ryō on the seventeenth of the eighth month in 1856 (Ansei 3), and five ryō on the fifth day of the first month in 1857 (Ansei 4), which show that Ariyo had been purchasing books from the academy, before he officially enrolled as a

I will now trace the process by which Ariyo came to enroll in the Hirata academy as the first disciple from Hirosaki.

The first letter written by Ibukinoya head Hirata Kanetane (1799-1880) to Ariyo is dated the twelfth day of the ninth month in 1856 (Ansei 3). Kanetane opens the letter by asking for verification on whether Tsuruya was his family name or given name. Here I cite select passages from this letter:

On the 18th of last month, a man named Tatsuyama Matsuzō delivered to me your letters dated the 28th of the sixth month and 19th of the seventh month, which I have read… Now, last year I received your letters for the first time, and I see your sympathy for us ever growing, especially at this time, giving us a gift of a box of white dried abalone produced in your domain. Your considerable gifts always are rooted in deep generosity. I express my deep thanks. I immediately offered some before the spirit of our ancestor (先人). We are grateful for your ceaseless concern from afar…

Although you are aware of Ogasawara Kenryū of Akita domain, sending me letters directly is actually most convenient. For me personally, it is not in the least bit inconvenient, so please do not refrain. While I am especially busy with correspondence (文通) with the provinces, due to the fact that our scholarship (学業) is steadily spreading, I do not spare myself the labour one bit.

In this long and detailed letter, Kanetane thanks Ariyo for a gift of dried abalone he had sent, stating that he offered some before the spirit of the late ancestor Atsutane. This is the first of various local products the Tsugaru group sent to the head school. There is also mention of a disciple from Akita, Ogasawara Kenryū, who appears to have served as a mediary of one form or another for delivering Ariyo’s letters to Kanetane, but Kanetane insists his letters be sent directly to him. The Ibukinoya head declares that despite his busy correspondence with students in the provinces, the spread of their scholarship provides him enough satisfaction and motivation to

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Kanetane continues to provide details about Atsutane, in response to inquiries about the academy founder and head:

I have received your questions based on your interest in our Ancestor. As you know, his posthumous title is Kamu Tama no mihashira no ushi (Deity and Master August Pillar of the Spirit). He died on the eleventh day of the ninth month in Tenpō 14 (1843). He was 68 years old at death. He was born in An’ei 5 (1776). It is most proper that you also conduct worships (霊祭) of his deceased spirit, using a portrait. However, the abovementioned portrait is one drawn by someone from Akita, and although people say it closely bears his resemblance, it does not measure up to the heart of our ancestor, and for this reason, I personally do not use a portrait. The posthumous title was received from a head family of priestly affairs who also gave the inscription, and this is used in the aforementioned spirit worship. Besides this, there is food that he favoured, and we also use such objects. Now, again you ask about the timeline, but these books have not yet been formally transcribed. Although preparations are being made, beginning with Koshiden, the final transcriptions of several manuscripts are still incomplete. The timeline is delayed.

Kanetane’s biographical sketch of Atsutane in response to Ariyo’s questions, reminds us that Ariyo, based in Hirosaki, and seeking to join the Hirata academy, actually had only limited and fragmented knowledge of the academy’s founder. Kanetane explains that Atsutane’s portrait was painted in Akita, the place of his exile in his last years, and is used in the spirit worship of the Master within the Hirata school, although not by adopted son Kanetane himself because he does not consider the image to portray Atsutane’s true likeness. If we look at Ariyo’s collection of essays entitled, Tsuruya bunshū (『鶴舎文集』), or Collection of Tsuruya’s Writings, we see a description of how Ariyo worshipped the Atsutane portrait sent with this letter. The letter also makes mention of offerings of the Master’s favourite foods.

Additionally seen are the beginnings of the Tsugaru group’s many book purchases, though the list of publications is incomplete. Kanetane lists the works which include hand-copied
manuscripts and woodblock printed books he sent to Ariyo. The manuscripts were five books of _Koshiden_ (『古史伝』Lectures on Ancient History), volumes 16 through 20, one book of _Kiyo sōhansho_ (『毀誉相半書』), and two books of _San’eki yuraiki_ (『三易由来記』). The following printed books are also listed here: Volume eight of _Tamadasuki_ (『玉帯』Precious Sleeve Cord), because Ariyo already possesses volumes one through seven, one small foldable book of _Kamiyo keizu_ (『神代系図』Divine Age Lineage), an expanded volume of _Ōharai kotoba seikun_ (『大払詞正訓』Correct Reading of Liturgy for Great Purification), one book of _Amatsu norito kō_ (『天津祝詞考』On the Divine Norito Liturgy), one sheet of _Hachikaron_ (『八家論』), and one book of _Kōso kyūsho kō_ (『皇祖宮所考』On the Palace of Imperial Ancestors), by Morioka disciple Kikuchi Masahiko whom I discuss later in this chapter.

Finally, toward the close of this letter, Kanetane reiterates his pleasure over Ariyo’s letter and his expressed interest in the academy from Hirosaki, stating, that he read his letter three times. Kanetane continues, “In your region, I had not even one acquaintance, and even though I have contacts in Nanbu, there was no one in your area with whom I kept correspondence.”

While Kanetane acknowledges a gradual depletion of the inventory of original writings (親筆之物) by master Atsutane, offered only to disciples, he also obliges Ariyo’s request, agreeing to send such items. Kanetane goes on to express his wish and expectation that Atsutane’s teachings would spread in Hirosaki, as he states, “In any event, just as you think, I desire more than anything else, the increasing appearance of persons of the same aspirations (同志) even in your precious land (貴地).”

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226 At the time of Atsutane’s death in 1843, less than half of his works were published. Yoshida Asako emphasizes the importance of data on publishing and texts, in discussing the dissemination of Hirata nativist thought at the local level. Yoshida Asako. _Chi no kyōmei: Hirata wo meguru shomotsu no shakaishi_.
227 Ibid. p. 603.
228 Nakagawa, p. 79.
Kanetane’s second letter to Ariyo, dated three months later on the sixth of the first month in 1857 (Ansei 4), explains the procedure for enrolling in the Ibukinoya, accompanied by a pledge form to be filled out.²²⁹

Regarding your insistence (御執心) on enrolling directly as my student, I received details of your intentions in your letter. However, I am essentially inexpert, and as I do not have the aptitude to teach beyond our ancestor’s writings, I refuse anyone that requests to enrol as my disciple. So for those who offer enrolment gifts (束脩), I show them before the ancestor’s spirit. And, therefore, we will refer (相称) to you as the ancestor’s posthumous disciple (先人没後門人), and make arrangements to record your name in the disciple registry. If this is acceptable, please let us know without hesitation…

[Accompanying Pledge Form (誓詞案)]

Words of the Pledge

I seriously desire to receive the guidance of the Master on the Way of the Divine Age of the Divine August Country, and according to this guidance, I shall be enlisted on the registry and make haste toward the Way and humbly receive the teachings. Henceforth, as I receive the teachings, I will learn intently, and learn from the divine Way (神乃御道), and will not oppose the law of the lord (公乃御掟), and furthermore will not harbour offensive or suspicious thoughts toward the Master. If I should defy this pledge, may the awesome Heavenly Kami and Earthly Kami know and see this and give punishment. With deep reverence.

Country (Mutsu Province, Tsugaru Domain, Hirosaki castletown) Age (50)

Common Name (Tsuruya Ariyo)

Year/ Month/ Day (1857/ 2/ 25) Formal Name Itsuyoshi Personal Stamp

In this second letter, reference is made to Ariyo’s request to formally enrol as Kanetane’s disciple, but the academy head declines, insisting he devotes himself solely to spreading Atsutane’s teachings. Gifts from enrolling disciples are offered before the Master’s spirit, and Ariyo, like the other students who entered Ibukinoya after Atsutane’s death, is admitted strictly

as the ancestor’s posthumous disciple (先人没後門人). The Pledge form is distributed eliciting a pledge of devotion to receive Master Atsutane’s guidance on the “Way of the Divine Age of the Divine August Country,” and to learn from the “Way of the Gods” (神乃御道). Observance of the “law of the lord” (公の御掟) and reverence to Atsutane are also pledged. The Monjin seimei roku, or Disciple Registry, records that shortly after on the 25th of the second month in 1857 (Ansei 4), Ariyo enrolled as the first disciple from Hirosaki and 819th overall to register in the Hirata school.230 It took, therefore, roughly fifty days between Kanetane writing his second letter early in the new year of 1857, accompanied by the pledge form, until Ariyo’s reply and completed form reached the Ibukinoya, and his enrolment became official late in the second month. Ariyo was age fifty at the time, and was the eldest of all members to join the group.

After Ariyo’s entry into the Hirata academy, five others also enlisted that year.231 Enrolling in the fifth month of 1857 were Iwama Ichitarō (岩間市太郎／滴 Shitatari 1811-84) age 47, Mitani Chihei (三谷治平／大足 Ōtari), and Masuda Kōtarō (増田幸太郎／源並樹 Minamoto Namiki) age 27, while Ueda Hirayoshi (植田平吉／正健 Masatake), age 25, joined on the 25th day of the fifth month, and Imamura Yōtarō (今村要太郎／真種 Mitane 1824-84), age 37, entered on the eleventh day of the sixth month. Registering in 1862 (Bunkyū 2) was townsman Takeda Seijirō (竹田清次郎／千尋／広道 Chihiro/ Hiromichi) age 34. Thus, six of the first seven disciples from Tsugaru were townsmen (chōnin) who pursued poetry, while Imamura Yōtarō, better known as Mitane, was a domainal samurai from a family of merchant backgrounds, who also pursued poetry. These first seven members formed a core group, predominantly of townsmen that would set the tone of this community.

231 Please see Table 1. “List of Hirata Disciples in Tsugaru” for details of their registration in the Ibukinoya academy.
Imamura Mitane, the sixth to enrol with the Hirata academy, was a major financial supporter of the group. The Imamura family were a wealthy merchant family that operated an enterprise, which even printed paper currency for use in the domain (藩札). Mitane’s artistic name was Momo no ya (桃の舎), or “House of Peaches.” Mitane purchased several tens of Atsutane’s books, and presumably read and distributed them among the Tsugaru group for other members to see and copy. Mitane’s collection of Atsutane’s books is housed at the Aomori Prefectural Library, many of the books containing his stamp of “Momo no ya.” Then in 1864 (Genji 1) Hachiman shrine priests Ono Wakasa (小野若狭／磐根／藤原正房 Iwane/ Fujiwara Masafusa 1833-89) age 32, and Sasaki Awaji (笹木淡路／藤原祐雄 Fujiwara Yoshio) age 51, followed by his son Sasaki Kensaku (笹木健作／藤原祐行) age 23 enrolled in the Hirata academy. A central member of this Tsugaru group, painter Hirao Rosen, finally joined this same year in 1864 at age 57, some seven years after his close friend Ariyo.

Kanehira Kiryō (兼平亀綾 1815-78) created quite a stir before and after she joined the Hirata academy in 1866 at age 52 as a rare female disciple. There were a mere 29 women among the over 4,200 disciples of Atsutane, with the most renowned today being Matsuo Taseko of the Ina Valley, whom Anne Walthall made famous through her biographical study of the female peasant scholar who participated in events surrounding the Meiji Restoration. Before and after Kiryō’s official enrolment in the Hirata academy in the sixth month of 1866 (Keiō 2), Kanetane inquires to Rosen, Ariyo, and the others about the identity of this woman whose name appears in a haiku collection, Gappo sharimo seki (『合浦舎利母石』1865), edited by Osari Nakaakira

and sent to the Ibukinoya, and who eventually requests to formally be registered as a disciple.\textsuperscript{234} Kiryō was a painter who specialized in painting turtles. From Hirosaki, she moved to Sendai, then to Edo, and in Fukagawa she met and married a merchant.\textsuperscript{235} Her husband died, and Kiryō later met a Neriya Tōbei (Kudō Hakuan) also from Hirosaki, and the two returned to Hirosaki together. After Tōbei died, Kiryō went on to marry a town doctor in Hirosaki, Kanehira Kiyoshi. In 1872 (Meiji) at age 60, Kiryō again caused a stir when she climbed Mount Iwaki which had been restricted for women. Some turtle paintings and haiku poems by Kiryō have survived, and some of these, are parts of larger compilations with fellow Hirata disciples and other local painters and poets, as seen in the above-mentioned \textit{haiku} collection.\textsuperscript{236}

Nakamura Yorozuya (中村万弥／行彦 Yukihiro) also joined the group that same year, and the following year in 1867, two domainal samurai Yamada Yōnoshin (山田要之進／源楯雄 Minamoto Tateo 1843-68) age 25 and Shimoza Hachisaburō (下沢八三郎 Yasumi 1838-96) age 27 became disciples. It is known that Yōnoshin registered with the Ibukinoya and studied \textit{kokugaku} on domainal order.\textsuperscript{237} In early Meiji, the final three from Hirosaki, all Shintō priests, became disciples: Inomata Hisayoshi (猪股久吉／藤原繁永 Fujiwara Shigenaga) in 1869 at age 57, Koyama Naishi (小山内梓／藤原建丸 Fujiwara Tatemaru) in 1870 at age 41, and Gotō Takayoshi (後藤孝吉／藤原奇酉 Fujiwara Kiyū) the last from the group in 1871 at age 24. Ariyo served as the official recommender (紹介者) for most members of this group, and it was a

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{234} Hirata Kanetane. Letter to Hirao Rosen and others, 20\textsuperscript{th} day, 12\textsuperscript{th} month, in 1865 (Keiō 1), \textit{Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei}, p. 613. Hirata Kanetane. Letter to Tsuruya Ariyo and others, 20\textsuperscript{th} day, eighth month, 1866 (Keiō 2), \textit{Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei}, p. 614.
\item \textsuperscript{236} Paintings of Kanehira Kiryō are housed at the Hirosaki City Museum, and compilations which include her \textit{haiku} poems and paintings are archived in the Hirosaki City Library.
\item \textsuperscript{237} Please see chapter seven where I discuss in greater detail Yamada Yōnoshin and his involvement in the Hirata academy and role in the Boshin war and ensuing \textit{Shōkonsai} ritual.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
group led primarily by townspeople, as well as by Shintō priests. Kumano Okuteru shrine priest Osari Nakaakira, who was the official recommender for Gotō Takayoshi to join the Hirata academy, does not appear in the Ibukinoya Disciple Registry as an official disciple, but his relationship with the Hirata family and Tsugaru group, make him a prominent player in this community and an unofficial “nineteenth member.”

Pursuit of Poetry and the Ancient Way

Research to date has identified several major streams within the kokugaku school, which are: (1) the study of the ancient Way (古道), including the study of myth, history, and divinity in the Japanese tradition; (2) the study of the Way of poetry (歌道), namely studies and composition of waka; (3) the study of literary prose; and (4) the study of ancient language or philology. The overlap between these different streams notwithstanding, such categorizations have served useful in comparing, contrasting, and characterizing scholars and groups engaged with kokugaku. The Tsugaru group of Hirata disciples, by and large, engaged in the studies of the ancient Way and the Way of poetry, and so I will now examine such activities of their community in Hirosaki.

“Iwama Shitatari shichijū gachō jo” (岩間滴七十賀帳序), a commemorative essay written in 1880 to honour the seventieth birthday of Iwama Shitatari, the second disciple to enrol

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238 Please see my detailed discussion of Osari Nakaakira in his role as head of Shōkonsai ritual in 1869 in chapter seven and leading role in the Shinto reforms in early Meiji in chapter eight.
239 Here I have gained many insights from the work of Nakagawa Kazuaki for his detailed analysis of letters exchanged between the Hirata academy and the Tsugaru disciples to reconstruct the group’s activities. Nakagawa, “Bakumatsu Hirata juku to chihō kokugaku no tenkai: Hirosaki kokugaku wo rei ni,” Nakagawa, Hirata Kokugaku no shiteki kenkyū, pp. 346-379.
from Hirosaki, sheds light on the Tsugaru group and some of its activities, even if the piece was written retrospectively of their most active period. Concerning Shitatari, it states:

However, from around the age of forty he enjoyed Studies of the Ancient Way (古道学), and along with his friends Tsuruya Ariyo, Hirao Rosen, Imamura Mitane, Mitani Ōtari, he became a disciple of the late Great Man Hirata and Hirata Kanetane. And they purchased books of the [Hirata] house and works authored by the Great Man of Suzunoya Motoori Norinaga, reading them himself, showing others, and greatly spreading the Way of the Gods (神の道)... Therefore, people in society called this “Tsuruya’s faction” (鶴舎党)... 240

This piece describes Shitatari as having “enjoyed Studies of the Ancient Way” or kokugaku from around age forty, several years before he formally became a Hirata disciple in 1857 at age 47.

Core members of the group, namely townspeople, are described here to have become disciples of “Great Man” Hirata Atsutane and Kanetane, purchased books by Atsutane and Norinaga, read and circulated the books among them, and “spread the Way of the Gods.” This passage also indicates that the Tsugaru group of Hirata disciples were referred to in society as “Tsuruya’s faction,” and that Ariyo was recognized as the leader representing them. The piece continues to state that studying kokugaku changed Shitatari’s poetic practices: “Thus, since engaging in Ancient Studies (古学), he could no longer compose kata uta (片歌) poems, 241 and came to wholly favour ancient chōka (長歌) long poems and tanka (短歌) short poems 242 of high melody... 240 “Iwama Shitatari Shichijū gachō jo,” Kan’un Shizomawa Yasumi sensei wo aogu: Goikō to kankei shokan shū. Ed. Tazawa Tadashi. Kan’un Shizomawa Yasumi sensei no ikō wo yomu kai. 1991. p. 88.

241 Kata uta (片歌) poems are considered a form of ō uta (大歌), or large poem of the court, sung to music and taught and learned in the gagaku ryō (雅楽寮) or bureau of court music. One kata uta poem is formed by three verses of five-seven-seven or five-seven-five syllable lines. Takebe Ayatari (建部綾足 1719-74), a kokugaku scholar, painter, and haikai poet from Hirosaki, endeavored to revive kata uta as a form of haiku. Ayatari studied under Kamo no Mabuchi, and his haiku poetry was of Ise style (伊勢風), while his kata uta poetry was of Man’yō style (万葉片歌).

242 In contrast to kata uta, chōka (長歌) long poems and tanka (短歌) short poems are considered waka, or “Japanese poetry.” Chōka repeat five-seven syllable verses, often end in seven-seven, and are commonly accompanied by a hanka (反歌), or responding poem. Tanka generally consist of 31 syllables, made up of five verses of five-seven-five, seven-seven syllables. Chōka are seen in the Man’yō shū, Japan’s oldest extant poetry anthology from eighth century, but decline after the Heian period (794-1185), whereas the tanka, which came to be
(高き調), and played with these freely, and playfully composed poems of such nature himself.” Here we see an indication that for poet and Hirata disciple Shitatari, studies of the Ancient Way (古道論 kodōron) influenced his views and practice of the Way of Poetry (歌道論 kadōron).

It is evident the Tsugaru group regularly conducted sessions for poetry composition. Ariyo’s letter to his fellow Hirata disciples, dated the fifteenth day of the twelfth month, late in 1862 (Bunkyū 2), outlines designated subjects for poems for the following year month-by-month. Ariyo writes, “I state the assortment of subjects (御題組合せ) for the coming year of the boar, and so please look through them accordingly. Please write them out for each individual and distribute.” Ariyo is presumably asking Yasumi to copy the notice for all the other group members. The first month lists as poetic subjects, or kigo (季語) or seasonal phrases: “early spring (初春), remaining snow (残雪), plum wind (梅風), love encounter (逢恋), celebration of spring (春祝).” The subjects for the sixth month in summer are: “outer mountain, summer moon (外山夏月), field path, summer grass (野徑夏草), rain shower quickly passing (夕立早過), felt but unspoken love (思不言恋), farm house, hearing rain (田家聞雨).” Ariyo’s notice for the poetry compositions of the upcoming year was addressed to eight “Great Men”: Shimozawa Yasumi, Masuda Namiki, Iwama Shitatari, Mitari Ōtari, Ueda Masatake, Takeda Chihiro, Hisasuke (久輔), and Shigeki. Ariyo, along with five of the eight on this list were townsmen poets, as well as registered Hirata disciples by 1862. We see that Yasumi, though not officially synonymous with waka, also appear in the Man’yō shū and maintained their prominence through the premodern period and into modern and contemporary times.

243 Ibid.
244 Tsuruya Ariyo. Letter to Shimozawa Yasumi and others, 15th day, 12th month, 1862 (Bunkyū 2), Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei. pp. 610-11.
245 Ibid. p. 610.
246 Ibid. p. 611.
enrolled in the Ibukinoya until 1867, was already involved with the group’s poetic activities by this time. Thus, poetry composition by townspeople comprised a large portion of this group’s activities, particularly in the early years.

There is evidence of “meetings” (御より合) in Ariyo’s letters addressed to a handful of disciples from the list above, plus Imamura Mitane, who was the sixth member to join the academy.\(^{247}\) Ariyo requests to hold meetings in the near future, and as Nakagawa Kazuaki points out, one can imagine there were study sessions held regularly as well.\(^{248}\) It is also clear from such letters that Ariyo’s residence was the location for the group’s meetings. Records regarding the Tsugaru group’s gatherings, led by Ariyo, suggest their strong religious nature. One can consider this point through looking at the significance of Kanetane’s gifts accompanying his letters to Ariyo, of the Atsutane portrait along with poem on tanzaku paper and sheet of old calendar, both of which were hand-written by Atsutane himself. In Ariyo’s Tsuruya bunshū (『鶴舎文集』) or Collection of Tsuruya’s Writings, he writes about these items in the following way:

On the single kumogami tanzaku sheet which my Master of Ibukinoya made and wrote personally, it states, “written at the beginning of Tamadasuki (Precious Sleeve Cord)” and the poem goes,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tamadasuki</th>
<th>The Precious Sleeve Cord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kakete wasurana</td>
<td>wear it and do not forget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yoyo no oya</td>
<td>the blessings of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yoyo no Mī Oya no</td>
<td>Ancestors of the ages,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kami no Chiwai wo</td>
<td>Deities of the ages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Atsutane Atsutane

Also, my lord Master Kanetane included with his letter a single sheet of two months out of the ancient solar calendar (“Koreki hibushiki”) and sent it from his residence in

\(^{247}\) Tsuruya Ariyo. Letter to Shimozawa Yasumi and others, sixth day, fourth month, year unknown, Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei, p. 622.

\(^{248}\) Nakagawa, Hirata Kokugaku no shiteki kenkyū, p. 352.
Mototorigoe in Edo. While that letter is dated the sixth day of the first month in Ansei 4 (1857), it arrived on the first of the second month that same year, and I am safely storing it as a part of the master’s spirit (onreimi), and the ancient calendar I hang in my study, worshipping it morning and evening… Concerning these spiritual treasures (mitama mono), I pray and worship them like they were his spirit, saying, “Bless the Way of the Ancient Studies (古学 inishie manabi) to which I have devoted myself for years!” Now and repeatedly I enact the Right Way (masamichi) thanks to the grace of this Master. 249

The above passage shows how kokugaku studies for Ariyo revolved around ancestor worship, with his daily worship of the hand-written poem and calendar of Master Atsutane, as representative of his spirit. His prayer, “Bless the Way of the Ancient Studies to which I have devoted myself for years!” is reflective of the growing excitement and expectation that kokugaku scholars of the day had placed on their studies as they moved toward a “new dawn” in the Restoration and Meiji periods. It can be imagined that these objects of worship, along with the aforementioned portrait were reverently worshipped at the group’s study sessions, much like a portrait was by the “Mameo no tsudoi” or “Circle of Righteous Men” in the Ina Valley, where text reading and debates were merely one part of a day full of worship and festival. 250 The great value of these “spiritual treasures” can be well imagined when considering that they were rare physical and visual connections to Master Atsutane, whom none of these posthumous students had met in person.

Another document that reveals the manner and attitudes of Ariyo and the Hirosaki group toward their nativist studies is Ariyo’s “Gakusoku” (「学則」) or “Study Rules,” found in the second volume of Tsuruya’s Writings. The list contains 43 rules or guidelines for everyday worship, attitude towards daily life and studies, views of the world around them, proper handling

249 Tsuruya Ariyo. Tsuruya bunshū, Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei, p. 532.
of books, and proper daily conduct. Unfortunately, its date of composition is unknown. However, the comprehensive nature of the rules and guidelines suggests that Ariyo, as the eldest and first registered disciple from the group, directed this list not only at himself but at the group and junior members. The wording and general spirit of the “Study Rules” resemble the Hirata school’s “Juku soku” (「塾則」) or “Academy rules”, which the head school issued to students studying in the Ibukinoya academy, and the former was presumably modeled after the head school’s example. And yet, Ariyo’s version is distinctive enough to reflect his and the group’s character and originality.

Ariyo opens his “Study Rules” with the following two lines urging daily prayer:

[1.] Do not neglect to pay respects to and worship the heavenly and earthly deities every morning.251

[2.] Pay respects to the divine spirits of your ancestors and parents, and worship them after worshipping the deities.

That deity and ancestor worship heads this list, again, reflects the priority placed on religious worship within this study group. The list continues, “Those engaging in Ancient Studies (kokugaku), must be mindful to embrace a “kokorozashi” (“desire” or “wish”) to serve the country and make achievements.” Such political awareness and the mindset of “embracing” such a “desire” were deemed important and were in line with the Hirata academy’s efforts nationwide. Also, imperial thought is reflected in rules eight and nine which state, “The Imperial country is the main realm of divine truth: know that the head of this land is the lord and instructor of all countries,” and, “Discern the great foundation of the only Imperial way.”

251 Tsuruya Ariyo, “Gakusoku,” Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei. p. 535
Of the 43 guidelines, number ten best articulates Ariyo’s central ideas, stating, “The unopposing nature (muteki) of the visible and invisible is the root of my way.” While Atsutane asserted that the visible realm arahaniyo of the living and invisible realm kakuriyo of deities, spirits, and souls of the dead overlapped and occupied the same space, Ariyo takes Atsutane’s thesis further with his original thesis emphasizing continuity between life and death. He ends his “Study Rules” with rules to encourage maintaining good relations with family in this life:

[39.] Your family of birth is your origin in our world, and so do not neglect to send letters and gifts.

[40.] Do not forget family over distance, nor take them for granted over proximity. Interact with them and observe holidays with them.

Here, the message is consistent with those of Norinaga and Atsutane to live life fully in this world, but with Ariyo, perhaps even more so than with Atsutane, consideration is given to continuing good relations from this realm in life to the next one in death. After his 43 points, Ariyo closes out his “Study Rules” by stating, “The articles above are old traditions and customs of the Divine Country, and the essence of the classics. I have performed these until now. Why would my students not follow them?” This statement along with the ensuing five “cautions” when reading texts, show that indeed Ariyo’s “Study Rules” were not only a personal expression of daily thought and practice, but also a set of guidelines for his own students, fellow disciples of Atsutane in the Hirosaki group.

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252 Ibid.
253 Ibid. p. 536.
Informational Network

Correspondence between the Ibukinoya academy and disciples in local communities served, as Miyachi Masato has demonstrated, as a means of exchanging vital information between Edo and locales nationwide on socio-political developments in Edo and the periphery. The following letter written by Kanetane to Ariyo and fellow Tsugaru student Imamura Yōtarō conveys the situation in Edo in the fall of 1858:

The aforementioned foreign barbarians (外夷) from America, Russia, England, began arriving one after another and unboarded their ships. At this time, France arrived by ship. However, their wishes were met in detail, and although it is not known where they are going, it is fortunate that at least there was no incident. However, from this event last month a terrible epidemic has spread, and society is in a state of distress and confusion. You are likely to eventually hear in definite terms. I think the cause is completely the Yōmi (妖魅) spirit that accompanied the foreign barbarians.

Firstly, concerning the death of the Shogun Iesada (大樹公), although we cannot say whether that was the cause, because of the changes in his illness, rumours of a poisoning are also heard. From the end of last month to this month, this disease has spread widely, and thousands are dying daily. About this illness, first there are chest pains or stomach pains, then sudden diarrhea, sudden fatigue, and generally within half a day, one’s life expires. Also, during this process there are cases of possession by a fox spirit. There are people who claim to have seen such a sight. If those with courage dare to inquire further, they say that a thousand foxes accompanied the Americans who sailed over. There are others who join in this falsehood and say the Nichiren followers brought the foxes, and that there was a possessed Buddhist priest (妖僧). And so, great confusion abounds...

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254 For example, concerning the exchange of political information between the Hiratas in Edo and disciples in peripheral areas, namely disciples in Akita domain, see Miyachi Masato. “Bakumatsu Hirata kokugaku to seiji jōhō,” Bakumatsu ishinki no shakai-teki seiji jōhō gi. Ed. Miyachi Masato. Iwanami shoten, 1999, pp. 203-40.
255 Hirata Kanetane. Letter to Tsuruya Ariyo and others, 19th day, eighth month, 1858 (Ansei 5), Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinkō. p. 607.
Kanetane describes an outbreak of cholera in the summer of 1858, and in xenophobic reaction, attributes it to the Yōmi spirit accompanying the “foreign barbarians” from abroad.\(^{256}\) 1858 is the year when commercial treaties are signed with five countries: the U.S., England, France, Holland, and Russia. Kanetane describes the distress and confusion of local Edo society. Kanetane mentions the death of the thirteenth shogun Tokugawa Iesada (1824-58). Iesada died on the sixth day of the seventh month in 1858, just over a month before this letter was written. He is known to have been of weak constitution from birth, and although there were rumours of poisoning, he is said to have died of cholera. Kanetane states that victims of the cholera epidemic numbered in the thousands daily, and he describes the symptoms leading to death. He also cites various rumours of possession by fox spirit, which are attributed to the Americans, Nichirenists, and Buddhist priests. Such “rumours” reflect discourse of society at large, as well as that of the \textit{kokugaku} community. In this way, Kanetane transmits the latest news on social and political developments from Edo to the disciples in Tsugaru.

There is also valuable information related to the Hirata academy that is disseminated through letters from Edo. It is evident Kanetane received an inquiry from Hirosaki about the \textit{tengu} boy Torakichi who was interviewed by Atsutane after he allegedly died and visited the \textit{Senkyō} other world. The Tsugaru disciples must have read Atsutane’s \textit{Senkyō ibun}. Kanetane responds in his letter, “You inquired about what has happened to Torakichi at this time, he has permanently taken up medical divination (医卜), and although he is living a secular life, he enjoys liquor with temperance, and he has not lost his love for people, though he cares not for

simpletons (凡人).”

Now, some thirty-six years since first meeting Atsutane in 1820, and Senkyō ibun’s completion in 1822, Torakichi, at age 50, is said to have permanently taken up “medical divination… living a secular life,” enjoying alcohol, and maintaining his love for people. This letter provides a rare update on Torakichi’s life, long after the attention he had garnered for his appearance in Edo salons and “informing” Atsutane about spiritual matters and the other world. The Tsugaru disciples also inquired about Katsugorō, the informant interviewed by Atsutane on his visit to the underworld before his rebirth, the subject of Katsugorō saiseiki (『勝五郎再生記』) completed in 1832. However in this case, Kanetane admits, “Although I know that Katsugorō is also well, I have not received news of his activities in recent years. If a neighbour informs me, I will hear it and will be sure to tell you.”

Relations with Morioka and Akita Disciples

Examining the Tsugaru group’s ties with disciple communities in neighbouring domains, Morioka and Akita, sheds further light on the development of the group as well as its position within the national network. Morioka is an important comparison because the leader of that group, Kikuchi Masahiko, was a noted figure within the Hirata academy, whose Kōso kyūsho kō (『皇祖宮所考』), or On the Palace of Imperial Ancestors was read by Ariyo, who criticized it with his Kōso kyūsho kō ben (『皇祖宮所考弁』), Refutation to On the Palace of Imperial Ancestors. The rivalry between Hirosaki and Morioka domains, or Tsugaru and Nanbu clans, spans from the sixteenth century and intensifies during the Boshin war, and here, Ariyo confronts Masahiko in an intellectual conflict. On the other hand, comparisons with the Akita disciple

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257 Hirata Kanetane. Letter to Tsuruya Ariyo and others, 21st day, tenth month, 1859 (Ansei 6), Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei, p. 608.
258 Ibid.
community show contrast in size and social make-up of community, as well as parallels due to geographic proximity, and of course the shared fate of their domains fighting for the Imperial cause in the Boshin war of 1868 to 1869.

Kikuchi Masahiko (菊池正古 1809-67), also known as Yoshimi (宜見) or Masayo (正与) was born on the sixth day of the ninth month in 1809 (Bunka 6), in Jōnai koji (城内小路), Tsuchizawa chō, Waga county in Morioka domain, to physician, Kikuchi Rikkei (菊池立慶), also known as Masamato (正麿). Masahiko read classical texts and learned Chinese studies, Japanese studies, and medicine from his father, who was learned in all these fields. Masahiko’s household practiced medicine, taught calligraphy, and carried out agriculture in order to earn a living and endure poverty. Masahiko, who had learned kokugaku from his father Masamara, sought to pursue further study, and went to Edo in the fourth month of 1830 (Tenpō 1) in hopes of learning from Atsutane. After being granted a discount on his enrolment fee from the regular 200 gold soku (金二百足) down to 100 soku, due to his financial struggles, Masahiko registered as a disciple of Atsutane on the third day of the twelfth month in 1830, at age 22, as the academy’s 394th disciple. Atsutane was age 55 at the time, and Masahiko visited him on the 13th and 23rd of every month to study directly from him.

On the fifth day of the third month in 1831 (Tenpō 2), Masahiko shaved his head and renamed himself Ryōsai (良齊), and on the 29th that same month, he became a disciple of physician Tachibana Naokata (橘尚賢) of Suruga chō, who was also learned in Dutch medicine. From there he attended Atsutane’s lectures on Koshiden, but around the seventh month,

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260 Monjin seimei roku. SHAZ, Bekkan, p. 268.
Masahiko became ill, and left Tachibana to become a disciple of Miyazaki Kōan of Yushima Tenjin shita, to learn medicine from him. From the second month, Masahiko joined a traveling group, and left Edo, to pay respects at the Ise shrine. During the visit, he saw Kyoto, Mino, Shinano, Kōzuke, Shimotsuke, and finally on the first of the fifth month, he returned home after six years away from Tsuchizawa in Morioka domain. On the sixth day of the ninth month of that year, Masahiko married Fujimoto Tomi. From the spring of 1834 (Tenpō 5), he grew his hair out again, and in 1836 (Tenpō 7) at age 29, Masahiko wrote Rongo kō (『論語考』), or a commentary on the Analects. Two years later, both of Masahiko’s parents died, causing much grief. However, Masahiko and his wife persevered in his medical practice, the education of his disciples, and agriculture, as he continued his scholarly writing. In 1840 (Tenpō 11), Masahiko at age 40, wrote Kōso kyūsho kō (『皇祖宮所考』 On the Palace of Imperial Ancestors) and Yomi no kuni kō (『黄泉国考』 On the Land of Yomi).

Even after Atsutane’s death in 1843, Masahiko carried on his direct contact with his master and the academy. In 1844 (Kōka 1), Masahiko visited Akita to pay respects before Atsutane’s grave. In 1855 (Ansei 2), he visited Edo and stayed at Kanetane’s house located at the time inside the Akita domain compound in Torigoe, Asakusa (浅草鳥越). There, he read Atsutane’s works, and copied the early volumes of his Koshi den. Masahiko consulted with the Hiratas over the publishing of Kōso kyūsho kō. Kimura Kahei of Koyanagi machi in Kanda engraved the wood blocks for the manuscript, Kanetane’s third son Shōkichirō (圧吉郎) printed it, and finally Izumiya Kinshichi of Shimoya chōja machi bound it into a book. Masahiko began distributing copies of Kōso kyūsho kō thereafter, and as seen in Kanetane’s first letter to Ariyo,
Ariyo purchased this work through the Ibukinoya in as early as the ninth month of 1856. In 1866 (Keiō 2), by the age of 58, Masahiko had completed several major works.

That year of 1866, Masahiko was ordered by the daimyo of Morioka domain to produce polished drafts of his works and to submit them to the domain. Masahiko describes the situation surrounding the offering of his works in the following note, and expresses his feelings in a poem in Matsunoya kabunshū (『松の屋歌文集』 Pine House Poetry and Prose Collection):

From winter of last year (1865), the customs of Morioka have changed, and the current lord and sachūshō general (左中将) favoured Ancient Learning (古学). This year in the fourth month, when Masahiko received an order to create polished drafts of his writings and submit them:

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Magatsu hi no    In the great castle
kami koji kata no where God of Magatsuhi
ōshiro ni wa    had prevailed
Inishie manabi  Ancient learning
ima sakari keri  is now flourishing
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Masahiko asserts that the Nanbu lord’s order to offer polished drafts of his works reflects a change in “customs” within the castle, through the fifteenth daimyo, Nanbu Toshihisa (南部利剛 1827-96), who favoured Ancient Learning or kokugaku. Masahiko composes a waka poem which celebrates that “flourishing” of Ancient Learning in the castle, where the evil deity of Magatsuhi, considered the cause of evil in the world, had prevailed, and as a result Chinese studies had taken

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261 By 1866, Masahiko age 58, had completed the following works, archived in the Morioka History and Culture Museum: Rongo kō (論語考) 10 vol. On the Analects), Kōso kyūshō kō (皇祖宮所考) 1 vol., Yomi no kuni kō (黄泉国考) 1 vol.), Shōkan zōbyō ronshū kō (礎案雑病論集考) 7 vol. On Writings about Typhoid Fever and Various Illnesses), Ōharada kotoba shūkai (大祓詞集解) vol. 1 Interpretations of Liturgies for Great Purification), Shinado no kaze ben (科長戸風弁) 2 vol. On the Shinado Wind), Maiasa shin hai ki bun (毎朝 神拝記文) 2 vol. Morning Order for Worship Text), Kenpaku sho (建白書) 1 vol. A. Petition), Kaizoku bōgyo hishō roku (海賊防禦必勝録) 1 vol. Records of Maritime Defence Against Piracy and Certain Victory), Gojū ga en kashū (五十賀宴歌集) 1 vol. Poems on a Fiftieth Birthday Banquet), Koden kō (古伝考) 26 vol. On Ancient Records), Kanji on kigen (漢字音起原) vol. 2 ), Matsu no ioe (松の五百枝) vol. 10 Five Hundred Branches of Pine), Matsunoya kabunshū (松の屋歌文集) 10 vol.).

262 Kōso kyūshō kō hasigaki, Kōso kyūshō kō, Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei, p. 627.
precedence. On the eighth day of the eleventh month that same year, Masahiko was ordered to
serve as an instructor for the domainal school, Sakujin kan (作人館), or the Academy for
Character Building. Following this, he devoted himself to writing and teaching, and eventually
overcame his poor health. Eventually, in the second month of 1867 (Keiō 3), Masahiko quit his
post, returned home, and died on the twelfth day of the second month, at age 59.

Now, let us examine Ariyo’s criticism of Masahiko’s theories, Ariyo in 1856 obtained the
Kōso kyūsho kō directly from Kanetane in the Ibukinoya, a work completed in 1840 and
published in 1855. The published version includes a preface written by Kanetane, signed as
“Ibukinoya second generation, Taira Kanetane” (伊吹の屋乃二世平銕胤), which describes
Masahiko’s studies in the academy, and praises him for his novel theories on “matters which the
Great men had not yet even given thought to.”263 As seen above, Masahiko became Atsutane’s
disciple while the master was alive and active, and therefore had personal encounters with him,
while Ariyo became a posthumous disciple. While both belonged to the same Hirata academy,
Ariyo criticizes Masahiko for what he perceives to be mistaken readings of Atsutane’s teachings.

In Kōso kyūsho kō, Masahiko notes in the divine age myths, that after the male and
female creator deities Izanagi and Izanami created the islands of Japan upon heavenly order, and
the eight million deities gave birth to all of creation, then Izanagi and Izanami built a great palace
(大宮), but that the location of this palace was hitherto unclear. Masahiko argues that the
location of this palace was the land of Yamato (大和国) in Kinai province.264 Ariyo attacks this
assertion as a “forced claim” (強言), and based on further examination of ancient texts, asserts
that the location of the great palace the two deities built was actually on the Onokoro islands in
the land of Awaji, the islands formed when the drippings from the two deities’ jewelled spear

263 Ibid.
264 Kōso kyūsho kō ben, Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei, p. 557.
had solidified. In making his argument, Masahiko relied primarily on the sections of Emperor Jimmu in the *Nihon shoki*, or the *Chronicles of Japan*, which state that the land of Yamato was named by Izanami. On the other hand, Ariyo consults not only the *Nihon shoki*, but also the *Kojiki*, or *Record of Ancient Matters*, which states the spacious “Yahiro palace” (八尋殿 Yahiro dono) was built on the Onokoro islands, and cites also Atsutane’s *Koshiseibun*, which maintains that the Yahiro palace was a divine creation of the deities, as well as Atsutane’s *Koshi chō, The Meaning of Ancient History*, which states this Yahiro palace was inhabited and existed exclusively in the divine age. Ariyo criticizes his counterpart in Morioka, stating, “In Masahiko’s mind, he thinks it is unsatisfactory unless it is like a man-made palace seen now. Is this, therefore, the reason he makes this forced claim? It is laughable.”

Ariyo’s refutation of Masahiko’s arguments on the divine age myths and the location and nature of the ancient palace requires a more detailed study that is beyond the scope of this chapter. Nevertheless, it is evident that Ariyo’s acquisition in 1856 of *Kōso kyūsho kō*, by a Hirata disciple from Morioka, and subsequent criticism of it in his *Kōso kyūsho kō ben* served as part of the formative steps in the early years of Ariyo’s engagement with Hirata *kokugaku*. In Ariyo’s refutation, we see a rigor toward accurately interpreting ancient text and a staunch defence of and loyalty toward Atsutane’s teachings. Ariyo’s attitude toward such “ancient studies” and *kokugaku* is highlighted in his uncompromising strictness toward a senior disciple of Atsutane who had met the master and studied at the academy in person. Ariyo asserts his stance against this fellow Hirata disciple of the same academy, one who hails from the neighbouring, rival domain.

265 Ibid.
266 Ibid. p. 558.
267 Ibid.
Contrasts and parallels are seen between the Hirata disciple communities in Hirosaki and Akita domains. As seen previously in his first letter to Ariyo, dated the twelfth of the ninth month in 1856, Kanetane makes reference to one Ogasawara Kenryū (1799-1858) of Akita, and urges Ariyo not to go through this Kenryū, but to correspond directly with the Ibukinoya academy. Kenryū became a disciple on the 20th day of the ninth month in 1841 (Tenpō 12), five months after Atsutane had been exiled to and made his return to Akita. Kenryū, therefore, attended his master’s lectures in Akita. Kenryū was a town physician, and managed book orders for the Akita disciples, his name repeatedly appearing in the Hirata family journals and transaction records. He served a central role among the disciples in Akita, and there is a suggestion in Kanetane’s letter to the Tsugaru disciples, that Kenryū had been either mediating between Ariyo and the Hirata academy, or that he had some contact with Ariyo.

As shown in chapter one, Akita, as Astutane’s native domain and place of exile at the end of his life, became a hotbed for Hirata kokugaku from the 1840s through to the early Meiji period. Through Astutane’s lectures in his last years and the efforts by Kanetane and Nobutane to propagate the academy’s thought in the area, discipleship in Akita grew to about 300 by 1872 (Meiji 5). As seen early in Kanetane’s first letter to Ariyo in 1856, the emergence of Ariyo and the Tsugaru community showing interest in Hirata kokugaku pleased the Ibukinoya leader, because it meant the spread of Atsutane’s teachings beyond Morioka domain to the northern frontier of Honshū. It is also evident in Kanetane’s letters addressed to Ariyo, that Hirosaki’s close proximity to Akita which held such great importance to the Hiratas, also created a sense of

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familiarity with this new group. In Kanetane’s letter to Ariyo dated the third day of the third month in 1858 (Ansei 4), he states:

You are in the neighbouring country, and in light of our incessant desire that the ancient Way be rapidly and greatly opened up, we said for you [to request] anything you wish. However, we are troubled over a lack of those items. Please do not be disheartened…”

Kanetane acknowledges the Tsugaru disciples are located in the “neighbouring country” (御隣国) to Akita, and expresses his willingness to send requested items, availability permitting. He makes this offer with the desire that the “ancient Way” be quickly and widely “opened up” in that region through the proliferation of Hirata kokugaku.

In a letter written two-and-a-half years later, dated the 13th day of the eleventh month in 1860 (Man’en 1), Kanetane again identifies the Tsugaru disciples with neighbouring Akita domain:

This year, the spring weather was unfavourable, and regarding this, although you were concerned it would be a bad harvest year, the late summer heat was great and there was indeed a bountiful harvest. Akita was also the same way, and indeed the great joy of all was unsurpassed. People with shallow sincerity, would place no thought on the seasonal weather, but I am reading with interest your detailed and thoughtful letters.

Kanetane states he was worried over the poor weather in the spring of 1860, but is now relieved to know that the late summer heat was strong enough to lead to a bountiful harvest for Hirosaki domain, as was the case for Akita. The associations made by geographical location and proximity notwithstanding, there were both major contrasts and parallels between the Tsugaru and Akita disciple communities. One contrast is the difference in size of the group, with Akita boasting around 300 disciples by 1872, while Hirosaki had 18 by that time. Also, the disciples in

269 Kanetane’s letter to Ariyo, third day, third month, 1858 (Ansei 5), Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei, p. 605.
270 Hirata Kanetane letter to Tsuruya Ariyo. Thirteenth day, eleventh month, 1860 (Man’en 1), Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei. p. 609.
Akita were predominantly high-ranking samurai, many with a Confucian education, Chinese studies being more prominent in local education than were Japanese studies. The Tsugaru group was led primarily by townspeople and some Shintō priests. As will be examined in chapter seven, in the Boshin War, Akita domain and later Hirosaki showed their loyalty to the imperial court, by fighting in support of the new government forces. I will examine the issue of domainal allegiance for the imperial cause and the role of Hirata disciples in and around the Restoration years of 1868 to 1869.

**Characteristics: Townspeople and Shinto Priest-Centered Group**

Finally, I consider characteristics of the Tsugaru group of disciples, compared to other local communities of Hirata disciples seen in chapter one or the case of Morioka or Akita. The Tsugaru group demonstrates a sense of social and cultural autonomy, by virtue of its early core members being townspeople (*chōnin*). As outlined earlier, beginning with townsman Tsuruya Ariyo, six of the first seven from Hirosaki to enrol as disciples in the Hirata academy were townsmen, most of them from merchant backgrounds who pursued poetry. Imamura Mitane, the lone domainal samurai among these first seven, was of merchant background also, and served as a financial patron to the group, purchasing many books from the Iibukinoya for circulation and copying among the members. Ariyo’s letter dated the twelfth month of 1862, notifying his fellow members of the following year’s “seasonal phrases” or subjects for poetry composition, demonstrates that this group of primarily poetic townspeople met freely at Ariyo’s residence. They pursued studies and composition of poetry independently, as a voluntary cultural and scholarly association, free from control by the domainal authorities or the domainal school. In
this sense, the Tsugaru group can very much be considered an example of a civil society in early modern Japan.

Painter and townsman Hirao Rosen joined the group seven years after its inauguration by close friend Ariyo, and one reason for this delay could be that Rosen was not as devoted to *waka* or *haiku* poetry as the other members, and thus, did not find his place in a group so engaged with poetry. Later member and domainal samurai Inomata Shigenaga and “unofficial disciple” Osari Nakaakira served as instructors of Japanese studies in the domainal school on official order, but there is no apparent political influence they exerted on the Tsugaru group from their position as instructors in the school to educate children of the domain’s samurai. This point parallels with the cases of Morioka and Akita, where, as observed above, Chinese studies and Confucianism dominated domainal education. Confucianism was also the core of education in Hirosaki domain’s Keikokan, and Dutch Learning became increasingly prominent from the late 1850s. Hirosaki’s ninth daimyo Tsugaru Yasuchika expressed interest in Hirata *kokugaku*, as did twelfth daimyo Tsugaru Tsuguakira around the Restoration years. However, it can be argued that the low demand overall for “Japanese studies” or *kokugaku* at an official level in the domain, combined with the fact that the early carriers of Hirata’s teachings were Ariyo and other townspeople, prevented Hirata *kokugaku* from penetrating widely into the samurai ranks, or the domainal school. This issue will be taken up again in chapter eight, as I examine the Restoration years and modernization period more closely.

As evident in group leader Ariyo’s “Study Rules” and letters he received from Kanetane, religious practice is clearly a major element of this group’s activities, as seen in group leader Ariyo’s worship of Atsutane’s handwritten poem and calendar, as well as the Master’s portrait. An emphasis on deity and ancestral worship is seen in Ariyo’s “Study Rules” which are very
much in line with Hirata school tendencies, while showing originality in its tenth guideline of “The unopposing nature (muteki) of the visible and invisible is the root of my way.” Such religious practice will be examined in greater detail in chapter six, in Ariyo’s major authored works, such as Kenyū rakuron or Treatise on Enjoyment in the Visible and Invisible Realms, which further pursues the notion of continuity between life and death as Ariyo’s central thesis.

**Conclusion**

As a social context for my discussion on the Tsugaru group of disciples, this chapter outlined the history of Hirosaki domain in late-Tokugawa times. I broadly examined the various conditions that contributed to changes and developments in the local agricultural and capitalist economies, military defence of Ezo against Russian and other Western threats, social life in transition, needs and policies in domainal education, and religious activity. I chronicled the establishment of Hirata kokugaku in Hirosaki domain, beginning with daimyo Tsugaru Yasuchika’s invitation to Atsutane to give lectures in 1820. I then described Tsuruya Ariyo’s correspondence with Ibukinoya’s second head Kanetane, and detailed Ariyo’s role as leader and manager of the Tsugaru group from its inauguration in 1857. Through an examination of various documents, I reconstructed the group’s activities—their study and composition of poetry, studies of the ancient Way, and book purchases from and informational exchange with the Hirata academy.

I compared and contrasted this group with Hirata disciple communities in neighbouring Morioka domain, focusing on Kikuchi Masahiko and Ariyo’s refutation of his work Kōso kyūsho kō, and with Akita, considering their ties to the Hirata family. All three disciple communities, Morioka, Akita, and Hirosaki have varying connections to their local domainal schools through
the appointment of some members as instructors, but the disciple communities maintained independence from these schools, and influence between the two sides was limited. Furthermore, an autonomous character is seen in the Tsugaru group, revolving around Ariyo and other townsmen pursuing poetry, which explains their freedom to conduct scholarship as a civil society, while also accounting for their limited growth and expansion within the local community, especially among the samurai class. Religious thought and practice, including deity and ancestor worship, are a strong element of this group’s activities, as seen in Ariyo’s “Study Rules,” as well as his other major works to be examined in greater detail in chapter six.
Chapter 4 Hirao Rosen I: Life, Art, Thought, Ethnography

Overview

After chronicling the formation of the Tsugaru group of Hirata disciples, describing their activities, and making note of their characteristics in the previous chapter, the present chapter offers a biographical study of the life of a core member of this group, Hirao Rosen, and pays attention to his artwork and writings, leading up to his 1855 visit to the island of Ezo, one year after Hakodate port was officially opened to the West. I focus particularly on Rosen’s development as a painter and scholar in Hirosaki castle town and Tsugaru region, and on how he conceived of his local environment, through his ethnographic records of local life and culture in image and text, years before he seriously took up kokugaku studies and became a Hirata disciple. I demonstrate how Rosen’s first ever journey outside his Tsugaru home “overseas” to Ezo in 1855, his observation and encounter with Ezo locals and Europeans, Americans, and Qing Chinese provide him an opportunity to see the “world” and Japan’s place in it, as well as Tsugaru or Hirosaki domain’s place alongside Matsumae domain, which also upholds a part of Imperial Japan. Rosen’s experiences and writings around this pivotal time are increasingly directed toward studies of ethnography and kokugaku, and I pursue this tendency in greater detail in the following chapter which examines the interplay between regional and national identities in Rosen’s discussion on Tsugaru and Imperial Japan.
Hirao Rosen: Early Years

Hirao Rosen was born on the tenth month of 1808 (Bunka 5) as the eldest son of Hirao Tōjirō, in the fish vending shop Obama-ya located in 80 (banchi) Kon’ya machi, Hirosaki castle town, Mutsu province. Rosen’s name was Sukemune (亮致), and his common name was Hatsusaburō (初三郎). He also used Kōsai (宏斎) as an artist, as well as Rosen (蘆川, 芦川) as a haikai poet. Later, this would be adapted to Rosen with the Chinese characters 鲁儒 or 鲁仙, by which he is best known posthumously. Across the river from Kon’ya-machi was a town that connected to Nishihama, a port town on the Japan Sea coast, and so by virtue of lying on this junction, Kon’ya-machi was a place with a concentration of domainal storehouses for the collection of rice and fish, and saw a regular bustling of activity. Goods were transported and information transmitted here, from Edo and the Kamigata area of Kyoto and Osaka.

From a young age, Rosen has been characterized as naturally intelligent and perceptive (天稟頴悟, 稟性頴敏). It is said that as a small child, Rosen memorized poems from the Ogura hundred poem collection (Hyakunin isshū) which his mother recited while carrying him at her bosom. He came to be called “child prodigy” (奇童) from a young age. From age five, Rosen loved to draw, and would be content to spend his days indoors with brush and paper, as opposed to playing like other children. For fear that their child might be affected by melancholy, Rosen’s parents deprived him of his brush and ink, only for the boy to search for charred pieces of wood

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272 Kojima, p. 17.
and wooden shingles to carry on drawing. At the age of eight, he climbed the 1,625 metre high Mt. Iwaki, then after returning home recreated images of the notable stops on the route in proper order, which astonished those around him. He also depicted the carrying of the mikoshi palanquin (御輿) at the local Hachiman shrine, military march formation, and the positions of sumo (角力) wrestlers at an arena with impressive accuracy. Rosen was praised as a “child artist” (画童) for his light and wondrous brushwork. He was naturally gifted and displayed a high level of curiosity toward the world around him.

Rosen read and memorized children’s readings in the Imagawa jō collection (『今川状』). At age nine, he enrolled in a Terakoya temple school, where he read aloud and became versed in the Four Books and Five Classics. He spent his free time drawing, instead of playing. It is said that at age eleven, Rosen listened to his father’s reading of Taikō ki, Warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s biography, and recited it from memory, which impressed those around him. That same year, Rosen entered the tutelage of Matsuda Kusui (松田駒水 1755-1830), the head of classical studies (経学学頭) at the domainal school Keikokan, where he studied the classics (経学) and history. Kusui recognized that his student excelled beyond the other children, and devoted himself to drawing the natural landscape over play, and therefore sent him to study art with Kudō Gohō (工藤五鳳). After training the young man for some time, Gohō sent Rosen to study with his own teacher, Mōnai Unrin (毛内雲林).

At age 14, Rosen quit school and returned home to assist with the family business. This did not stop him from studying, however, as he would devote his nights to studying, alternating between his two main subjects—learning painting one night, then reading books the next. Rosen continued to work and study in this way, with limited social interaction. One day when he was
age 16 or 17, his parents suggested he go out and enjoy some theatre. Rosen obliged and happily
left home, but secretly went to a friend’s house and spent the day pursuing art studies and
reading. The young man did not conform to his surroundings, and for his unusual ways, he was
ridiculed and branded with the nickname of the otherworldly sennin (immortal 仙人). Perhaps
out of humility and humour, Hatsusaburō added the character “Ro” (魯)²⁷³ to “Sen” (仙) to adopt
the name Rosen 魯仙, which he also rendered 魯僊.

At age 18, Rosen learned writing (書法) and haikai poetry from the prominent poet and
leader of the local haikai circle, Utsumi Sōha (內海草坡). Sōha studied Chinese texts, the
Ancient Way, and Buddhism, and was responsible for the reception of “Ancient Way studies”
(古道学) into Tsugaru. Under Sōha’s tutelage, Rosen came to know his lifelong friend and
scholarly peer Tsuruya Ariyo (1808-71), both of the same age. It is recorded that one day, Ariyo
lamented to Rosen, “Is it not shameful, for us men to be born in the backwater of the Deep East
(東奧僻陬), and wilt in futility along with the grass and trees?”²⁷⁴ Rosen was overjoyed to hear
this, and both he and Ariyo are said to have set off for the cultural hub of Edo. However, while
lodging in Ówani village, an acquaintance recognized them, reported them to their families, and
they were immediately called back home.

It is said that when Rosen repeatedly tried to set out for Edo but failed, he became
depressed and eventually fell ill. His parents worried and arranged for him to learn yōkyoku
singing (謡曲) for noh theatre, tea ceremony (茶道), and flower arrangement. Rosen did not
particularly care for these pursuits, but neither did he want to oppose his parents’ order and so
took them up. Rosen eventually found comfort again in artwork. While tending to the family

²⁷³ The character 魯 can be read “nibui,” dull, or “oroka,” foolish.
²⁷⁴ Nakamura Ryōnoshin, Hirao Rosen Okina, p. 5.
business, Rosen learned from Unrin and eventually studied under Momokawa Gakuan who was versed in both painting and literature. He then learned the secrets of Yamato painting colouring (Yamato-e chakushoku) from Kano Harukawa’s disciple, Imamura Keiju (今村渓寿), and other painting techniques from Edo painter Sō Shihō (宋紫峯). All the while, Rosen continued to work, assisting with the family business.

At age 23, Rosen married Tomeko (登留子、登女 Tome), daughter of the Masuda family of merchants. From around this time, the family finances were strained, and Rosen had to devote himself solely to the business, putting aside art and his studies for seven years. At 30, Rosen deplored to his father, “My nature is not suited to managing the family business. Fortunately, younger brother Saburōji has this [nature], and so I ask you, please pass my inheritance on to him. I wish to live independently and solely research on the way of art (画道).” Rosen’s father granted his eldest son’s request, permitting younger son Saburōji to manage the business. Rosen changed residence to nearby 178 Kon’yachō, and resumed his artwork and studies.

1837 (Tenpō 8), the year Rosen became independent and began his career as an artist, immediately follows the Tenpō famine of 1833 to 1836. Rosen experienced the difficulty of making a living on his artwork, and his family faced dire poverty, as he could no longer rely on his inheritance as the eldest son. Out of sympathy, his parents gave Rosen some clothes and food. Rosen’s biography records that he gave these gifts to his wife Tomeko, and handed her the following message:

Although I pledged a vow of marriage with you for life, the poverty of our family is as you see. However, no matter how great a famine we may face, I vow not to abandon my research on the way of art. Because of this, the family finances will increasingly fall in

275 Ibid. p. 6.
poverty, and finally we could not avoid the plight of starvation. The ancients also say that a woman’s happiness and sadness simply lie in the wealth or poverty of her husband. You are still young. Quickly leave and seek a good relationship with another.\textsuperscript{276}

Thus Rosen wrote in the customary “three and a half lines” (\textit{mikudari han}) of a divorce paper and delivered it to Tomeko. Tomeko was astonished by this and cried. However, she tore the paper and replied, “Though I may be misfortunate, once receiving orders from my parents to be betrothed to you, how can I desire wealth or success with another, as long as I keep my vow with you to death? Starvation is a fate of the times. Wealth is also a fate of the times. In all things, I simply follow the fate of the times.”\textsuperscript{277}

In response, Rosen three times tried to convince his wife to leave, but she would not listen. Finally, Tomeko sold clothing and books, in order to gather brush and paper, and encouraged her husband, “Devote your heart to this and endeavor in your studies! Never let poverty interfere with your will.”\textsuperscript{278} Thus encouraged by the unwavering support of his wife, Rosen pursued his artwork with renewed will and determination.\textsuperscript{279} He worked through sleepless nights and extreme cold. On days that his hands could no longer endure the cold, he is said to have soaked his hands in icy water until he felt warmth returning to them, then resumed to take up his brush. Years of devotion led to his advancement in skill, and at age 34 or 35, he gained recognition and his works came to be sought after, leading to a more stable life.

Nakamura describes Rosen’s character as “honest and straight” (\textit{誠直}), with a tendency to record all accounts that he hears.\textsuperscript{280} This is seen in his meticulous records of written and oral

\textsuperscript{276} Ibid., p. 7
\textsuperscript{277} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{278} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{279} Rosen and Tomeko’s granddaughter Doki Yasuko, reflects on hearing her grandmother tell her this story, of her determination to support her husband and the actual struggles they faced over the years. See her account in the same biography edited by Nakamura. Ibid. pp. 61-62.
\textsuperscript{280} Ibid., p. 9.
accounts of strange, mysterious, and spiritual things and phenomena in his *Gappo kidan* (『合浦奇談』), or *Strange Tales of Gappo*, and *Tani no hibiki* (『谷の響』), or *Echoes of the Valley*. Rosen was known to regularly display flowers on his desk, or carp and other fish in a water tank to observe in close detail. Rosen’s artistic productions include books of sketches and paintings of nature—including flowers, fish, animals, people, and various objects from daily life. He stressed the importance of directly observing objects and people before drawing or painting their image, and is even known to have severely scolded a young disciple for painting the image of a Chinese child (唐子) without adequately studying the appearance and behaviour of actual children.

Rosen urged that one begin with the true image of original objects, and idealize them later. He is also quoted as saying, “first follow the law (法), then later leave the law.” In order to accurately depict people of the past with accuracy, he studied *kojitsu*, or rituals, laws, and etiquette of the past. His books of sketches and paintings also include those devoted to military armory and weaponry. Rosen moreover studied and collected ancient earth and stone vessels, as well as other archaeological findings, namely in the Tsugaru area. He provides sketches of unearthed vessels and artifacts, accompanied by explanations in *Gappo kidan* (*Strange Tales of Gappo*). Early modern records of this domain show interest and excavations of sites from early on, including those of Jōmon sites, such as Kamegaoka, located in the southwest part of Tsugaru plain in marshland just west of current-day Tsugaru city.

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281 Some of Rosen’s sketchbooks are archived in the Hirosaki City Library, Hirosaki City Museum, Aomori Prefectural Museum, and in Tokyo.
282 Nakamura, p. 53.
283 Ibid.
284 Ibid. pp. 31-32.
285 *Tsugaru ittōshi* (『津軽一統志』), a record compiled by the ruling Tsugaru family from the 18th century, gives detailed descriptions of archaeological excavations of earthen vessels in Kamegaoka. In the late-Tokugawa to early
Rosen’s career and thought as a Hirata disciple and *kokugaku* scholar make up a major topic in itself, and I discuss this in greater detail in chapters five and eight. To outline in simple terms, Rosen joined his friends Tsuruya Ariyo, Imamura Mitane and others as Imperial loyalists (勤王家, 勤皇家) and joined the Hirata academy in 1864. He also learned Chinese and Imperial studies (皇学) from domainal school instructor Kanematsu Sekkyo (兼松石居 or Seigon 成言), who also became one of Rosen’s biographers. Sekkyo records in Rosen’s biography that “at forty, he was awakened to the right way of Imperial Studies (皇学)”. As Kojima Yasunori rationalizes, this “Imperial Studies” likely refers to Hirata *kokugaku* which he takes up in later years, and when considering it was his *haikai* teacher Sōha who transmitted Ancient Way studies to Tsugaru, we can imagine that Rosen received this influence under his teacher’s tutelage, and at around forty he gained conviction in his *kokugaku* studies.286

**Study of Folk culture**

Rosen was a prolific ethnographer or researcher of the folk culture and life of the Tsugaru region. While I use the terms “ethnography” and “folklore studies” here, I make a distinction between these and the modern academic discipline of *minzokugaku* or folklore studies, pioneered by Yanagita Kunio, Orikuchi Shinobu, and others in the late Meiji period and onward. Later in this chapter, I will discuss these early studies which preceded modern “ethnography” and “folklore studies,” and the transition from early modern to modern forms, contextualizing Rosen’s activities within these movements. Rosen’s interest in ethnography or folklore studies is

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reflected in his paintings and drawings of local Tsugaru landscape or commoners’ life and culture, his major treatises written later in life, and his waka poems which he composed throughout his life and collected in his Hirao Rosen kashū, or Hirao Rosen Poetry Anthology, likely around 1877 (Meiji 10), in his later years. All of such works, most of which will be discussed in greater detail later, are invaluable visual and written records of local commoner culture in Tsugaru society, reproduced and cited regularly in contemporary Aomori prefecture, in studies and celebrations of local history and culture, particularly in introducing the annual Neputa festival from late July to early August.

Tsugaru fūzokuga maki (Images of Tsugaru customs), features colourful paintings of a number of local cultural and everyday activities, beginning with “Neputa no zu” (Neputa image), and also featuring “Bon odori no zu” (Bon festival dance image), “Oyama sankei no zu” (Mount Iwaki Worship image), “Fuyu no saryō fūkei to yōgu” (Scenes of winter work and tools). “Neputa no zu” depicts a festive scene similar to those of contemporary times that take place for one week from the end of July into August. Over a hundred people are seen marching in a procession, some men in only loincloth, carrying large Neputa floats lit from inside depicting mythical and historical figures, warriors, an octopus, an assortment of local produce, and a castle. There are taiko drummers, and people dancing, and some buying goods from merchants. “Bon odori no zu” depicts groups of people performing bon dance in the summer festival of the seventh month to welcome back souls of the dead. Some groups are comprised of people in

287 Tsugaru fūzokuga maki is known to exist as reproduced versions, whereas Rosen’s original has yet to be located. Known reproductions are one by Rosen’s disciple Satō Senshi (佐藤仙之), and a reproduction of this work by Kimura Senshū (木村仙秀), disciple of Mikami Sennen (三上仙年), one of Rosen’s prominent disciple painters. Senshi’s version is privately owned by Hasegawa Takashi in Hirosaki, and Senshū’s belonged to the collection of the late Moriyama Tairō. Senshi’s version includes a preface “Kyū han Hirosaki fūzoku ga jo,” but Senshū’s contains an inscription, “Tsugaru fūzokuga maki.” Though it is unknown how Rosen himself referred to the work, I use the latter which has become the accepted name. Please see a reproduction (Senshi’s version) and Hitoshi Narita’s description in “247 Tsugaru fūzokuga maki” in Shinpen Hirosaki shishi shiryo hen 3 (Kinsei hen 2). Ed. Shinpen Hirosaki shishi hensan iinkai. 2000. Preface, pp. 775-78.
elaborate costumes of ogres, and animals, as well as samurai and ladies with oversized heads. One of the groups includes an individual holding a large umbrella. A larger group is dancing in a circle waving their arms in one direction. There are male and female adults as well as children in the scene. Musicians, many in varying costumes, are playing shamisen and flutes.

“Iwaki sankei no zu” recreates the Mount Iwaki worship, a festival to pray for a plentiful harvest, with pilgrims setting out from local towns and villages on the first day of the eighth month, lodging along the way, worshipping at the Iwaki shrine, then climbing the mountain through the night, to watch the sunrise atop the summit. In the image, men are climbing up the slope, carrying nobori banners and streamers. Only men are depicted here, as women were restricted from climbing this mountain until this rule was abolished in Meiji. The scroll also shows a scene of pilgrims after descending from the mountain. There are many in costume dancing vigorously, many wearing tall eboshi hats, some with fans in hand, accompanied by a group of taiko drummers. Shishi mai lion dancers are also performing, flanked by more dancers.

These images of the Mount Iwaki harvest festival nicely complement Rosen’s individual print of the same name, Iwaki sankei zu. This print includes Rosen’s inscription, “Ōshū province (奥州), Tsugaru, Mount Iwaki, Image of going to and returning from worship, from the first until the fifteenth day of the eighth month.” The colourful print depicts multiple dimensions of the Mount Iwaki worship, and the layout of the images suggest transition in the activities of this festival. The foreground shows a bustling scene of worshippers, merchants tending shop, taiko drummers, dancers, and entertainers. Several men are carrying nobori banners of “Iwaki san daigongen” (Mount Iwaki Avatar). Our view is led from the busy festive scene on the right,

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289 Hirao Rosen “Iwaki sankei zu.” As labelled, this is a print prepared by Seiji (成治版) in Hirosaki, and reprinted (再写) by Ukiyoe Artist, Utagawa Sadahide (歌川貞秀, 1807-79?) in Edo. One print is housed at Hirosaki City Museum as well as another at Mitsunobu kō no yakata (Lord Mitsunobu Museum) in Ajigasawa, Aomori.
toward the more serene atmosphere of the shrines of Mount Iwaki shrine visited by worshippers, which is represented in much smaller scale. Clouds separate these two scenes of the bustling people and shrine from the image of Mount Iwaki, as the main object of journey, as if to define the line between sacred and secular.

“Yuki fune hiki no zu” (Sled pulling image) is another impressive image, this time a winter scene, of several tens of men pulling a large object by rope on large ski-like sleds (yuki fune). Aside from this party are smaller groups such as a high-ranking samurai, wearing a big-shouldered haori vest, being pulled in his elaborate seat on sleds, accompanied by several attendants. Another man is pulling what could be a bushel of rice or barrel on sleds, with a small boy sitting aboard. There are images also of adults and children playing in the snow. In one, men are laughing at another who fell into a trap pit they had set up. Children are being pulled on a sled along a slope. Rosen depicts a comical scene of children piling on top of each other, with a description: “For those who fall when riding the slope, there is a rule called ‘nihotsumu,’ a game in which children pile atop when someone falls. This is obviously a case of the rule being observed.”

There are others carefully climbing and descending the snowy slopes and paths, with some slipping and falling.

In the ensuing “Tōki sagyō no zu” (Winter work and tools image), men are clearing snow from off a building roof and making roads with it. Rosen describes the different jobs involved in the process, and provides diagrams of tools and gear used for such work in the snow. A man presses down the snow to make a road (街道), using a “yuki oshi” or snow press, a tool consisting of a long shaft with a long flat piece of wood on its end. The next man treads on and hardens the snow also in the road making process, wearing cylindrical “yuki fumi” or snow tread

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on his feet, cut out of tawara straw bags. He is holding a “kaheshiki” or shovel. Two men are flattening snow also using “kaheshiki,” one of them wearing another kind of flat, broad-based “yuki fumi” made of tawara bags for carrying coal. Two men are shoveling heavy snow from off of the roof. Another man is cutting blocks out of “accumulated snow from the second month” with saws, for more road making, while another is pulling out those cut blocks. Rosen’s list of snow tools and gear include objects not mentioned above such as other variations of footwear, and ski-like sleds for transporting objects.

Tsugaru fūzokuga maki and Iwaki sankei zu are representative works of Rosen that demonstrate his fine detail to folk culture of commoners in daily life in the local Tsugaru setting. Rosen’s policy of depicting images of objects and people only after closely observing their originals is seen in his works on Tsugaru. Next we will examine how he is able to apply this artistic philosophy to his journey to Ezo in 1855. We will also see how 1855 and the years surrounding become an important period for Rosen’s scholarly thought and tendencies going forward.

1855 Visit to Ezo

On the second day of the seventh month in 1853 (Kaei 6), Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry led four black steamships to Uraga Bay in Edo. The four ships mounted sixty-one guns, carried 967 men, and were six or more times larger than any ship in Japan.291 Perry stated he had been ordered to deliver a letter from President Filmore directly to the emperor, and sought trade privileges with Japan. After asserting his demands and instilling fear in the bakufu

and daimyo, Perry left to replenish supplies in China, then returned again in the second month of
the following year, 1854 (Kaei 7). In 1854, following negotiations between Perry and Hayashi,
the head of the Shōheikō Academy in Edo, the Tokugawa Bakufu signed amity treaties with the
United States, England, and Russia. The Japan-U.S. Amity Treaty was signed in the third month,
and guaranteed perpetual peace between the two countries, the opening of Shimoda and
Hakodate ports, the right to purchase supplies of firewood, water, coal, and food, and the
protection of American castaways, and ensured the United States’ status as “most favoured
nation.”

Also in 1854, the bakufu, out of fear of Russian encroachment southward on Japanese
territory, declared Ezo (present-day Hokkaido) under Bakufu control, and re-established a
magistrate in the port town of Hakodate, located on the southern coast of Ezo. In the following
year of 1855 (Ansei 2), the bakufu ordered the northern domains to carry out the security of
Ezo, and Hirosaki and Morioka domains received official order to defend and control West
Ezo.

The events of Perry’s arrival, heightened concerns about the Tokugawa state’s military
capabilities, and the opening of the country, are all subjects of the numerous official documents,
letters, and treatises copied, edited, and compiled in the six-volume fūsetsu gaki bulletin, Taihei
shinwa (『太平新話』), or New Writings on the Vast World, which Rosen completed in the
second month of 1855 (Ansei 2). The voluminous Taihei shinwa reveals Rosen’s awareness of

292 The “most favoured nation” clause is a feature of the “unequal treaties” signed between imperial powers and
Asian states from the mid-nineteenth century, which granted to the superior nation any and all privileges and rights
promised to other nations with which they negotiated agreements.
293 These northern domains included Sendai, Morioka, Akita, Hiroaki, Matsumae, Aizu, and Tsuruoka.
295 Taihei shinwa (『太平新話』) is archived at Hirosaki City Library. This collection begins with “Memorandum
from Uraga magistrate on Kaei 6 (1853) arrival of foreign vessels” 「嘉永六年異国船渡来につき浦賀奉行よりの
届け書」, and letters (上書) from daimyo to the bakufu, letters from Russia, and documents depicting local life in
Matsumae. There are also various colour images including one of Commodore Perry, American warships, and
several maps. The volume contains Kyūmu issoku (A Principle of Urgent Matters) written in 1853 (Ansei 1) by
such current events and his ability to obtain such information, and the work overall is reminiscent of Hirata Atsutane’s *Chishima no shiranami* (*White Waves of the Kuriles*, 1807) compiled almost half a century before, following Russian and British ships’ arrivals to Japanese coastal waters.

On the eleventh day of the sixth month of 1855 (Ansei 2), Rosen left his home in Hirosaki castle town to embark on a journey to Ezo. His 33-day excursion featured crossing the Tsugaru Strait to travel to Matsumae port and castle town, where he stayed two days, before traveling eastward through mountainous forests and the southern coast of Ezo, visiting villages along the way, then arriving in Hakodate where he stayed 18 days. Rosen records his observations and experiences of this Ezo visit in writing and images in *Hakodate kikō* (*箱館紀行*), or *Hakodate Travelogue*, and *Yōi meiwa* (*洋夷茗話*), or *An Account of Foreigners*. In the openings of both *Hakodate kikō* and *Yōi meiwa*, after the text’s title, Rosen

Chōshū scholar and military strategist Yoshida Torajirō (Shōin, 1830–1859) which discusses Imperial Japan’s military preparedness in the face of foreign encroachment, and explains the importance and the need for good naval defence in Japan: “For those born in the Imperial Country, how can they not reflect on the past and on returning to the militant past? The four sides of the Imperial Country are all ocean and there is nowhere that is without barbaric contact. Also Edo is where the barbarian-subduing government is located.” (*Taihei shinwa*, folio 46, front) It is not clear how and through whom Rosen obtained such current documents, but one can imagine his source may be other fellow merchants who regularly dealt with ships from Edo, Osaka–Kyoto areas, and Ezo, such as the wealthy Kanagiya merchant house, which produced the Kanagiya diary, full of detailed information on late-Tokugawa political and social change, as well as the local life of commoners. Hasegawa, *Hirosaki han*. pp. 198–203.

As Moriyama Taitarō explains, Rosen completed *Hakodate kikō* (archived at Hirosaki City Library) about a year and one month after his return from Ezo on the 22nd day of the eighth month in 1856 (Ansei 3), and this work is a revised version of *Matsumae kikō* (Matsumae travelogue) archived at Hakodate City Central Library. *Matsumae kikō* has been reproduced in 1989 by Hakodate City Central Library as *Kyōdo shiryō fukusei sōsho* (* têmoku hachi*), and in *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō* *shūsei*, Volume 20, *Tanken, kikō, chiri, hōi*. San’ichi shobō, 1972, along with Moriyama’s introduction and annotation. Hakodate kikō has been reproduced in *Seikatsu no koten* sōsho: *Yōi meiwa, Hakodate kikō*. Yasaka shoten, 1974.

*Yōi meiwa* complements *Hakodate kikō*, and contains several tens of accounts observing Westerners. It was completed on the tenth day of the eighth month in 1856 (Ansei 3), and this is a revised version of *Hakodate ijindan* (housed at Hakodate Central City Library). *Yōi meiwa* was reproduced as *Aomori kenritsu toshokan kyōdo sōsho* *daisan shō* (*jiyūshū*), in December, 1970. *Matsumae kikō* and *Hakodate ijindan* are later revised into *Hakodate kikō and Yōi meiwa*, respectively, but between the two editions there were two sketchbooks, *Matsumae fūkei* and *Hakodate ikoku jinbutsuzu*, both housed at the Northern Studies Collection, Hokkaido University Library. I write about the changes and editing processes between *Matsumae kikō*, *Matsumae fūkei*, and *Hakodate kikō*, as well as how this is reflected in Rosen’s later works in my “Matsumae fūkei: Hokkaidō daigaku fuzoku toshokan Hoppō kankei shiryōshitsuzō”
writes, “Hirosaki recluse Hirao Rosen’s Records” (「弘陽逸民平尾魯僊喘」), identifying himself as an “itsumin” (「逸民」), and recluse or hermit, not bound to public office, but living his life freely, pursuing his artwork and studies. Coming from a merchant household, Rosen identifies himself as a townsperson of Hirosaki, independent of social classifications. In this sense, Rosen’s travelogues of his journey to Ezo are valuable records of Ezo, and particularly of Matsumae and Hakodate of that period, from a commoner’s perspective.298

The primary purpose of Rosen’s journey to Ezo appears to have been for exploration and research to fulfill personal interests, but he was also likely fulfilling public duty in drawing images (図) for Hirosaki domain. Hirosaki domain’s military base was located in Chiyogadai, on the outskirts of Hakodate, and Yōi meiwa records that on the 28th day of the sixth month, Rosen, accompanied by three dominal samurai, visited Chiyogadai and produced images of it.299 It is known that Rosen shared his experiences in Ezo with others, as evidenced by Tsuruya Ariyo’s essay, “Ezo ga kyūsen, koto no kotoba” (A few words on Ezo bow and arrows, and harps), in which Ariyo writes about the Ezo harps that Rosen had seen during his visit to Hakodate.300 Also, in a letter written on the eleventh day of the sixth month in 1869 to Shimozawa Yasumi, Rosen

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298 Images and passages of Rosen’s Ezo travelogues are cited in many works, including local histories of Aomori and Hokkaido. They are also reproduced at the historical display and elevator of the Goryōkaku Tower of Hakodate, built on the site of the Bakufu stronghold in late-Tokugawa.

299 “On the 28th day of the sixth month, I was accompanied by two samurai Iwasawa and Ishibiya, and another samurai belonging to both of their battalions, three in total, and went to draw an image of a place called Chiyogadai which manages a military base.” Yōi meiwa. p. 102.

300 Tsuruya Ariyo, “Ezo ga kyūsen, koto no kotoba”, in Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei gakugai hen. p. 537.
expresses his desire to send Yōi meiwa and Hakodate kikō to Ibukinoya academy head Hirata Kanetane, stating, “I wish to spread these in society as much as possible.”

Rosen’s 1855 journey to Ezo during this transformative period in the region’s history, also had major influence on his scholarly activities and thought formation in the years to follow. Let us closely examine Hakodate kikō and Yōi meiwa in order to see how in Ezo, Rosen “discovered” the world, and in conjunction, rediscovered the “Divine country” (皇国 mikuni) and “Tsugaru.” First, let us look at how Rosen identifies the first local community he sees in Ezo within a context of “Imperial Japan”. After arriving in Matsumae late on the 16th day, Rosen begins to survey the port town from the following morning, noting a shrine and temple, residences, ships sailing in and out of the harbor, sailors loading and unloading cargo to and from their ships, and the bustling commercial and merchant activity taking place on the streets. A townsman and merchant by birth, Rosen confirms the prosperity of the island as he had heard it reported, stating, “Indeed, the fact that this island has remarkable prosperity and local customs is not a falsehood, and testifies to the riches on this land.”

Despite witnessing this economic activity, however, Rosen laments that the vast potential of this island is not realized due to its incomplete development:

Ah, what a waste! Sadly, if there was even a single valiant figure, who laid down irrigation, reclaimed paddies and fields, cleared the reef, and established a foreign-style base, adding wealth on wealth and strengthening the country’s base, like adding wings to a tiger, would it not respectfully profit the Divine Country (皇国 mikuni) for ten thousand generations, and benefit not only this single island?

301 Hirao Rosen letter to Shimozawa Yasumi. 11th day of sixth month, Meiji 2 (1869), Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei gakugei hen. p. 617. Note that 1869 (Meiji 2) is a correction from 1868 (Meiji 1) as rendered in Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei gakugei hen.
302 Hirao Rosen, Hakodate kikō, p. 121
303 Ibid. pp. 121, 128.
Rosen deplores that there does not appear “a single valiant figure” to develop Matsumae agriculturally through laying down irrigation and reclaiming the land, as a port city through clearing the reef to improve naval access, or in military defense through building a foreign-style base. Here, Rosen expresses his vision of Matsumae as upholding a vital part of the Divine Country’s economy.

Above, we saw how Rosen regarded Matsumae’s place and role in the Divine Country, in terms of development and economic prosperity, and now in the following passage, we are provided a glimpse at Rosen’s vision of the “people of the divine country” (皇国人 mikuni no hito), through his encounter with youth in Hakodate:

On the night of the Two-Star Festival (Tanabata), twenty-three youth of Hakodate joined together, some carrying the Nebuta, some pulling the rope and chanted, “Yasa, yasa,” some even removed their clothes. There were those wearing headbands, some daringly jumped around, and until the very end they followed and propped up [the float]. When I see their attitude toward the people of the imperial country (皇国人 mikuni no hito), is it not insulting and underhanded, how they brush them off as if they had become familiar with them? Because we cannot understand each other’s languages, this is difficult to determine.304

Rosen describes the lively participation of Hakodate youth in the Tanabata Festival, where they are propping up a Nebuta float, andchanting and jumping, donning festival attire. Despite the fact that these youth live in the “wajin” or “Japanese” territory of Hakodate, and are partaking in a common “Japanese” or “Tsugaru” cultural event, Rosen distinguishes them from “people of the imperial country,” and a number reasons can be considered. For one, Rosen points out what he deems as improper and disrespectful attitudes of the youths toward the “people of the imperial country,” for brushing them off with an air of familiarity. Second, the language barrier between the Hakodate youth and himself suggests a difference in backgrounds—the youths might be

304 Hirao Rosen, Yōi meiwa, p. 103.
children of migrant workers from a region with a markedly foreign dialect, or they may even have been Ainu, though the former seems more plausible. In any case, such personal encounters afforded by this journey in the racial, ethnic, and cultural mosaic of Ezo allowed Rosen to “flesh out” his visions of identity, of who were and were not the “people of the imperial country.” Keeping in mind these boundaries of identity, let us now examine Rosen’s encounter with a new external other.

**Yōi meiwa**’s opening passage immediately depicts a very “globalized” Matsumae and Hakodate, whose residents were exposed and had even grown accustomed to the Westerners’ presence. Rosen’s early observations are striking in that the boundaries separating the different Western nations are blurred:

This year, Ansei 2 (1855) Kinotou [52nd year of the cycle] summer, late in the sixth month, the foreign ships docked at Matsumae and Hakodate ports were of four countries: North America, England, France, and Germany. The ships’ build are roughly the same, and it is only by the design of their flags that the countries are distinguishable. At the time, eight ships were docked, and from these ships 30 to 40 people, or 50 to 60 at one time, a total of roughly two to three hundred people, came up to shore daily, and they come and go through the city of Hakodate, as well as Kameda village (four kilometres from Hakodate) and Arikawa village (12 kilometres from Hakodate), and even if they rub shoulders with the locals, they have become accustomed to it and do not even turn and look. I now refer to several things I saw and have made them topics of casual discussion.**

At the very start of his travelogue, Rosen depicts the scene of foreign ships from four countries docking in the Ezo harbour towns, noting that these Westerners are coming on shore in the several tens, and that in total they number in the three to four hundred. Rosen observes that the ships’ designs are more or less the same and “it is only by the design of their flags that the countries are distinguishable.” This lack of clear distinctions between Western nations is a point

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that Rosen makes repeatedly throughout this text. Furthermore, he expresses surprise at how these Westerners have blended into the local scene, such that residents of Hakodate and nearby villages could make slight physical contact with them, without even showing a reaction. He discovers an international society within a northern Japanese port town where foreign encounters have become mutually mundane.

This journey to Ezo provides Rosen direct contact with Americans and Europeans, and observations of how peoples of different countries communicate and interact. These direct observations come to shape his views of foreign people and cultures, beyond mere conceptual views:

The way that people of England [Igirisu] call their own country sounds like “Engeresu,” and America sounds like just “merica,” with that pronunciation the tip of the tongue is very light as if the sound is emitted from the teeth. Also, even though their speech is fast, the five sounds [vowels] are well distinguished, the high and low [in intonation] of word endings is similar to the twang in the western provinces of our country. Because Russians are unseen, they are unknown, but those of America, England, France, and Germany are all heard, and yet people like me have difficulty in differentiating between them. Further, the people of these countries converse and interact with each other such that it appears as though there is no distinction between oneself and other. Their headgear, clothes, and facial appearance and complexion look the same and it is difficult to distinguish between them. 307

Rosen dwells on the “difficulty in differentiating between” Americans, English, French, and Germans, remarking that these people of different countries speak and have social interaction with one another, appearing, “as if there is no distinction between oneself and other.” Rosen is citing the mutual language(s) being used, and the lack of distinction in appearance and dress, as well as their casualness of interactions. Such vague separation between “oneself and other,” and blurring of boundaries among Westerners, appears to be a revelation to Rosen, who by contrast,

307 Ibid. p. 22.
drew a clear distinction between “people of the imperial country” and those youth from Hakodate.

While Rosen is unable to clearly distinguish the origins of the ships and the people aboard them, he is quick to begin a physical description and comparisons of these Westerners to the “people of the imperial country” (mikuni no hito 皇国の人) or people of Japan. Rosen’s comparisons between the Westerners and Japanese begin with physical stature and height, noting the foreigners to be generally much taller, with height ranging in centimetres in the 170s. He also differentiates these Westerners’ manner of dress and walking in terms of their social rank, with officials carrying swords, dressing well, and walking in brisk, long, and ordered strides, which contrasts against the juniors whose strides are fast but disordered and unregulated. This is simply the first of numerous observations of Westerners’ practices that lead to comparisons with Divine Japanese on a variety of matters including hairstyle, clothing, eating and drinking habits, slaughter of livestock, Christian funerary rites, and the appearance and manners of women, emphasizing the more distinguished sensibilities of the Japanese in many cases. The text is full of racial prejudices common for those times. While racial and cultural differences are pointed out, however, Rosen displays a level of relative objectivity in his observations—perhaps those of an objective scholar or artist—that contrast with Atsutane’s descriptions of foreigners that were often distastefully xenophobic.

308 Ibid. p. 3.
309 While Atsutane credited the Dutch for their skill in science and technology, and identified them as superior to the Chinese whom he also labeled as unclean and deceitful, his descriptions of the Dutch also include expressions of a vicious xenophobia: “As everyone knows who has seen one, the Dutch are taller than other people and have fair complexions, big noses, and white stars in their eyes. By nature they are lighthearted and often laugh. They are seldom angry, a fact that does not accord with their appearance and is a seeming sign of weakness. They shave their beards, but their nails are not dirty like the Chinese. Their clothing is extremely beautiful and ornamented with gold and silver. Their eyes are really just like those of a dog. They are long from the waist downwards, and the slenderness of their legs makes them resemble animals. When they urinate they lift one leg, the way dogs do. Moreover, apparently because the backs of their feet do not reach the ground, they fasten wooden heels to their shoes, which make them look all the more like dogs. This may also explain why a Dutchman’s penis appears to be
One major conclusion that Rosen arrives at, concerning the Western nation, is that they are a very real and imminent force that Japan cannot take lightly. Throughout Hakodate kikō, Rosen observes the Westerners’ naval and military technology that he perceives as superior to Japan’s. Furthermore, Rosen records a humiliating experience told to him by Tadashichi, head clerk of the wealthy merchant Yamadaya in Hakodate, which exposes Japan’s vulnerability against the West:

He then took out a map of the globe and pointed to the large countries here and there, and watching him raise his hand and looking up, I wonder if he means that to identify countries belonging to him. Also, his pointing to Japan and laughing, must mean he is laughing at its small size. He made many hand gestures and pointed to Japan, as if to say, “obtaining this would be terribly easy.” Also, he circled the country of Japan with his finger, he clasped his hands, and what he said was, “It is possible to circle Japan in ten days.” All of them scorned this country as a small country, all of them did so, even the sailors. “They laughed heartily that the boats are also small and easily become dismantled, and the guns also are small and are useless for military use.” So spoke the man named Tadashichi.310

What is notable here is that, while Rosen discusses the potential of Japan’s military defeat and colonization at the hands of Western powers, he does not add a rebuttal to challenge such an idea as Atsutane did in the face of ridicule that Japan was a small country, stating, “No matter how large it is, an inferior country is an inferior country. No matter how small and narrow it is, a superior country is a superior country.”311 Rosen seems to accept fatalistically, Japan’s vulnerable position against the West, without challenging or confronting it.

However, as Rosen witnesses first hand, it is not merely Japan at risk, but even mighty Qing China suffered a severe defeat at the hands of England, France, and other European powers in the Opium Wars that began just over a decade earlier from 1839 to 1842—an ominous sign for

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310 Hakodate kikō, pp. 48-49.
311 Hirata Atsutane, “Kodō taii,” quoted in When Tengu Talk, Wilburn Hansen, p. 192. Hansen notes that this response is almost a direct quote of Norinaga’s arugment.
those paying attention in Asia and Tokugawa Japan. He witnesses this reality in some Qing officials in Hakodate:

Now, these two who appeared to be officials came to a Pure Land temple called Jōgenji, and in their written dialogue with the priests said, “In recent years, we went to war with England over trivial matters, and the Qing court lost profit and all people fell into terrible misery. Our king showed compassion and desired to save us, yielding military force to make peace.”… These men are distinguished officials even in Guangzhou, and the ten or more men are retainers of these two. Also, everyone suddenly shed tears over the English employing these vassals. Ah, even amid these changing times, it pains my heart to hear this!312

This is a remarkable passage, written sympathetically toward Qing China’s miserable disposition after military defeat, which included paying reparations and making territorial and legal concessions to the prevailing countries through the Treaty of Nanjing. In seeing several men of the Qing court being employed as vassals by the British, Rosen witnesses the harsh realities of a country experiencing military defeat, and lets out a sigh at the predicament of the Qing Chinese.

Rosen was able to see the Tokugawa bakuhan system in part, represented by the recently re-established Hakodate magistrate. In the appendix to Hakodate kikō, Rosen observes the orderly nature of Hakodate on a whole, and praises the governance of the magistrate.

Since Takeuchi Lord of Shimotsuke of the Hakodate magistrate has taken office, governance is extremely peaceful, taxes and corvee (課役) are minimized, rice prices are lowered, and relief rice 「堤守粮 ヨウイマイ」 is rented out and the poor are helped. At that time, even though foreign ships would dock one after another, and foreigners would come and go through the streets, there is no further unrest, and the people are devoting themselves to and enjoying their work. Therefore, the Nebuta event which had been discontinued has been re-established. Offering this as an exhibit for those above (上観に供へ、下興を尽くせる), and stirring excitement for those below, fully constitutes benevolent government (仁政), and everybody says to one another that this is something venerable.313

312 Ibid. pp. 65, 68.
313 Ibid. p. 189.
At the close of *Hakodate kikō*’s appendix, Rosen highly praises the accomplishments of Takeuchi Lord of Shimotsuke Yasunori (1807~?) who had been appointed to the Hakodate magistrate in 1854 (Ansei 1). Hakodate’s port had been opened and Americans and Europeans had been permitted to enter the ports, and since then, Takeuchi has taken office and has succeeded in governing Hakodate and his governance is praised as “benevolent government.” In this way, Rosen saw the bakufu government represented in the newly “opened” port town of Hakodate, and here expresses his approval of the Hakodate magistrate directly, and the Tokugawa regime indirectly.

**Between Ezo and Tsugaru**

As we have seen above, Rosen conducted comparisons between foreign countries and the divine country, and furthermore, as Moriyama Taitarō points out, in the same appendix to *Hakodate kikō* cited above, Rosen describes the landscape, people, lifestyle, dialects, clothing, folk customs, and mode of life (習俗, 風俗) of a number of villages in Ezo, while at times comparing them to his native Tsugaru which he also introduces. Here I will present some examples of the local observance of ceremonies (冠婚葬祭). For example, he notes that in Hakodate, “according to the folk custom of this area, all boys, regardless of being poor or rich, all four classes preserved their topknot, and when they turned 16 or 17, they would celebrate their coming of age [genpuku] with an Eboshi oya (烏帽子親)”.314 This individual who crowned the young man with the eboshi hat, also prepared the ceremonial dress for the occasion, and received a “gift” (幣物) from the father. There is a folk custom (習俗), such that when a girl

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marries, she was required to go through someone called a “kaneoya” or one who professionally blackens teeth, and they were otherwise not allowed to blacken their own teeth. In such a case too, there is a gift-giving ritual.

Concerning funerals, Rosen explains that when relatives or the above-mentioned “kaneoya” pass away, “members of their group” conduct a wake for 17 days following the funeral procession. He notes several points in common in the local funerary customs with “our country” Tsugaru. Rosen writes, “sending red bean rice (強飯調羹) to express appreciation is the same as in our country (当邦)”.

Also, whether those involved are affluent or poor, everyone uses a palanquin (轎) instead of a coffin (柩), and “people of wealthy houses use a four-sided coffin (四方棺) from inside the temple,” likely carried by four men on their shoulders, and “the view of the procession bears no difference from our country (吾邦).”

Rosen also records in detail his observations of shrines, temples, and festivals in Ezo, as well as the “Festival of the Soul in the seventh month” (七月魂祭) or Bon Festival. His description of the Neputa festival as a point of comparison between Ezo and Tsugaru culture is especially important. In Ezo, Neputa occurs on the sixth day of the seventh month, and is called the Tanabata Festival (七月祭). Children gather materials from their “schools” to create what “is called kaku (plaque) Neputa in our dialect” of Tsugaru. On this plaque, they write “Tanabata Festival” and images are displayed. Additionally, people’s names are inscribed inside the plaque, it is adorned with various decorations, and a tanzaku sheet is tied on. Affluent people prepare the Neputa elaborately, and “the decorations are the same as our country.” Rosen depicts the playing

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315 Ibid. p. 182.
316 Ibid. p. 183.
317 Ibid.
318 Ibid. p. 184.
of the taiko drums, flutes, bells, and shamisen, lighting of the lanterns, singing and dancing, and the festive scene of the Neputa being propped up and paraded through the street.

Even though Rosen visited Ezo in the sixth and seventh months of the summer season, he reports on year-round events and rituals. He points out that although there is no jūnigatsu sekizoro (十二月節季候) custom in the twelfth month, nor shōgatsu banzai (正月万歳) in the first month, they do nevertheless practice Daikoku mai (大黒舞). In the Daikoku mai, performed in the New Year, the masks are dyed in various different colours, and there is singing and chanting accompanied by taiko drums and shamisen. One person is designated to come and jest. Rosen points to Tsugaru’s neighbouring domain, stating, “these are mainly products from Nanbu, and in this region (当地) it is said they belong to the sardine fishers (海温取),” meaning that migrant sardine fishermen from Nanbu likely transported this custom here. Kadomatsu pine and bamboo decorations for the New Year are usually small, and because they are expensive, “ones similar to those in our country are few,” and only displayed by the affluent.

As we have seen to this point, in his journey of Ezo, Rosen encounters both Europeans and Americans, and through these encounters, he distinguishes between foreign countries and his native “divine country” Japan, and increasingly recognizes Japan’s relative place in the world. Not only that, while exploring Matsumae, Hakodate, and the various villages in between, he

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319 Jūnigatsu sekizoro (十二月節季候) literally means “‘Tis the season of the twelfth month” and is a custom performed from year end to the new year, in which two or three people form a group, veil their faces with red cloth and dress up, and sing and dance, while shouting, “sekizoro gozareya!” (‘tis the season). They would utter blessings for the new year, walking about and seeking rice and monetary donations.

320 Shōgatsu banzai (正月万歳) is also a dance performed in the new year in which blessings are uttered for a prosperous year ahead. Banzai shi (万歳師) would make visits and perform.

321 Daikoku mai (大黒舞) was another popular song and dance performed in the new year, in which the performer would wear a mask and dress up like Daikokuten (大黒天 one of the seven deities of fortune) and announce his arrival with a bushel of rice and blessings he brought for the new year.

322 Ibid. p. 186.
further distinguishes between Ezo and Tsugaru. Rosen relativizes the positions of Ezo and Tsugaru within Japan, describing these as distinctive regions and communities from each other.

After returning to Tsugaru

What is the significance of Rosen’s visit to Ezo within the larger context of his works and thought? One might be cautioned against overemphasizing such a brief period in Rosen’s life. However, the fact that it was his sole journey outside his domain, combined with his detailed documentation through multiple editing of his travelogues show the attention he paid to reconstructing these “foreign” travel experiences. With this in mind, let us now examine the patterns in Rosen’s works and thought from around 1855 and onward. As I demonstrated before, after Rosen returned home from his journey to Ezo, he compiled images along with written descriptions in Matsumae kikō (『松前紀行』), or Matsumae Travelogue, in which he combines all images from the Ezo visit, including those of landscape and water of Tsugaru territory. Specifically, among the 33 images appearing in Matsumae kikō, 21 are those of Tsugaru, and 12 are of Ezo, thus representing both places. However, in the process of rearranging and editing this travelogue, Rosen separates the records of Tsugaru and Ezo, transferring eight images of Ezo from Matsumae kikō to the following sketchbook, Matsumae fûkei, and the final edition Hakodate kikō completed a year later, and transferring 13 images of Tsugaru to Gappo sansui kan (Mountain and Water Images of Gappo), a three-volume compilation of 59 images of Tsugaru. In this way, after returning from his Ezo journey, Rosen clearly separates his experiences and observations of Ezo and Tsugaru in his travelogues and sketchbooks.

Let us now examine his other works. 1855, the year of Rosen’s visit to Ezo, was a considerably active and formative year in terms of his writing. For about a decade, from the Kaei years (1848–1853) to 1859 (Ansei 6), Rosen compiled *Kōsai shōshi (Kōsai’s Records)* a 150-volume edited collection of excerpts from classical and more contemporary Japanese and Chinese texts. This voluminous collection contains tales, anecdotes of military generals, histories and anecdotes of Confucianists and literati, Japanese and Chinese histories and miscellaneous works, Hirosaki domainal histories and other records, and Norinaga and Atsutane’s writings, which display Rosen’s broad-based learning. *Kōsai shōshi* is not a text authored by Rosen, but rather, an edited volume, and so, rather than expressing Rosen’s original thought, it represents his accumulation of foundational knowledge during a formative period which would shape his later thought. Rosen’s major works, to some degree, overlap with this “foundational period,” these texts being *Gappo kidan* (1855), *Hakodate kikō* (1856), *Yōi meiwa* (1856), *Fude no susabi* (1860-61), *Tani no hibiki* (1860), and *Yūfu shinron* (1865). When considering the above succession of works appearing from 1855 onward, one can see that until around the time that Rosen embarked on his visit to Ezo, he had been broadly surveying classical and more contemporary Japanese and Chinese texts, as well as records of Hirosaki domain, and laying down a foundation for his future research, and that a combination of these various materials would contribute to his own scholarly interests and original thought, which would crystallize thereafter.

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324 Kōsai refers to Rosen’s personal name.
325 According to Moriyama Taitarō, the 150 volumes of *Kōsai shōshi* are archived at the Hirosaki City Library, but I have yet been able to locate them. Please see Moriyama’s introduction on this text in his “Hirao Rosen,” pp. 68–71.
326 Rosen’s many works include authored texts, edited volumes, paintings, collections of images, and poetry anthologies, but the major works I list here are those authored texts he lists in his letter of the 11th day of the sixth month in 1869 to Shimozawa Yasumi, as his representative works he wishes to send to Ibukinoya’s Hirata Kanetane. Hirao Rosen letter to Shimozawa Yasumi, 11th day, sixth month, 1869, *Aomori kenshi*. p. 617.
Conclusion

Hirao Rosen, who established himself as an exceptional artist and scholar of Hirosaki castle town, closely observed local life and folk culture of his town and Tsugaru region, and recorded this through paintings and writing. His paintings of winter work and play, the Neputa festival of summer and the Mount Iwaki worship of early autumn remain invaluable records to this day. 1855 was an instrumental year in Rosen’s thought development and scholarship. In 1854, the Tokugawa bakufu signed the Japan-U.S. Amity Treaty, which “opened Japan,” and in the sixth to seventh months of 1855, Rosen journeyed from Hirosaki castle town “overseas” to the northern island of Ezo, including the newly-reopened port of Hakodate, where there were stationed foreign ships and visitors. There, Rosen directly observed and encountered both Ezo locals and the “world” in European, American, Qing Chinese, and Indian visitors. This “international” encounter awakened Rosen to the military superiority of the Western powers, the miserable defeated condition of Qing China, and Japan’s military weakness and vulnerability to potential Western threats.

This 33-day journey allowed Rosen to make observations of everyday life and culture of Matsumae, Hakodate, and the southern Ezo coast in between, which led him to juxtapose Tsugaru, or Hirosaki domain, and Matsumae domain, within a larger Imperial Japan. I showed how Rosen drew clear boundaries between his experiences and observations of Tsugaru and Matsumae, and categorized them in his edited records, *Hakodate kikō* (*Hakodate Travelogue*), *Yōi meiwa* (*Account of Foreigners*), and sketchbook of Tsugaru, *Gappo sansuikan* (*Mountain
and Water Images of Gappo). This journey to and from Ezo in 1855, led Rosen to re-enforce the boundaries constructing his worldview between Japan, the West, and China, including the lines drawn between Tsugaru and Matsumae. It was during this same year that Rosen finished compiling his 150-volume collection of excerpts from classical and more recent Japanese and Chinese texts, and completed Gappo kidan, or Strange Tales of Gappo, the first of his three major works which explore spiritual and mysterious matters from ethnographic and nativist approaches. Let us proceed to the next chapter, where we examine Rosen’s major works, which demonstrate an interplay between his ethnographic inquiry and engagement with Hirata kokugaku.
Chapter 5  Hirao Rosen II: Conceiving of Tsugaru and Imperial Japan

Through Ethnographic and Kokugaku Studies

Overview

Based on the previous chapter’s biography of Hirao Rosen’s life and artistic and scholarly work up to 1855, the present chapter examines the dynamics between the ethnographic and nativist dimensions of Rosen’s scholarship in Rosen’s three major works—Gappo kidan (Strange Tales of Gappo, 1855), Tani no hibiki (Echoes of the Valley, 1860), and Yūfu shinron (New Treatise of the Spiritual Realm, 1865)—completed over a ten-year period. Through these three texts, we see Rosen’s conception of the strange, mysterious, and spiritual matters and phenomena within the local Tsugaru landscape and community, and can observe how this “spiritual landscape” of Tsugaru is located within a larger landscape of Imperial Japan (皇国 mikuni). The dynamics and interplay between the two “countries” (国 kuni), Tsugaru and Imperial Japan, become increasingly pronounced during this decade in late-Tokugawa Hirosaki, and this tendency, as we will examine, coincides with his ever-increasing engagement with Hirata kokugaku, and with his notable enrolment in the Ibukinoya academy in 1864.

To provide context, I begin this chapter with general discussions on early modern ethnographic approaches—the studies of commoner life and culture—which precede modern folklore studies influenced by the west, and developed by Yanagita Kunio and others in the Meiji period and onwards. I consider the relationship between these earlier ethnographic methods in the Tokugawa period with kokugaku. I next proceed to closely examine Rosen’s main texts, from Gappo kidan to Tani no hibiki, and their progression. Then I outline Chinese and Japanese Confucian and kokugaku discourses on kishin spirits and the divine realm, before entering into a
detailed study of Rosen’s magnum opus, *Yūfu shinron*. Finally, I examine Rosen’s scholarly engagement with local Tsugaru and a larger Imperial Japan through his ethnographic approach and *kokugaku*, and consider the motivations behind his intellectual inquiries.

**Studies of Local Life and Japan in Tokugawa Times**

Even before the importation of folklore studies from Western Europe to Japan, early modern intellectuals displayed a strong interest in the tradition and legends of commoners (民間伝承), and there were efforts to gather collections of materials on commoner life, as explained by Uchino Gorō.\(^{327}\) *Kokugaku* scholars were among those that utilized such materials. Uchino notes that since Sugae Masumi (1754-1829), wandering *kokugaku* scholar of the late-Tokugawa period and his *Jun’yū ki* (『巡遊記』) or *Roaming Records*, were taken up by Yanagita, similar ethnographic works such as Amano Sadakage’s (1663-1733) *Shio jiri* (『塩尻』1697), Matsuura Seizan’s (1760-1841) *Kasshi yawa* (『甲子夜話』 *Tales on the Night of Kasshi* 1821-41), Suzuki Bokushi’s (1770-1842) *Hokuetsu seppu* (『北越雪譜』 *Snow Country Tales* 1835-40),\(^{328}\) and Kitagawa Morisada’s *Morisada mankō* (『守貞漫稿』 *Morisada’s Essays*, about 1853) and others have garnered attention as materials that highlight the “prehistory of Japanese folklore studies in the early modern period” (「近世における日本民俗学の前史」).\(^{329}\)

However, Uchino explains the reason why these materials do not qualify as more than a

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\(^{329}\) Ibid.
“prehistory” of modern folklore studies, is because they did not display “a clear scholarly consciousness” (「はっきりした学問意識」).

An early example of the connection between kokugaku and ethnography is seen in the following words of Motoori Norinaga under the subheading of “The matter of ancient things remaining in the countryside”:

Not only words, but regarding all things, deep in the countryside, there are many remnants of things ancient and refined… the disappearance of ancient things is something terribly lamentable. Funeral and marriage rites and the like, especially in the countryside, there are many things old and interesting. All such examples, [displaying] manners of the countries unto the seacoasts and mountain villages, I wish to broadly inquire about, listen to and collect, and even make written recordings of.

This quote from Norinaga’s late-18th century text of miscellaneous items, Tama katsuma (『玉勝間』Basket of Jewels) demonstrates the author’s early awareness and interest in ancient folk culture preserved in rural areas, as compared to major urban centres. Minami Keiji points to the above quotation as indicative that kokugaku and early modern ethnography shared certain internal connections, and states it shows “the basis for the inevitable reason,” that Tokugawa kokugaku scholars would harbour an interest in ethnographic studies. Minami goes on to examine how kokugaku scholars undertook the editing of local geographies (「地誌編集」) in their rural areas. The prominent scholar of Japanese folklore, Miyata Noboru, looks to the above quote as Norinaga’s call to collect folklorist materials (「民俗資料」). Miyata also recognizes that Edo period scholars who collected stories and materials of the strange, such as Ōta Nanpo (1749-1823), Matsuura Seizan (1760-1841), and Negishi Yasumori (1737-1815) as

330 Ibid.
studying folk culture through changes in daily life, and had their beginnings through “study groups” of scholars who gathered and exchanged data.

Perhaps more than any other kokugaku scholar, Hirata Atsutane attracts attention as a scholar of both kokugaku and ethnography. In terms of his kokugaku scholarship alone, it can be said that Atsutane is most commonly compared with his teacher Norinaga, but in terms of his ethnographic approach, the contrasts with his teacher Norinaga, and parallels with Yanagita Kunio come to be stressed. Haga Noboru states that Atsutane differs from Norinaga, in that he pursued direct methods to elucidate the yūmeikai or kakuriyo spiritual realm, and listened to and reported on the various folk faiths found in Japanese folk societies.334 Examples of such methods are seen in texts such as Inō mononoke roku (『稲生物怪録』 Records of Inō and Spirits) and Kokon yōmikō (『古今妖怪考』 On Marvels Old and New) Haga likens Yanagita’s Yōkai dangi (『妖怪談義』 Discussion of Monsters) to these texts of Atsutane in method and content. Haga also goes on to assert that Yanagita adopted from Atsutane’s method, the dimension of listening and recording, surveying, and documenting (「聞き書き、調査、記録」) the specific contents of ethnographic material seen in Atsutane’s later works.335

Gerald Figal offers a thoughtful, broad-based study of the treatment of spirits and the invisible world in the Meiji period, focusing primarily on modern folklore scholars, but also referencing the influence of kokugaku scholars, primarily Atsutane.336 Figal asserts that Atsutane’s work of “opening up and delving into the spirit world” was important to Yanagita and others taking up the topic of bakemono in the modern period, as “a scholarly precedent for the

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335 Ibid. p. 212.
recording and interpretation of reports of contemporary supernatural incidents.” Atsutane’s work was, Figal argues, a “serious intellectual endeavour” that provided “an aura of legitimacy to the scholarly pursuit of monsters.” Furthermore, Yanagita admits to having received “the gist of the theories on the hidden world” (yūmeiron no kosshi) from Atsutane’s works, but distinguishes his scholarship from his predecessor’s, through including the tengu within the hidden yumei world, unlike Atsutane, whom he accuses of an anti-Buddhist stance that led to an exclusion of the tengu from the spiritual realm.

The tengu are a central focus of Wilburn Hansen’s study on Atsutane’s ethnographic approach. Hansen identifies Atsutane’s “ethnography of the other world”, and describes how Atsutane collected stories of mountain-dwelling sanjin (山人) and their community and culture in his Senkyō ibun (仙境異聞 Tidings from the Land of Immortals), and how this can be viewed as a “forerunner of minzokugaku, or Japanese folklore studies.” Hansen boldly argues that just as the purpose of Tama no mihashira (『霊能真柱』 The August Pillar of the Soul) was to offer comfort and assurance to the people of Japan that life in this world would not lead to a miserable yomi underworld, “the goal of Senkyō ibun, was to establish a culture hero whose primary reason for existence was to render the Japanese comfort, assistance, and protection until they reached the Other World.” However, this statement could be further substantiated and contextualized within Atsutane’s broader discussions on spirits and the other world, beyond Senkyō ibun.

The connections between early modern to modern kokugaku and ethnography, and the links between Norinaga and Atsutane, to Yanagita and Orikuchi Shinobu have garnered

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337 Figal, Gerald. pp. 36.
338 Ibid. pp. 142-44.
340 Ibid. p. 200.
considerable attention in past historiography. Orikuchi recognized his own work as shin kokugaku or “new kokugaku,” acknowledging its indebtedness to the work of past kokugaku scholars. On the other hand, Yanagita rarely mentioned Atsutane, as if distancing himself from the kokugaku scholar, though Yanagita’s student Orikuchi acknowledges the influence his teacher had received from Atsutane. Having thus broadly surveyed the connections between kokugaku and ethnography, from the early modern to modern period, as well as within the context of Atsutane’s works, I will now examine the three major works of Rosen, which also reflect these various movements.

**Gappo kidan (Strange Tales of Gappo)**

Considering the above connections between kokugaku and ethnographic approaches and the influences of the former on the latter from the early modern to modern periods, further accentuates the significance of Hirao Rosen within this historiography. Kojima Yasunori proposes the examination of Rosen as a scholar who engaged in both Hirata kokugaku and ethnographic studies, and defines him therefore as a real historical link in Hirata kokugaku’s transition into modern folklore studies, stating:

In this sense, Rosen’s work can hereafter be focused on as something which fills the void within the historiography between Hirata kokugaku and Yanagita-Orikuchi minzokugaku. By placing Rosen in between Atsutane and Yanagita, can we not describe the trajectory of kokugaku developing into minzokugaku, and not just an insular nationalism?341

Kojima indentifies Rosen and the value of his work within historiography as instrumental in demonstrating *kokugaku*’s development into folklore studies, as opposed to solely a virulent ultra-nationalist ideology in the modern period. Furthermore, Moriyama Tairō, following his transcription of *Tani no hibiki*, introduces the text and observes that Rosen wrote *Gappo kidan*, *Tani no hibiki*, and *Yūfu shinron* all with an intention to demonstrate the existence of souls and divine mysteries, which were consistent with Hirata *kokugaku*’s core ideas of proving the work of divine spirits, and existence of the *yūmeikai* spiritual realm.  

*Gappo kidan*[^342] is a collection of tales and records of strange, mysterious, and spiritual objects and phenomena gathered from Hirosaki castle town and other locations around Gappo, which is another name for Tsugaru. As discussed in the previous chapter, Rosen completed this work in 1855 (Ansei 2), an active and instrumental year in his life and scholarly career. During this year, Rosen was in the processing of compiling his 150-volume *Kōsai shōshi* (*Collected Works of Kōsai*), which gathered portions of various historical and literary texts of Japan, China, and Hirosaki, as well as those of *kokugaku* writings. 1855 was also the year that Rosen compiled his *Taihei shinwa* (*New Discussions of the Vast World*), a collection of official documents, letters, and images related to Commodore Perry’s arrival to Japan in 1853 and the country’s subsequent opening, followed by Rosen’s visit to Ezo and his encounter with Westerners, Qing Chinese, and local peoples. His observations and experience of the “world” and his ensuing reflections on Tsugaru and the “Imperial country” of Japan are recorded in *Hakodate kikō* (*Hakodate Travelogue*) and *Yōi meiwa* (*Account of Foreigners*), completed the following year.

When considering these major works which Rosen either completed or was in the process of


[^343]: Only the second volume of *Gappo kidan* remains to this day, and is archived in Hirosaki City Library. Its transcription along with introduction by Moriyama Tairō are found in *Aomori kenritsu toshokan kyōdo sōsho 1 Tani no hibiki tsuki Gappo kidan*. 
creating in 1855, their titles suggest it was indeed a time of self-orientation within places local and foreign: Kōsai (宏斎 Rosen’s name) of Kōsai shōshi, referring to himself; Taihei (太平) of Taihei shinwa, or “vast world”; Yōi (洋夷) of Yōi meiwa, or Western barbarians; and finally Gappo (合浦) of Gappo kidan, referring to his native Tsugaru.

The first passage I examine from Gappo kidan is the first entry in the second and only surviving of two original volumes of the text. The entry is introduced with the heading of “strange illness” (奇疾 kishitsu):

In the domain, Ishiyama’s maid was terribly fearful of caterpillars. Around the recent Kōka years [1844-48], also in the domain, a man named Kawaguchi made light of this, and twisted paper in the shape of a caterpillar to fool her, saying, “That is a caterpillar,” throwing it at her collar, which caused her to yell, “Wah!” and faint immediately. Kawaguchi was helpless, and wondered, “What can I do?” In response, Lord Ishiyama sneered, brought oil and applied it to the maid’s mouth, and after a while she revived. When she removed her clothing, the area from her neck down her back and to her waist became bumpy and swollen, as if she had been affected by insect poison. After the lord applied oil to that area, it healed gradually. “It is truly something mysterious,” uttered Kawaguchi now and then in amusement.344

Rosen introduces this story of a “strange illness” which reportedly occurred sometime within the past decade during the Kōka years. Characteristic of many of the entries in Rosen’s three major texts, we see here individuals bearing actual names, as well as some humour in the narrative, with Kawaguchi teasing Ishiyama’s maid with a caterpillar which she dreaded, and inadvertently causing her to faint. The description of the scene to revive the maid, as well as the swelling and treatment of her back is detailed and visual, as characteristic of Rosen’s writing in general. The specificity in the above-mentioned period of occurrence, individual names, and physical descriptions create a sense of familiarity, and consequently a sense of plausibility to the story.

Under the subheading of “The strangeness of the toad,” Rosen introduces mystery and myth surrounding toads (蝦蟆 *gama*), describes them as “spiritual creatures” (霊物), and cites the *Hakubutsu shi* (『博物志』 Bowuzhi or Encyclopaedic records) which speaks of the “wonders of three mysteries” (「三奇の恠」 sanki no ayashi), and also points to the “Rou zhi zhi ling” (「肉芝の霊」) section in *Bao po zi* 『抱朴子』 by Ge Hong (葛洪 283-343) which discusses a toad with horns that causes mysterious phenomena. Rosen follows this by asking rhetorically, “Could there be reason to doubt the established theories of the ancient people?” Then he cites the experience of a haikai poet Katō, who stayed a year in the port city of Aomori and wished to investigate the veracity of a story about “a battle of frogs” (「蛙の合戦」) in a pond at a temple. He saw two ponds on temple grounds, on whose banks several hundreds of thousands of frogs were swarming, hopping, and scuffling about. However, Katō observes that the frogs neither attacked nor fought each other, and concluded the situation could not be called “a battle,” and yet for so many to be assembled together, it should be called “a matter of single mystery” (「一奇なる縡」). He reports that these frogs dispersed after over ten days. The “battle of frogs” lore, Rosen notes, is passed down orally from old, and appears also in the

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345 Ibid. p. 175.
346 Ibid.
seventeenth-century pictorial and written encyclopaedia Sansai zu e (『三才図会』)\textsuperscript{347} by Terashima Ryōan, as well as Shoku nihongi (『続日本紀』).\textsuperscript{348}

Continuing his inquiry into things and phenomena strange and mysterious, Rosen writes of “a bright object” (光物) witnessed in the seventh month of 1805 (Bunka 2).\textsuperscript{349} It is also reported to have dashed across the sky in autumn in the eighth month, during the early Bunsei years (1818-30). Its sound was like thunder, and its white tail (白気) measured two shaku, or two feet.\textsuperscript{350} One night on the sixth day of the seventh month during the An’ei years (1772-81), a fight broke out in Kon’yamachi in Hirosaki castle town, involving forty to fifty people riotously beating on each other. There was heard from the west a sound like a great wind blowing through the forest, and a bright object measuring over two shaku descended into the centre of the fight, and dispersed in small particles in all directions. Immediately, however, the fiery light (火光) gathered itself together, became one circular mass again, and flew off eastward. Rosen says that his grandfather witnessed this light and often spoke to others about it.

Rosen offers accounts like those above that were passed down in his local Hirosaki and Tsugaru community by word of mouth, while seeking reference and verification in written records of the past. He reports similar phenomena of light flashing across the sky in old documents (古記) on the 21\textsuperscript{st} day of the first month in the Genki years (1570-73), when a light

\textsuperscript{347} Sansai zue (『三才図会』), abbreviated from Wakan sansai zue (『和漢三才図会』) and comprised of 105 volumes and 81 books, was originally completed in 1607 by Terashima Ryōan. He modeled this work on San cai tu hui (『三才図会』) by Wang Qi (王圻) of Ming China. Ryōan’s work has entries from Japanese and Chinese, ancient and contemporary sources on astronomy, ethics, land, mountain and water, divided in three categories (三才) of heaven, humans, and land (天・人・地). He offers images, along with Chinese and Japanese names, accompanied by a commentary in Chinese script (kanbun 漢文).

\textsuperscript{348} Shoku nihongi (『続日本紀』), completed in 697, is second of the six national histories (六国史), following Nihon shoki (『日本書紀』), and covers the historical period starting with Emperor Mommu (文武天皇) in 697 to Emperor Kammu (桓武天皇) in 791.

\textsuperscript{349} Hirao Rosen. Gappo kidan. pp. 181-82.

\textsuperscript{350} One shaku (尺) is roughly 30 centimetres.
left Mount Iwaki and flew toward the eastern mountains, emitting a thunderous sound. There are several such examples, with Rosen noting that the light always travels from west to east. Rosen broadly references several ancient texts to make sense of these phenomena, such as with the *Nihon gi* (*Chronicles of Japan*), which records that on the eleventh day of the second month during the ninth year of Emperor Jomei’s reign (638 CE), a great star flew from east to west, with a thunderous sound. Also in the *Shi ji* (*Records of the Grand Historian*), “Biography of Liu Xiang” it states, “falling stars which emit sound are called *Tian gou xing* (天狗星) or *Tengu* stars. Those without sound are called *Kuang fu* (狂夫).” *Wu za zu* (*Five Seals*), an encyclopaedic text from late Ming China is also consulted for its commentary on various stars. So we see in the case of this “bright object” that Rosen cites ancient to early modern texts of Japan, China, and even his local Hirosaki domain for reference.

Another mysterious object which Rosen introduces is the “Buddha image in nature” (*仏形天然*). Rosen reports that one night, when a fisherman from Obashi village in Kami Iso, Aomori pulled in his fishing net, he discovered a large shellfish (馬刀貝) among the many fish he caught. When the fisherman threw the shellfish off the shore, it began to glow brightly and attracted pampas grass (芒) on all sides. He was intrigued, and so picked it up, and when he saw it the next morning, its insides had dried, and the positioning of its limbs made it look exactly like an image of Buddha. It was pearly in colour and radiant. The fisherman washed the object and placed it in his worship hall.

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351 *Wu za zu* (*五雑爼*) is a 16-volume collection of essays completed in 1619 by Xie Zhao Zhi (謝肇淛) of Ming China. It provides commentary on the five categories of heaven, earth, humans, things, matters (*天・地・人・物・事*).

*Gappo kidan* also contains Rosen’s records of unusual objects, which include archaeological finds. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Rosen showed great interest in excavated artefacts, and kept written and pictorial records of them. Here, he introduces excavated objects that are “unglazed” (素焼) and cannot be called “vessels” (器). Rosen acknowledges that old documents record “porcelain” (磁器) being unearthed in Kamegaoka, in southwest Tsugaru plain, and does not elaborate on them much here, and even deduces the present items are considerably older. He provides a sketch of vessel fragments with particularly old patterns unearthed from mountains and farms of the village of Tokko (独狐). A disparity in the purity and beauty of the various pottery fragments are observed in artefacts discovered at different sites. The Kamegaoka fragments are described as composed of fine soil (土精), with few patterns, making up a refined product. He goes on to further rank the artefacts of different sites, noting that those from Hachimanzaki (八幡崎) rank next, and those from the mountains and farmland of Tokko village are made of rough soil, with the vessels themselves thick, and of overall unrefined quality. Artefacts of Aizawa are simpler than those of Kamegaoka. However, Rosen acknowledges that they are old nevertheless. As seen thus in this recording and study of excavated artefacts, we see Rosen comparing finds of various sites, as well as evaluating and categorizing them.

At this point, I will review my examination thus far of *Gappo kidan*. Rosen introduces stories and descriptions of various “wondrous” and “mysterious” objects and phenomena occurring in Hirosaki castle town and the surrounding Tsugaru region. He writes of the “mysterious illness” of the maid suffering swelling caused by a prank involving a fake caterpillar, the “mystery of the toads” in challenging the myth concerning the “battle of toads,” the “bright object” flashing across the Hirosaki sky, with reported precedence in ancient texts, and “Buddha
image in nature” which describes a mysterious image of the Buddha discovered in a giant shellfish. In many of the above cases, Rosen seeks reference and inquiry into the veracity of the case by citing various ancient texts in an attempt to verify the story. In verifying the story of the “battle of frogs” in temple ponds in Aomori, Rosen cites cases of “battles of toads” appearing in Terashima Ryōan’s *Wakan sansei zue* and in *Shoku nihongi*, while in his examination of the “bright object” flying over Kon’yamachi, he references similar accounts found in such texts as *Nihongi* (*Chronicles of Japan*)\(^3\) and the *Shi ji* (*Records of the Grand Historian*). Rosen also inquires into the ancient and mysterious matter of archaeological discoveries, vessels and fragments unearthed in Jōmon archaeological sites including Kameoka near the western coast of Tsugaru.

I have introduced here a few representative examples from among many stories and accounts provided in this volume by Rosen, which also include “marvels” (妖魅 *yōmi*) and “ghosts” (幽霊 *yūrei*), as well as unusually shaped rocks. While Rosen shows a great interest and concern for strange, mysterious, and spiritual matters of Hirosaki and Tsugaru in *Gappo kidan* written in 1855, there is in the text no direct reflection of Hirata *kokugaku*, nor reference to Atsutane’s writings, even though the interests in spiritual and supernatural matters, as well as the ethnographic method of gathering local oral and written accounts are consistent with Atsutane’s own work and practices. In the second of the three major texts, which I examine next, we see an even clearer concern and awareness toward spirits and the spiritual realm, and begin to see concrete references to Hirata *kokugaku*.

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\(^3\) *Nihongi* (『日本紀』) refers to *Nihon shoki* (『日本書紀』)
Tani no hibiki (Echoes of the Valley)

Five years after completing Gappo kidan in his pivotal year of 1855, Rosen in 1860 (Man’en 1) completes his next major work, Tani no hibiki (『谷の響』) or Echoes of the Valley.\(^{354}\) Tani no hibiki is another collection of stories and accounts of strange and mysterious things and phenomena gathered from throughout Hirosaki castle town and Tsugaru region. Between the completion of Rosen’s two major texts over five years, Tsuruya Ariyo enrolled in the Ibukinoya academy in 1857, becoming the first Hirata disciple from Hirosaki, and this Tsugaru group would grow to six members during this span, with all enrolments coming in the same year, as Iwama Shitatari, Mitsuya Ōtari, Masuda Kōtarō, and Ueda Hirayoshi enrolled in the fifth month, and Imamura Yōtarō enrolled in the sixth month. Rosen, who enrolled in 1864, was not yet a Hirata disciple when he completed Tani no hibiki. However, the direct references to Atsutane’s writings show that Rosen had been reading them, and the text overall reflects Atsutane’s thought on the yūmeikai spiritual realm.

I begin my examination of Tani no hibiki, by first looking at the opening passage, which follows the subheading of “Orchestra in the Marsh” (沼中の管弦 Numa naka no kangen) which also explains the origin of the text’s title:

\(^{354}\) Tani no hibiki (『谷の響』), or Echoes of the Valley, the second of Rosen’s three major authored works, was completed in 1860 (Man’en 1), and a copied manuscript is archived in the Hirosaki City Library. Transcriptions of this text are available along with Moriyama Taitarō’s introduction in Aomori kenritsu toshokan kyōdo sōsho Tani no hibiki tsuki Gappo kidan. Aomori kenritsu toshokan hen. 1969, as well as with introduction and footnotes by Moriyama in Nihon shomin seikatsushi shiryō shūsei, Vol. 16, Eds. Mori Senzō and Suzuki Shinzō. San ichi shobō, 1970. 1860 and 1861 (Man’en 1, 2) were also the years that Rosen compiled his voluminous 15-volume Fude no susabi (『筆のすさび』) or Jottings with the Brush, another collection of quoted and edited passages from various Japanese and Chinese texts arranged under thematic headings, that further demonstrate Rosen’s wide-ranging foundational readings. This collection is similar in style to his 150-volume Kōsai shōshi compiled sometime between the Kaei years (1848–1853) to 1859 (Ansei 6), and due to Fude no susabi’s similarly encyclopedic style, I note it here as a reflection of his readings more than an expression of his original thought. Fude no susabi is also archived in Hirosaki City Library.
During the Kansei years [1789-1801], a man named Ōmiya something-or-other (nanigashi), a merchant from Hirosaki, visited his relative called Gihei in Sōnai (相内村) village. One day, Gihei wished to comfort this Ōmiya, and so along with two or three people, boarded a small boat and went fishing on Tappi marsh (田光沼), where the time passed as they made a plentiful catch. As the sun was already setting they started to paddle to return home, when from inside the surrounding reeds was heard the sound of a flute (笙) being played. While thinking this to be mysterious, the sounds of a biwa lute (琵琶), Japanese harp (和琴), kakko drum (鞁鞨), and hichiriki flute (篳篥) came to their ears, and their reverberations were pure and clear, and sounded as if they were not of this world (「塵界のもの」). Their gladness was incomparable, and as everyone perked their ears and listened intently, the tune seemed to gradually fade and it became increasingly sad and lonely, as if dousing the entire body with water, and they could not endure to be there even for a short while. They hastily rowed their boat to return back. Thus, Gihei said there were accounts which related that since long ago, the sound of an orchestra is heard from time to time from within this marsh. Also, three or four years before, there was in the same village someone named Yosuke who also claimed he heard this story and retold it, but thought it may be the sound of wind blowing the reeds, and doubted it to be true until now. However, when he examined what happened this time, he said that he understood that the legends of the ancient people were not falsehood.\(^{355}\)

Rosen describes the scene as occurring some sixty to seventy years earlier during the Kansei years, when Ōmiya, Gihei, and other friends went fishing on Tappi marsh (田光沼 Tappi numa), which is located on the southwest corner of the Tsugaru peninsula, about ten kilometres south of Jūsanko lake (十三湖 also known as “Tosano mizūmi”). The men heard the sound of orchestral instruments playing, and the description is that the “reverberations were as pure and clear, and sounded as if they were not of this world,” or literally not of this earthly “world of dust” (塵界). The men were at first delighted by the impressive sound and their “gladness was incomparable,” yet as the sound faded and it became silent again, this made them fearful, and they rowed back to shore. Citing this example, Rosen states, “the legends of the ancient people were not falsehood,” thus confirming the credibility of the “ancient people” and their wisdom concerning such

mysterious phenomena. This would be the first of numerous examples of how Rosen’s ethnographic findings would serve as verification for such legends of the past.

Rosen continues to describe the mystery and remoteness of this Tappi marsh. He explains that according to some, a flute sound is heard when wind blows through the reeds, and that when waves hit the shore a drumming sound is created naturally, and that these are generally called “flute of reeds” and “drum of waves.”

“All” say that these sounds are caused by wind and not by anything that should be called mysterious (奇 ayashi). However, Rosen insists there is something beyond ordinary about this marsh that measures over three li or about 12 kilometres in circumference, reflects light to the sky like a mirror, and is dense in its reed growth along the banks, with a chilling wind blowing through. He continues:

Truly, as it is in an extremely remote place (幽地 hekichi), it is immeasurable whether the gods of the kakuriyo realm (幽冥) are present or not. How narrow an act it is to determine something by using principle (理 kotowari) that is readily available before one’s eyes. Not only this marsh, but all places, especially Hirataki marsh and the like are full of many things mysterious.

Tappi marsh is described here with the term hekichi whose reading means “remote place” or “backwater” (hekichi). However, Rosen’s use of the Chinese characters “yū chi” (or “yōu dì” in Chinese, 幽地) and particularly the character yū (幽 or yōu) denotes there was a spiritual dimension which further distinguished this locale. Above all, Rosen asserts it is so remote, it is impossible to even measure the presence or absence of the “gods of the kakuriyo realm,” making reference to Atsutane’s theories on the kakuriyo spiritual realm. Rosen stresses it is “narrow” to determine such mysterious phenomena using “principle,” and suggests there are “many

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356 The word I have translated here as “drum” is represented in the original text as “是” with the reading “tsutsumi” which may refer to “堤” “tsutsumi” as in water “bank”, but can also refer to “鼓” “tsutsumi” as in drum with the same reading. I acknowledge the dual meanings, while privileging the meaning of drum.

357 A li (里) is a unit of measurement of 3.9273 kilometres.

358 Ibid. p. 3.
mysterious things” all throughout the area. _Tani no hibiki_ begins with this opening story of the mysterious Tappi marsh, which sets the stage for a collection of tales and accounts of strange, mysterious, and spiritual phenomena and objects throughout Tsugaru.

Throughout the five volumes that make up _Tani no hibiki_, Rosen relates various stories, which stress the abilities and capabilities that spirits possess. In story eleven of volume two, Rosen introduces a story entitled “Dreaming Soul Kills Wife,” which I paraphrase below.  

During the Tenpō (1830–44) years, a man from Hirosaki castle town named Mitsuhashi served on official duty (勤番) in Aomori. Mitsuhashi became intimate with a woman there, but was not able to marry her as he was already married. Eventually, he finished his work duties and returned to Hirosaki, and he and his lover continued their affectionate correspondence. The following year, he returned to Aomori for duty, where their affair became more intense, and his lover became resentful when she learned he was married. One day, the mistress related to her mother that while sleeping she dreamed that she reached Mitsuhashi’s house, and saw his wife beautifully sewing clothes, and she became so jealous of her that she bit into her throat, terribly upsetting the wife’s mother and children. The mistress left the scene and woke up from her dream. She confessed to her mother of a bad taste in her mouth and her heart thumping in fear, asked her what this could be about, only to have her mother make sad utterances and disregard her as if she was not human and treat her coldly.

The following morning, a _hikyaku_ carrier came to the post (勤番所) where Mitsuhashi was working and reported that his wife had died a violent death. Terribly shocked, Mitsuhashi requested and was granted permission to return home, and asked his mother of the situation. She explained that the day before in the afternoon, “something resembling a human soul came flying”

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359 Ibid. pp. 48-49.
into the house and she saw it enter the room where his wife had been sewing. Then in an instant, she heard a scream, so was alarmed and ran to investigate the matter, to find that her daughter’s throat had been torn and her breathing stopped. She immediately applied medicine, but they were ineffective on the wounds to her vital organs and she died immediately. Mitsuhashi’s mother said with tears, “Indeed, I am resentful! Nonetheless, this is a mysterious and fearful thing.” Although Mitsuhashi knew of the matter, he was unable to confess of his affair, and instead grieved for his wife wholeheartedly. Thereafter, Mitsuhashi resented his mistress, and once his official duties were concluded, he ceased meeting her. Rosen explains, “Mitsuhashi’s mother occasionally told this story, and over time, people came to know and quietly speak of the story of the dream of the woman.” The human soul is depicted as acting with real purpose and formidable strength, even beyond the consciousness of individuals, as seen in the example of Mitsuhashi’s mistress.

In the very next section, article twelve of volume two, Rosen relates a story of divine protection upon humans, entitled “Gods’ Protection” (神の擁護 kami no yōgo) which I here paraphrase.\(^{360}\) When Rosen was a young boy, he and his friends of similar age, about four or five of them, played together, gathering wood pieces and chips and piling them up in the shape of a wall (籬塀 sugaki) in the yard, and created a small, square hut of one shaku or roughly one foot. For fun, one of the children set fire to the hut in enacting a fire. Young Rosen accompanied this child to obtain fire, timing his entry into a kitchen when no one was there. He lit his kindling, shielding himself by stretching out his sleeve, then finally carried it and set himself on fire. And yet, it was as if someone present extinguished the fire. Even though the hut collapsed, it was again raised, and though it was set fire again, it was again extinguished as in the beginning. This continued in like manner, four or five times, but eventually one of the grandmothers saw this and scolded the

\(^{360}\) Ibid. pp. 52-53.
children. Looking back now, it was a day in the fourth month, with strong wind, and the conditions optimal for the fire to blaze and cause a fire. However, Rosen insists, “thus it was as if a person was there to extinguish the fire, because ancestral spirits saved them. And so, even in the places hidden from us, it is immeasurable what sort of deities are present that are invisible to the human eye.”

Directly following these words, Rosen pursues further the discourse on spirits, the soul, and afterlife. He states:

How foolish it is for crafty people of this world to assert that when people die their souls return to heaven and earth, and to conclude that because nothing remains therefore the spirit of the deities also do not exist. That Ruan Dan (阮膽) in *Wu gui lun* (『無鬼論』) and Fan Zhen (范縝) in *Shen mie lun* (『神滅論』) dwell on this and so it is not worth discussing here.

Rosen references Ruan Dan of Jin (210-63) in his *Wu gui lu*, or *On the Inexistence of the Soul*, which argues that spirits of the deceased (幽鬼) do not exist, and Fan Zhen of Liang (450-510) in his *Shen mie lun* or *On the Mortality of the Soul*, which asserts that once somebody dies, their soul also perishes. Following this passage, Rosen relates the following story about the daughter of his distant relative Hachigorō, when she was around three or four. The girl was playing at the edge of the fireplace and fell into the fire. However, she immediately rolled over three or four shaku or feet to the other side, and managed to avoid any burns. Hachigorō and his wife were shocked and fearful, and purified and worshipped the fire. He concludes, “This too is a case of the gods being present and assisting them. Otherwise, how is it possible for a three or four-year-old child to tumble on her own? This occurred in Tenpō 10 (1839) the year of the boar.”

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361 Ibid. p. 53.
362 Ibid.
The next story I examine is from the ensuing section, article thirteen of volume two, entitled “Dog Barking at Shapeless Object.” This passage is of particular interest because Rosen makes reference to Atsutane’s writings, and again to his theories on the invisible, spiritual realm of Kakuriyo:

In the past year of hinoetatsu (丙辰 1856), in Shimo Tsutsumi machi, Shimaya Shirōzaemon observed that under a banner (幟) that stood at a gate, were five or six dogs that were looking up at this banner, first encircling it, then later barking as if something was there. The locals and those passing by also marvelled at it greatly and watched as if there was something, and yet there was nothing to obstruct their view, and the dogs became increasingly agitated and barked. Shirōzaemon had his servant chase them away and cause them to disperse and cease. Such a thing happened five or six years ago.363

Thus, Rosen cites a recent incident of 1856, of dogs being agitated by a “shapeless object” and barking at it, to emphasize the reality of unseen objects and the unseen spiritual realm. He then cites a similar incident that happened near his home, where there was a persimmon tree and two dogs looking up at it, intensely barking for some time, and though Rosen gazed up at the tree he saw nothing mysterious. Because of the great ruckus, he chased the dog away, but in an instant they rushed to the foot of the hedge at the back and again became agitated and barked. Finally, they started digging at the hedges, and began to bark at the house in the back. The dogs were chased away by the lord of the house, and they finally ceased.

Then in conclusion, Rosen states:

Around the year Bunsei 7 or 8 [1824-25], now that I think about it, the coming of the Kakuriyo realm (幽界) was realized. In Hirata’s (平田氏) Yōmikō (『妖魅考』)364 in the same manner, he writes of dogs barking at shapeless objects, and arguing there are gods in the Kakuriyo realm (幽界). Indeed that is how things are.365

363 Ibid. p. 54.
364 This is an abbreviated form of the full title of Kokon yōmikō 『古今妖魅考』 Thoughts on Supernatural Beings Past and Present) a seven-volume treatise Atsutane completed in 1822 (Bunsei 5) and published six years later in 1828 (Bunsei 11).
365 Hirao Rosen, Tani no hibiki. p. 55.
Yōmikō, cited here, is an abbreviation of the full title Kokon yōmikō (『古今妖魅考』) or Thoughts on Supernatural Beings Past and Present, a text which comments on Hayashi Razan’s Jinja kō (『神社考』 Treatise on Shrines) and inquires into marvels (yōmi) and Buddhist realms of heaven and hell (gokuraku) through citing various texts, rejecting Buddhist concepts, while asserting to the people of Japan the importance of worshipping gods and upholding the kakuriyo spiritual realm. Unlike Gappo kidan of 1855, Rosen’s Tani no hibiki of 1860 clearly references Atsutane’s theories on spirits and the spiritual kakuriyo realm, even though such theories of Hirata kokugaku are not yet a foundational basis for Rosen’s arguments here, as they become so in Yūfu shinron completed in 1865. It is also notable that Atsutane here is referred to in respectful but still relatively neutral terms as Hirata shi (平田氏), as opposed to being reverentially or affectionately addressed as Master (大人) or Old Man (翁) as seen later on.

The focus of Rosen’s ethnographic approach can be categorized as twofold, dealing with more realistic matters including commoner life and culture, as well as more surreal matters of the strange, mysterious, and spiritual variety. Some cases can, to some degree, be considered to straddle both spheres—real and surreal—such as the metochi introduced in article seven of volume five:

Around the Kan’ei years (1624-44) in Wakadō machi, so-and-so’s child drowned and died in a small back river, and so they immediately laid down the dead body and exhausted various means, attempting to induce him to throw up the water, when from inside his stomach were emitted grumbling sounds, and something exited out of his anus. It was shaped like a snake, measured one shaku (foot) and six or seven sun (18 to 20 centimetres), was wide and flat, its head was large, and crazily ran about. People who happened upon it, would soon attempt to catch it, taking wooden swords or a bundle of firewood and chase it about. But it would escape quickly and they were unable to hit it, and it splashed into the small river, with them finally losing sight of it. Chiba conveys

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366 Sun (寸) is a unit of measurement that spans 3.03 centimeters.
what Takase said about the matter, that “This is what they call *metochi* in the world.” Again, this person Takase around the Bunka years (1804-18), went river-fishing with his friend so-and-so, and as the heat became unbearable they immersed themselves in the water, and so-and-so dove down to the bottom of the river, being unseen for some time. While Takase felt the situation was dangerous, [his friend] slowly floated up and said, “Let us stop immersing ourselves in the water!” While anticipating [his friend] would now float up, a large amount of oil resembling foam floated to the surface of the water.

Takase marvelled and asked why this happened, and so [his friend] spoke, “When I was swimming in the water, there was a band (帯)-like object, and it approached me and wrapped itself around my stomach twice around, and gradually closed up and pulled me and we went to the bottom of the river, and when it raised what I thought was its head above a rock, I looked closely, took a rock near my hand, and with all my strength shattered its head—its grip on me was loosened, the water clouded, and it became invisible. Indeed, fierce trouble was avoided. Is this not what they call *metochi* in the world? It is something to be feared.  

The river-dwelling creature of Tsugaru, the *metochi*, is described as “shaped like a snake”, measuring one *shaku* and six or seven *sun*, or a total of just over 48 to 51 centimetres with a wide and flat body, and large head. The *metochi* is considered responsible for a child’s death in the river during the Kan’ei years, after it was seen exiting out of the anus of the corpse of the drowned child. This creature “crazily ran about,” and was hunted down when seen. During the Bunka years, Takase’s friend was more fortunate than the boy above, because even though he had been pulled down to the bed of the river by the *metochi* that had wrapped its body around him, he managed to smash its head with a rock and avert disaster, showing that while it is dangerous to humans, it is not invincible.

The above detailed description of the river-dwelling *metochi* is twice sited by Yanagita Kunio, as part of his inquiry into the river-dwelling *kappa*, or water sprite. In “Kappa to mizuchi” Yanagita writes:

In Aomori prefecture in the North, there remains the word *medochi*. Apparently it is not found outside in Nanbu, but among old works that write about Tsugaru, there is a book

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367 Ibid. pp. 143-44.
(Tani no hibiki) by someone named Hirao Rosen. It is a book that was made very close to Meiji, and inside medochi is written of in great detail. They distinguish these from kappa, and they seem to think there exist a certain species of animal called medochi.368

Yanagita notes that medochi is a term that remains in Tsugaru, but not in Nanbu, and cites his source as Rosen’s “book,” referring to Tani no hibiki. In Yōkai dangi (『妖怪談義』) or Discussion of Monsters, in a section entitled “Bon sugi medochi dan” (「盆過ぎメドチ談」 “Discussion on Medochi after Bon Festival”), Yanagita sites “Old Man Hirao Rosen” again as differentiating between medochi and kappa or water sprite. Medochi are described as snake-like in appearance, but Yanagita here expresses his opposing view, stating, “I still believe this is a local name for the kappa, because there are words resembling this even at some distance from this place.”369

Rosen’s treatment of more realistic matter in his ethnographic approach, also includes examinations of excavated artefacts, as also seen previously in Gappo kidan. Rosen displays in his discussion of these excavated objects in Tani no hibiki, critical analysis regarding their origins:

Also, among the artefacts (什物) in this Hyakutaku Temple (百沢寺), there are seven old masks. Although it has been passed down that long ago around the Enryaku [782-805] Daidō [806-809] years, when Sakanoue no Tamuramaro embarked on his Eastern expedition to subdue the barbarians, he made his military strategists (軍師) wear [these masks], and they prevailed over the enemy (賊を威して) and secured victory, there are neither books nor histories (縁記) that show this. Thus, these do not appear to be objects that are two hundred years or three hundred years old. The lacquer colour is tarnished, the roughness of the carved engravings smoothed, and the awkwardness of the shape and such are terribly old and refined, and they are not objects made by the hands of people in middle or late-middle ages, nor in recent years. Also, they are much larger than regular objects, and there are those that are eight sun (24 cm) or nine sun (27 cm) in length. The

material looks like Japanese Judas (桂). It is something very mysterious and so I render its appearance here.\textsuperscript{370}

Here, Rosen makes reference to views that these unearthed masks could belong to Sakanoue no Tamuramaro (坂上田村麻呂 758-811), the Heian period military general who was the first in Japan to be appointed Barbarian-Subduing Generalissimo (Seii taishōgun) and succeeded in conquering the “Ezo” region of Tohoku.\textsuperscript{371} Rosen rejects these views as implausible, suggesting from the style, size, and condition of the masks, they do not date back as far as medieval times, or the Heian period. Rosen goes on to explain that the shintai (神体) or objects of worship in the Myōmi hall (妙見堂) of Arakawa village, are also twelve of the same sort of ancient masks. These masks are also “wondrous” (kusubi) objects, and it is said that when their boxes are opened, there is certain to be violent wind, rain, thunder, and lightning, and so they strictly prohibit showing the masks to people.

As I have shown, \textit{Tani no hibiki} reflects Atsutane’s theories on spirits and mysteries associated with the invisible kakuriyo realm, cited in direct reference to the remote and mysterious locale of Tappi, where orchestral sounds “not of this world” are heard. The phenomena of dogs being agitated and barking mysteriously at some unseen objects also related to similar accounts in Atsutane’s \textit{Kokon yōmikō}. Hirata \textit{kokugaku} and views of the kakuriyo are

\textsuperscript{370} Hirao Rosen. \textit{Tani no hibiki}. pp. 163-64.
\textsuperscript{371} Sakanoue no Tamuramaro is famous throughout the Tohoku region including Tsugaru due the many legends transmitted from Heian times of his military prowess in conquering and “pacifying” the region referred to in early Heian times as “Ezo.” Tamuramaro is credited for founding many notable shrines, including Hirosaki Hachiman shrine, which he is said to have erected for the purpose of praying for military success. Also, popular theories about the Neputa Festival in Tsugaru identify Tamuramaro and his military conquest over Ezo as the historical origin of the summertime festival which, at least from early modern times, depicts military expeditions setting out for battle, accompanied by a band of drummers, flutists, and dancers. Tamuramaro is one of the traditional and most common figures depicted on the large fan-shaped floats in the Neputa of Hirosaki, as well as the large figurine floats of the Nebuta of the city of Aomori, and other floats in different cities throughout Aomori prefecture.
clearly a part of the basis of this text, even if not as overtly as in the third of Rosen’s major works.

**Yūfu shinron (New Treatise on the Spiritual Realm)**

On the eleventh of the ninth month in 1864 (Genji 1), Rosen’s name finally appears in the Ibukinoya disciple registry, *Monjin seimei roku*, as the 1,344th Hirata disciple, on the twenty-first anniversary of Atsutane’s death. Rosen was the eleventh to join from Hirosaki, seven years after close friend and Tsugaru group leader Tsuruya Ariyo registered. Several reasons could be cited for his late enrolment, but I would argue that Rosen was still preoccupied with his ethnographic studies of Tsugaru—in terms of local commoner life and culture, as well as cases of the mysterious and spiritual—that he delayed full commitment to the Hirata school and engagement in studies of “Imperial Japan” until 1864.

Of Rosen’s writings, his *Yūfu shinron* (『幽府新論』), or *New Treatise on the Spiritual Realm*, completed in the fifth month of 1865 (Keio 1) best expresses his kokugaku thought. Rosen bases this treatise on Atsutane’s works, particularly *Kishin shinron* (*New Thesis on Spirits*, 1820), as he confirms and builds on Atsutane’s arguments on the spiritual realm *yūmeikai* or *kakuriyo* (幽冥/幽冥界) and on the divine spirits (*神霊* mitama), spirits (*鬼神* kishin), and souls (*心霊* tama) that live and are active in this realm. Rosen supports these claims by citing numerous Japanese and Chinese texts. Debates on spirits (*鬼神* kishin or *gui shen* (Ch.)) were carried out by Confucianists from ancient to early modern times in China and Japan, and

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eventually by *kokugaku* scholars beginning with Atsutane. I will now proceed to outline the discourse on *kishin* spirits.

The discourse on *gui shen* or *kishin* (鬼神) commonly translated as “spirits” or “spiritual beings” spans well over two millennia, from ancient China through to Tokugawa Japan. This discourse has featured a wide variety of interpretations on the compound word composed of Chinese characters “鬼” (*gui* (Ch.) or *ki*, *oni* (J.)) and “神” (*shen* (Ch.) or *shin* or *kami* (J.)). The *Analects* of Confucius, are often considered human-centred and focused on this world, and the following passage, while referring to spiritual matters, confirms Confucius concern with the here and now:

> Zilu asked about serving ghosts and spirits.  
> The Master said, “You are not yet able to serve people—how could you be able to serve ghosts and spirits?”  
> “May I inquire about death?”  
> “You do not yet understand life—how could you possibly understand death?”

Here, disciple Zilu inquires to his teacher Confucius about serving “spirits” which could be interpreted as worship or veneration of divinities or ancestral spirits. Confucius admonishes his disciple, urging him to focus his attention on serving humans rather than being concerned about “spirits.” Confucius also responds to Zilu’s question about death with a rhetorical question that insists his disciple focus on life over death. Wing-Tsit Chan characterizes this passage as, “A most celebrated saying on humanism.” Edward G. Slingerland interprets it as an expression of

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“Confucius’ practical orientation,” which places expectation on the gentleman to “focus his energy on virtuous conduct and concrete learning rather than empty speculation.”

Confucianists of the Song dynasty (960-1297), as Koyasu Nobukuni describes, took up the issue of gui shen, which had previously been an issue of faith and worship, and interpreted it philosophically. Zhang Zai (張載 (張橫渠) 1020-76) asserted, “The negative and positive spiritual forces (鬼神 gui shen) are the spontaneous activity (良能) of the two material forces (二気).” Chan points out that Zhang Zai here offers a new and innovative interpretation of gui shen as “the spontaneous activity of material force” and adopted the idea into a comprehensive “metaphysical system.” Further, Cheng Yi (程颐／程伊川 1033-1107) states, “Positive and negative spiritual forces (鬼神) are the function of heaven and earth (天地の効用) and are traces of creation (造化の迹).” Cheng Yi interpreted gui shen as the “function” of nature which causes natural phenomena to occur, as well as constituting “traces of creation” or the visible natural phenomena and objects themselves. Kunio Miura describes Cheng Yi’s interpretation as reducing gui shen from the “supernatural” down to the “natural.”

Then, citing these views by Zhang Zai and Cheng Yi, Zhu Xi (1130-1200) asserts his own view on gui shen in Zhong yong zhang ju (『中庸章句』 Chūyō shōku) or The Doctrine of the Mean by Chapter and Phrase: “What I think is that concerning the two material forces (二気), basically gui is the spirit of yin, and shen is the spirit of yang. Concerning one material force, basically that which extends is shen, and conversely, that which returns is gui. That is truly only

377 Chang Tsai, A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy. p. 505.
378 Ibid.
one thing.” Furthermore, to paraphrase Zhu Xi’s assertions in his *Zhu zi yu lei* (『朱子語類』), *gui shen* is material force (氣), and this material force “contracts and extends” (屈伸). *Gui shen* are simply the “decline and prospering” (消長) of Yin and Yang, causing birth and growth of creation and functioning of nature. *Shen* is “extension” and *gui* “contraction,” such that the early occurrence of wind, rain, thunder, and lightning is *shen*, and the residing of these phenomena *gui*. Thus, Zhu Xi and the Song Confucianists incorporate *gui shen* into their system of material force.

Confucianists in Tokugawa Japan also took part in the discourse on *kishin*, and Itō Jinsai (1627-1705) has been described by Koyasu as a faithful interpreter of Confucius, in considering the limits of human action and knowledge. Jinsai gives the following definition of *kishin* spirits under the heading of “*Kijin*” (鬼神) in his *Go Mō jigi* (『語孟字義』 *Interpretation of Confucius and Mencius’ Sayings*): “*kijin* are heaven and earth, mountains and rivers, mausoleum, the gods of five offerables, as well as that which cause all human misfortune and fortune by the divine spirit—all of these we call *kijin*.“ Jinsai defines *kishin* broadly, as an object of worship in nature, mausoleum, gods, and the divine cause of misfortune and fortune. Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725), Confucian scholar and advisor to the Shogun Tokugawa Ienobu (1662-1712), wrote *Kishin ron* (『鬼神論』), or *Treatise on Kishin*. Considering the long tradition of *kishin* discourse, Hakuseki acknowledges the difficulty of defining *kishin*, stating, “The matter of *kishin* is truly difficult to speak of. Not only is it difficult to speak of, but it is also difficult to comprehend (listen to). Not only is it difficult to comprehend, but it is also difficult to believe.

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381 Ibid.
The difficulty of believing is due to the difficulty of knowing.”384 Indeed, Hakuseki draws attention to the challenges of an intellectual understanding of *kishin*, which also make it difficult to believe in them.

Ogyū Sorai (1666-1728), Confucian scholar also of the Ancient School, who, according to Maruyama Masao’s famous thesis, historicized the Ancient Sages of China, also historicizes the matter of *kishin*.385 He asserts in *Benmei* (『弁名』 On Distinguishing Names), “Now, the names ‘ghosts’ and ‘spirits’ were ones that the sages formulated. How could anyone doubt them? Those who claim that there are no ghosts do not believe in the sages. They might explain that they do not believe because they cannot see them.”386 Furthermore, in an essay entitled “Shigi taisaku kishin ichidō,” (「私擬対策鬼神一道」) in Sorai shū (『徂徠集』 Sorai’s Collected Writings), Sorai asserts, “Therefore, the Sage regulated the spirits (鬼 *ki*, oni) to unify their people, built and founded mausoleums, and created the autumn ritual of making offerings to the ancestors (丞嘗 Ch. *cheng chung*, J. *jōshō*) and conducted worship.”387 Koyasu cites this passage and asserts that Sorai credited the Sages with “regulating” the *kishin* spirits and made them the clear object of spirit worship (鬼神祭祀), and thereby established human society as a “worshipping community” (祭祀的共同体).

With his *Shin kishinron* (『新鬼神論』 or *New Treatise on Spirits*), completed in 1805 (Bunka 2) Atsutane was the first *kokugaku* scholar to join the discussion on *kishin* spirits, dominated previously by Confucians in China and Tokugawa Japan. Atsutane wrote *Shin

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*kishinron* only four years after he had begun reading Norinaga’s writings, and this text was one of Atsutane’s first major works on *kokugaku* spirituality. He asked Motoori Ōhira to write a preface for this text, to which he obliged, and this endorsement from Norinaga’s son seems to have helped Atsutane’s cause when he requested to Motoori Haruniwa for admittance into the academy that same year, and officially became Norinaga’s disciple the following year in 1806. Atsutane revised and renamed this treatise *Kishin shinron* (『鬼神新論』) or *New Treatise on Spirits* of 1820 (Bunsei 3), the edition which Rosen obtained a copy of and based his work upon.

Several scholars have commented on the significance of Atsutane’s entry into the Confucian debate with his *Shin kishinron* and *Kishin shinron*. Koyasu asserts that Atsutane’s thought achieved some legitimacy by assuming an “epistemological character” (知のある性格) also demonstrated by the early modern Confucianists.\(^{388}\) Gerald Figal credits Atsutane for identifying, through *Kishin shinron*, previous Confucian interpretations of *kishin* spirits as “an administrative construct” employed to mediate and control the beliefs of commoners in spirits, and to curb their “human passion” related to these beliefs. “As such it was a premonition of the modern control of Japanese Spirit via a control of spirits,” states Figal.\(^{389}\) This point fits into Figal’s larger argument that, “Japanese spirituality was reorganized into the Japanese Spirit, where spirits were relegated to the realm of folklore and superstition in what I call supernatural ideology.”\(^{390}\) Mark McNally offers a detailed discussion on *kishin* discourse leading up to Atsutane, and asserts that in his first major treatise *Kamōsho*, a refutation to *Bendōsho* (『弁道書』On Distinguishing the Way) by Confucianist Dazai Shundai’s (1680-1747), and his second work of *Shin kishinron*, “Atsutane addressed Confucian issues in an effort to garner attention for

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388 Koyasu, p. 64.
390 Ibid., p. 197.
his emerging career as a scholar.” McNally argues that despite Atsutane’s entry into the

discourse and his becoming a Norinaga disciple after 1806, he “found himself on the social and

intellectual periphery of two distinct nativist schools,” because his views of cosmology and

history clashed with the Edo-ha’s aesthetics and philology, and his scholarly method was

considered loose compared to the more rigorous textualism of the Norinaga school.

Rosen’s =*Yūfu shinron* is preceded by two formal introductions, one by Osari Nakaakira,
priest of Kumano Okuteru Shrine of Hirosaki, and another by Tsugaru group leader and close
friend Tsuruya Ariyo. Both are recognized by the Hirata academy heads, and both are well

known in the local Hirosaki community, Nakaakira in Shinto, scholarly, and poetic circles, and

Ariyo in the poetic and scholarly community. Nakaakira’s introduction is rendered in

*Man’yōgana* style, and praises the virtues of the Imperial Way of Japan since ancient times, as

well as the efforts of the *kokugaku* masters, Kamo no Mabuchi, Motoori Norinaga, and Atsutane

for their studies of the Imperial Country. Nakaakira then introduces the author of the present

work, stating, “There was an Old Man called Hirao Rosen in Hirosaki of our Tsugaru.” He

praises Rosen’s paintings for depicting the deep colours of the landscape, and reproducing

flowers and birds with vibrant colours to appear as if the wind was blowing and voices singing.

People are depicted realistically as if actually speaking. He also describes how Rosen utilizes his

brush freely to depict the various scenes of “our land of Tsugaru” including Mount Iwaki and the

shores of Sotogahama.

Furthermore, Rosen is described as recording the shapes of the “rare and mysterious

objects of this territory”, and writing of their origin in many authored and edited volumes.

Nakaakira then states, “Thus for these ten and more years, he placed his heart into the Studies of

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391 McNally, p. 94.
the Imperial Country (皇国学), and morning and night devoted himself to and invested his energies in this, and called upon the spirit of the Naobi deity. He deeply deplored those who engaged in Chinese Studies, and those lost in the Buddha, and wondered how he could rectify their error and clear their doubts.\(^3^9^3\) Nakaakira’s observation that Rosen had been devoting himself to “Studies of the Imperial Country” for over ten years since Ansei, correspond to his period of increased engagement with Hirata kokugaku, as observed in Gappo kidan and Tani no hibiki, which we will also observe in Yūfu shinron.

Then, Ariyo in his circular, cursive handwriting composes his preface, which also introduces Rosen as artist and kokugaku scholar, while outlining the development of his thought:

In order to enact the right way (正道 masamichi), the two principles of visible matters (顕事 arahanigoto) and invisible matters (幽事 kakurigoto) must not be gloomy like eight-fold clouds, but clear as if pointing to the palm of one’s hand. This person’s first books were largely based on the Chinese heart (漢心 karagokoro), however, from the years past called Ansei, he began to solely read the books that the Old Man of Suzunoya and our Master (大人 ushi) had written. He came to know for the first time the preciousness of the Imperial Country, and furthermore, discerned his previous error; He corrected his former ways (旧習 kyūshū), and solidified the pillar of the soul. Such is indeed the work of a Brave warrior (真益たけ雄 masura takeo) of Yamato heart of the Eight Great Islands (大八洲大和心), and now he has gained momentum as if to become the academy head (学頭) of our way. How could anyone not praise this person, how could anyone not admire this text?\(^3^9^4\)

Ariyo asserts the importance of elucidating “the two principles of visible matters (arahanigoto) and invisible matters (kakurigoto)” in order to “enact the right way.” Then, in charting Rosen’s evolution as a kokugaku scholar, Ariyo concedes that Rosen’s earlier writings had been based on writings of a “Chinese heart” (karagokoro), but confirms that from the Ansei years he engaged with the writings of Norinaga and Atsutane, and has come to know “the preciousness of the Imperial Country” and has corrected his past ways. Ariyo not only confirms Rosen’s concern for

\(^{3^93}\) Ibid. p. 6-7.
\(^{3^94}\) Tsuruya Ariyo, “Introduction,” Yūfu shinron. Folio 15 front to folio 16 front.
the visible and invisible matters, which also reflects his own scholarly interests, but his reference
to Rosen “[solidifying] the pillar of the soul” as a “Brave warrior of the Yamato heart” is a direct
reference to Atsutane’s major treatise *Tama no mihashira* (*『霊能真柱』 August Pillar of the
Soul*), wherein, Atsutane asserts that those engaging in “Ancient Learning” (古学 *kokugaku*) or
who desire to firmly and highly solidify that Yamato heart must first understand the settling of
the soul’s destination after death. Ariyo, the leader of the Tsugaru group, praises Rosen’s rapid
rise in *kokugaku* studies, and acknowledges that Rosen could be called “academy head” and
leader of their scholarly community. Thus, both of Rosen’s preface writers, Nakaakira and Ariyo,
confirm Rosen’s gradual immersion into Hirata *kokugaku* following the Ansei years.

In confirming and expanding upon Atsutane’s thought, Rosen introduces numerous
stories on spiritual matters originating from Hirosaki domain. *Yūfu shinron* is comprised of eight
volumes, and is considerably longer than *Kishin shinron*. Rosen eventually sent a manuscript of
his treatise to Hirata Kanetane at the Ibukinoya academy in Edo in 1867, and received high
praise for his work from Hirata Nobutane, and even received an offer to publish it at the
Ibukinoya. However, by that time he was not willing to travel such a distance, so he declined
and remained in Hirosaki to continue his studies. I discuss such details concerning the treatment
of *Yūfu shinron* in the years after its completion in more detail in chapter eight.

I now proceed to examine the contents of *Yūfu shinron*, beginning with its opening
passage.

*China* (赤縣 *Morokoshi*), like the Imperial Country, does not have details of
transmissions of spirits in antiquity (幽古 *mukashi*), but the fact that they fear the
heavenly deities (天帝 *amatsukami*), and worship the spirits (鬼神 *kishin*) is [known]

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discussion on these theories of Atsutane.
because they have left traces of their mysterious works to the current age, and beginning with the Xia and Shang, and even in the age of the Zhou, those remnants (余波) still were passed down, and they speak first of so called heaven and earth, mountains and rivers, mausoleums, the gods of millet (社稷) and the five offerables (五祀) (Sha (社) are the deities of the land. Shoku (稷) are the deities of the five grains. Goshi (五祀) are the deities of indoors, and are the so-called deity of the home, deity of the kettle, Chūryū (中霤) are deities of inside the home, Kōshin (行神) are deities of the road. The remainder should be noted.) and value the worshipping of various divinities, and have strictly regulated these rituals.397

Rosen begins the first volume of his treatise entitled “heavenly deities,” by asserting that although no detailed records are passed down of “spirits in antiquity” in China, much like in Japan, it is known that people of China have feared the “heavenly deities” and worshipped the spirits because of the “traces of their mysterious works” transmitted to the present. Rosen acknowledges that since the dynasties of the Xia (2100-1600 BCE) and Shang (1600-1045 BCE), and through the Zhou (1045-256 BCE), “those remnants” have been passed down, and include concepts of “heaven and earth,” nature of “mountains and rivers,” “mausoleums” for worshipping divine and ancestral spirits, and “the gods of millet and the five offerables,” deities of the land and produce, and those of domestic life. Rosen, who was an erudite scholar of Chinese studies, as discussed earlier, acknowledges and demonstrates an appreciation for spiritual traditions passed down from antiquity in China that prove the observance of spiritual traditions of worship and reverence.

Some of Yūfu shinron’s major claims are seen in volume one, in which he writes, “spirits (kishin) are real objects, and are not empty, dead objects like theories of ‘creation by spontaneous activity of the two material forces (二気の良能造化)’ discussed by the Song Confucianists. They all have minds and corporeality and I wish to discuss the matter of how they

must be feared and revered.”

Thus, he challenges theories of Zhang Zai and the other Song Confucianists for their interpretation of *kishin* as abstract objects, and argues that they are actually “real” and dynamic, with personified features. Furthermore, in emphasizing the power of heavenly deities (*amatsu kami*), Rosen argues, “these point to our Ame no minakanushi no kami and Kami musubi no kami, and these deities created heaven and earth, and gave birth to the solar deity and lunar deity, make the four seasons function, and make all things live and such: they are truly wondrous, truly mysterious, and although they are unfathomable, all things are the great works of these great deities, and the four seasons do not change on their own.” As central themes throughout the text, Rosen asserts that spirits (*kishin*) are living entities with “minds” and “corporeality,” and that great creator deities like Ame no minakanushi no kami and Kamimusubi no kami possess the ability to create heaven and earth, the solar and lunar deities, and cause seasonal change.

What was Rosen’s stated reason for writing *Yūfu shinron*? He states his purpose in the first volume:

However, the great man of Ibukinoya [Atsutane] alone argued the fact that spirits (*kishin*) are real objects that have minds and corporeality, and explained the truth of the matter that they must be greatly feared and respected, and this terribly startled people in the world and caused them to fear. And so, even though there is nothing more an incapable person such as me can say, the Old Man [翁 Okina, Hirata Atsutane]’s text, this *Kishin shinron*, is still [only] a manuscript and is not yet a published book, and so it is very rare in our land of Tsugaru (吾が津軽の国 *waga* Tsugaru no kuni), and the fact that there are many people who have not seen it is a terribly lamentable, undesirable situation, and so with this text as a basis, I write all that I have collected from here and there over the years regarding spirits (*kishin*), and wish to show it to my friends who are unaware of gods.

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399 Ibid., p. 28, back.
Rosen praises Atsutane’s arguments as convincing, with his assertion that spirits (kishin) are “real objects” with “minds” and “corporeality,” and humbly admits there is nothing more he could add, and furthermore, he laments the fact that Atsutane’s *Kishin shinron* remained an unpublished manuscript unavailable to people of “our land of Tsugaru,” or “Tsugaru no kuni.” Now a disciple of Atsutane, Rosen in *Yūfu shinron* refers to Atsutane affectionately as the “Old Man” (翁 Okina). He then clearly states that he wrote *Yūfu shinron* for “my friends who are unaware of deities (kami)” and that he wished to show them the “great spiritual power” of the deities and to enlighten them on “the notable works… that must be feared and respected.” Of Rosen’s three major texts, *Yūfu shinron* is the first and only one where he directly references “our land of Tsugaru” or “Tsugaru no kuni.” The main reason for this is that the first two works, *Gappo kidan* and *Tani no hibiki* were primarily about Hirosaki castle town and the surrounding Tsugaru territory, and therefore, required no direct reference to the area as a whole. In contrast, *Yūfu shinron* takes up accounts of Tsugaru and Imperial Japan at large, requiring Rosen to orient Tsugaru within Imperial Japan, thus referring to his locale, “our land of Tsugaru”.

If we next examine volume eight, we see that his intended readers were not only the general inhabitants of Tsugaru domain, but that he had targeted another specific group:

And so, now for those just beginning their studies, I shall cite and show in detail the things that the great man of Ibukinoya argued. However, as stated in the Old Man’s *Kishin shinron*, because there are no ancient records, the matter of the heavenly deities controlling all things in the world, and the matters of human life and death, and

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400 Ibid., p. 42, front – 43, back.
misfortune and fortune all being deeds of the deities, that human strength indeed cannot attain to, are difficult to comprehend easily, and because of this even Confucius said, “at fifty, I understood Heaven’s Mandate.”

Throughout *Yūfu shinron*, Rosen repeatedly quotes large passages from Atsutane’s *Kishin shinron*, and here he states he does this for “those just beginning their studies.” He also explains that the fact of “heavenly deities” controlling all things in the world cannot be comprehended easily, such that even Confucius said, “at fifty, I understood Heaven’s Mandate.” When he had completed this work, Rosen too was in his late fifties, and addressing the Hirosaki nativist group that included his juniors, some of whom were thirty years younger, we can presume that he wished to convey the direct teachings of Atsutane, regarding the difficult and unfathomable matter of heaven.

In the concluding volume, volume eight, Rosen cites a passage from Atsutane’s *Kishin shinron* which compares Ōmagatsubi no kami with Ōnaobi no kami, good with evil, and fortune with misfortune:

To begin with, in the world there are Ōmagatsubi no kami and Ōnaobi no kami, and there are Magakami that completely cause misfortunate deeds, and their various works greatly differ. And that which is called Ōmagatsubi no kami, has another name called Yaso magatsubi no kami or Ōyahiko no kami, and this is the deity of the spirit that scatters filthy things, and so when there are filthy things in the world, it becomes terribly angry, and when it becomes enraged, there are things that are even beyond the strength of Naobi no kami, and it causes even terrible misfortune.

Rosen cites Atsutane’s arguments of the evil deity Magatsubi no kami and purifying deity of good, Naobi no kami based on Norinaga’s theories. This passage can be understood as

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402 Ibid., p. 64, back – 65, front.
representing Rosen’s wish to offer established *kokugaku* theories to the people inhabiting Tsugaru domain, in order for them to make sense of the mysterious spiritual phenomena of their region. By conveying verbatim the words of the nativist masters to the Tsugaru locals, Rosen wanted to show them that in the world incomprehensible things occur often, like good people suffering from misfortune, or bad people benefiting from fortune, but that there are deities in the spiritual realm that are the cause of such realities.

While conveying the nativist thought propounded by the Great Men is a major task of Rosen’s *Yūfu shinron*, this text’s originality and value lie in its introduction of local stories from the Tsugaru region within such an intellectual framework of *kokugaku* thought. As an example of this, I cite from volume five, stories of “thunder deities” and “thunder beasts.” In volume five, Rosen shows that the occurrence of thunder is not mere coincidence, but a result of the “thunder deities’” anger, and such “deities’ rage.”

Furthermore, although they say thunder is the anger of heaven and earth, it is not so. Because it is a very severe, very powerful deity that is born from out of anger, it is one that causes deeds of spiritual matter (*kamigoto*) that cause the world to prosper and unleashes its great spiritual power giving rise to all things.

Rosen explains that the thunder deity is a “very severe, very powerful deity” born out of anger, and it possesses the ability to cause “deeds of spiritual matter” that cause the world to prosper, and use its “great spiritual power” that causes “all things” to happen.

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403 Ibid., volume 5, “lightning,” p. 44, back.
404 Ibid., p. 2, back.
Rosen then demonstrates the thunder deities’ power with the following story about “our land of Tsugaru, Ōshimizu village” as an example. In the Bunsei years (1818-1830), a father and son were cultivating the fields. Suddenly it began to rain and thunder, so the boy became afraid and asked to return home, but his father became agitated and cursed at the thunder. Then, before he could finish uttering his words, lightning struck him, “shredding his body into small pieces.” In this way, just as Rosen established in volume one that his purpose for writing this treatise was to enlighten people on the deities’ “great spiritual power,” here he explains it is the “great spiritual power” of the thunder deities that work to create the fearful, natural phenomena of thunder and lightning, and he illustrates this with examples from Tsugaru.

In volume eight, Rosen also introduces a mystical story about “works caused by the soul (tama) in the spiritual realm (yūmei)” that he had heard from another fellow kokugaku scholar from Hirosaki, Iwama Shitatari (1811-1891). The story is about Matsuya Chūemon, a sake brewer from “our land of Tsugaru, Hirosaki Dote town.” In 1806 (Bunka 3), Chūemon fell ill for two or three days, and died on the first of the sixth month. On the very same day, Chūemon’s good friend, Yoshiya Chōemon, visited a temple, and on his return from the temple, saw Chūemon walking with a young boy Manjirō. As Chūemon and Chōemon were good friends, they spoke for some time before parting. After walking for a while, Chōemon saw Yoshisuke, a member of Chūemon’s household, standing in front of the torii gate of the Sumiyoshi Shrine. Yoshisuke then told Chōemon that his lord, Chūemon, had fallen ill four days before and had just died moments earlier. Chōemon was stunned to hear this and explained to Yoshisuke that earlier that day he had seen Chūemon and Manjirō walking together and that he had spoken with him.

405 Ibid., p. 13, back – 14, front.  
406 Ibid., p. 14, front.  
408 Ibid., p. 33, back – 35, front.
However, Yoshisuke proceeded to give Chōemon the details about Chūemon’s illness and treatments. In disbelief, Chōemon visited Matsuya, where he was shocked to find Chūemon’s wife and child crying, as well as to see the corpse of his friend. He called Manjirō and questioned him, to find out that he had been nursing Chūemon all along, and had not once stepped outdoors. After citing this story, Rosen explains that “works done by the soul (tama) in the spiritual realm (yūmei)” are “stories which cannot be believed” by human understanding, and that such souls (tama) which are active in the spiritual realm have the power to move people in the visible world.409

As I have examined, a lively discourse on gui shen or kishin spirits spanned over two millennia from Confucius, through Confucianists of the Song dynasty and of Tokugawa Japan, and was eventually joined by kokugaku scholar Hirata Atsutane through his Shin kishinron (1805) and Kishin shinron (1820). Rosen based Yūfu shinron mainly on Atsutane’s Kishin shinron, and criticized Song Confucianist theories of kishin as “empty” and abstract for equating them to concepts of “material force” and “yin and yang,” and Rosen in turn asserted that kishin are living entities with “minds and corporeality” possessing powers to create, control nature, and cause change in the visible world. In this work, Rosen introduces the established kokugaku thought of Motoori Norinaga and Hirata Atsutane to the general people of Tsugaru domain, as well as to junior members of the same local kokugaku community, while citing mystical stories originating within Tsugaru domain, thereby contextualizing local tales of mysticism within the cosmology of kokugaku thought. When stories from “our land of Tsugaru”—of men being struck and killed by lightning after issuing threats and curses against it, or of a man seeing and conversing with his friend who had died earlier that day—were contextualized within kokugaku theories, such as those of Atsutane’s spiritual realm and “great spiritual power” of deities,

409 Ibid., p. 35,
Norinaga and Atsutane’s “good deities/bad deities” arguments—it can be argued that Rosen was offering Tsugaru inhabitants theoretical answers to comprehend mysteries of the world around them and to urge “people who are unaware of deities” to live with an awareness of the existence and power of invisible deities that surround them.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I examined the three major works by Hirao Rosen, *Gappo kidan (Strange Tales of Gappo)*, *Tani no hibiki (Echoes of the Valley)*, and *Yūfu shinron (New Treatise on the Spiritual Realm)*, completed over a decade from 1855 to 1865, in order to consider Rosen’s ethnographic inquiries into strange, mysterious, and spiritual phenomena and objects of his local Tsugaru domain. Through this analysis, I charted the gradual and increased reflection of Atsutane’s theories on spirits and the spiritual *kakuriyo* realm in Rosen’s writings, showing Rosen’s increased engagement with Hirata kokugaku. Hirata kokugaku gave Rosen established theories with which to rationalize spiritual mysteries of Tsugaru, and allowed him to locate the spiritual landscape of “our land of Tsugaru” (*waga Tsugaru no kuni*) into that of a larger Imperial Japan. This exercise of locating Tsugaru into Imperial Japan is particularly evident in *Yūfu shinron*, as the expression “our land of Tsugaru” often appears in this work and for the first time, out of a need to orient Tsugaru within a larger Imperial Japan, whereas his previous two works focused primarily on the local scene of Hirosaki castle town and Tsugaru on their own.

In the following chapters, I continue to pursue this issue of the Tsugaru disciples’ endeavour to orient their local Tsugaru into Imperial Japan, next by examining Tsuruya Ariyo’s conceptions of Tsugaru and Imperial Japan, then later examining the Meiji Restoration years and early Meiji society, when this objective was pursued in warfare, as well as spiritually and
politically. In this chapter, I focused primarily on Rosen’s intellectual endeavours with his ethnographic and *kokugaku* studies over the span of a decade, and in chapter eight, I will resume my examination of Rosen’s life and actions in this tumultuous period from late-Tokugawa to early Meiji. Rosen and the other Tsugaru disciples too experienced modernity in the north and made efforts and struggled to find their place within Tsugaru and Imperial Japan, eventually in the context of a new modern state.
Chapter 6 Tsuruya Ariyo: Mount Iwaki and the Spirits

Overview

This chapter examines the scholarship of Tsuruya Ariyo. In chapter three, I demonstrated how the community of Hirata disciples in Tsugaru developed around leader Ariyo, and showed the group’s poetic and nativist pursuits, as well as the strongly religious and autonomous nature of their activities. The current chapter focuses on Ariyo’s poetry, kokugaku thought, and religious thought and practice. As with Rosen in the previous two chapters, here I examine how Ariyo conceived of the two “countries” of Tsugaru and Imperial Japan, and the connection between these visible earthly realms with the spiritual realm through gods and spirits. Following a brief survey of past research on the image of the sacred mountain in religious traditions of Japan, I demonstrate how Ariyo depicted Mount Iwaki as the spiritual symbol of Tsugaru through waka poetry in his Iwaki san sanbyaku shu (『岩木山三百首』), or Three Hundred Poems on Mount Iwaki. I show how he asserted the gods’ (kami) rule and control over the mountain through these poems, as well as his treatise, Iwaki san shinreiki (『岩木山神霊記』), or Mount Iwaki Divine Records. Next, I take up Ariyo’s major work, Ken’yū rakuron (『顕幽楽論』), or Treatise on Enjoyment in the Visible and Invisible Realms, in which he connects life in this world with the afterlife through enjoyment, which he asserts is paramount to living a full life. Finally, I examine how Ariyo’s visions of the visible contemporary world and spiritual realm are further connected through religious practice, namely spirit and ancestor veneration, seen in his norito liturgies, which reflect his adoption and expansion of Hirata religiosity.
Mount Ibaki in Ariyo’s Waka Poetry

I begin by taking up Ariyo’s *Iwaki san sanbyaku shu* (岩木山三百首), or *Three Hundred Poems of Mount Ibaki*. As evident from the title, this work completed in 1866 (Keiō 2), is a collection of over three hundred waka poems devoted to Mount Ibaki, the 1,625 metre high mountain centred on the Tsugaru plains of Hirosaki domain. As described in chapter three, Mount Ibaki was an object of worship as well as sacred site for pilgrimage, with pilgrims generally starting their ascent from Mount Ibaki Shrine located near the base of the southern slope of mountain. This mountain was visible from anywhere in the Tsugaru region, to farmers gazing at the amount of remaining snow on its peaks to determine when to begin planting crops, and to fishermen orienting themselves on coastal waters relative to its peaks. For the people of Tsugaru, Mount Ibaki was both the region’s most recognizable landmark, and its most important spiritual symbol. Through this poetry collection, Ariyo depicts the gods’ connection to Mount Ibaki, and describes its place in the “country of Tsugaru” within Imperial Japan.

To give context for my discussion on Ariyo’s conceptualizing of Mount Ibaki as a spiritual symbol within Tsugaru, I survey past scholarship on the idea of mountains as sacred in religious tradition. Mountains have been viewed as sacred symbols in societies throughout the world. Upon citing several examples, Ichiro Hori notes that in each case, “the mountains were believed to be the center of the world, the cosmic mountain, the pillar supporting and linking heaven and earth, or the residence of a god or gods.” Examining mountains in the context of Japanese folk religions, Hori adds that mountains in Japan have been regarded as “the world of the dead,” serving as a “passageway from this world to the next, from the profane to the sacred

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410 Please see chapter 3 where I list Ariyo’s various poetry collections.
and from earth to heaven.” Furthermore, the mountains are believed to be “the world of spirits,” a realm of deities, buddhas, and bodhisattvas, where shamans and ascetics had to undergo austerities of hell in order to receive from paradise powers and blessings, and where souls of the deceased had to undergo initiation to enter paradise or the Buddhist Pure Land.

Taking up the example of the Ōmine Mountain range, stretching from Yoshino in Nara prefecture to Kumano in Wakayama prefecture, Miyake Hitoshi explains that by combining the cosmology of esoteric Buddhism with the ancient Japanese concept of a “mountain otherworld as the abode of deities,” the mountain ascetic faith of shugendō gave rise to the idea of a mountain mandala which regards the Ōmine mountain range as mandala of both the diamond world and womb world. As seen in other societies around the world, the view of the mountain as an axis mundi, or centre of the cosmology, is a core belief associated with sacred mountains of Japan. In an effort to define “sacred space” in Japanese religions, Allan G. Grapard identifies three types of sacred space: a “sacred site” or residence of divinities, such as a shrine; a broader “sacred area” such as a pilgrimage route; and a “sacred nation” which spans the broadest space. According to this categorization, “sacred site” encompasses “shintai”—the “body/support of the divinity”—as well as “shin’iki” or “sacred region,” and these both include mountains. Grapard observes that over time, a vast “historical process” took place whereby sacred space was gradually expanded from a limited “sacred site” to that of a broader “sacred nation,” essentially making all of Japan a “sacred site.”

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412 Ibid. p. 22.
415 Ibid. p. 220.
historical developments associated with them, are cited above, are also observed in the case of Mount Iwaki of Tsugaru, as depicted by Ariyo.

In his introduction to the poetry collection, *Iwaki san sanbyaku shu*, Ariyo describes Mount Iwaki as “filling the heavens and earth, and the place where the morning sun illumines and the evening sun hides behind, where the great gods reside who protect the country of Tsugaru where boats dock, in our land of Mutsu.” He goes on to compare the three main peaks of the mountain to swords of medium and tall height. Mount Iwaki is further depicted as a fearsome mountain, possessing great power to protect the Northeastern (東北) region of the Great Imperial Country (皇大御国), and guard against and ward off barbarians and the wild and uncivilized. The anthology itself begins with a *chōka* long poem which repeats many of the above-mentioned characteristics of Mount Iwaki, while also adding that it “winds around the country of Tsugaru to serve as a shield (*mitate* 御楯),” that this “mountain range forms a barrier,” and that “the wide Iwaki summit fills the land, the high Iwaki peaks fill the heavens and soar into the spacious skies, as the superior mountain of the land.” This long poem also notes that “imperial gods” (皇神) rule over this mountain and that the “great gods” (大神) protect this land against “enemies of foreign countries” (外つ国の仇守ります).

A barrage of images and metaphors associated with Mount Iwaki are presented in these verses. First, Ariyo proclaims the mountain’s size and grandeur—so impressive to the local inhabitants like Ariyo. The mountain is depicted as filling heaven and earth, towering to the skies, and being an object illumined in sunrise, and hiding the setting sun at dusk. Such a description is analogous to the image of the mountain as *axis mundi*, or centre of the cosmos—in this case, the centre of the Tsugaru region. Second, Ariyo employs a series of metaphors which further depict

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417 Ibid. Folio 3, front.
the natural, physical characteristics, as well as the mountain’s various functions. The three peaks are likened to three imposing swords pointing skyward, and they refer to the central peak called “Iwaki san,” the southern peak of “Chōkai san,” and the northern peak known as “Ganki san.” The mountain also functions as a “barrier” to demark territory and boundary, as well as a “shield” to protect against the threat of outsiders. Third, Ariyo illustrates the divine nature of Mount Iwaki, as a place where the “great gods reside” who protect “the country of Tsugaru,” and describe a mountain ruled specifically by the “Imperial gods.” So here, Mount Iwaki is sacralised, in traditional manner, as an abode for the gods who provide protection, as well as a place for them to rule over. Moreover, it is depicted as a “fearsome mountain,” and deified so as to possess awesome power to protect against barbarians and the wild and uncivilized. The “great gods” defend against “enemies of foreign countries,” thus accentuating the mountain’s importance in “national” security, albeit in a spiritual sense. As I will show, these three general characterizations of the sacred mountain of Tsugaru are communicated by means of various expressions through the many poems in the collection.

After the chōka long poem at the collection’s opening, 304 tanka short poems follow, first grouped in association with places on or near Mount Iwaki, with the place names preceding the poem as a form of introduction. The first place names are as follows: Shimo Orii no miya (下居の宮) or shrine of Lower Oriii; Yudono (湯殿), a site of a hot springs; Maki no Koma (牧之駒); Takasu (鷹巣); Ōishi Shrine (大石神社); Oni Shrine (Oni jingū 鬼神宮) or Shrine of Demons; and Futamori (二森). Following these are tanka grouped by season—spring, summer, autumn, winter—then those categorized by themes: morning and evening; “outlook” (chōbō 眺望) or distant perspectives; “divine spirit” (shinrei 神霊); miscellaneous; and others. A number
of longer *sedōka* poems ensue, followed by more irregular-syllable poems, with some additional *tanka* to conclude.

The first poem I cite here is associated with “Omuro” (御室), also known as “Okumiya” (奥宮) or “Rear shrine,” located on the summit and corresponding with the Mount Iwaki shrine near the base of the mountain. This small shrine atop the summit was worshipped by climbers. The poem reads:

Amatsu miya  The heavenly shrine  
Takanari mashite  echoes a high sound  
Iwaki ne no  on the Iwaki peaks  
Kami no mamorazu  whose gods protect  
Tsugaru kuni hara  the plains of Tsugaru country

The shrine atop the summit is aptly described as the “heavenly shrine,” as the shrine at the highest elevation in the domain. The “high sound” emitted may refer to the wind whistling through the small shrine made of wood that Ariyo heard when he had reached the summit. The gods of Mount Iwaki, writes Ariyo, protect the plains stretching across Tsugaru country.

Certainly, the 360-degree panoramic view of the Tsugaru plain from atop the mountain gives one the sense of the expanse of the territory, the region under divine protection of the gods.

Mount Iwaki is known for a series of hot springs scattered across the lower third of the mountain, and some areas such as Dake Hot Springs (嶽温泉) have been a site of baths and inns for climbers and visitors from premodern times to the present. “Yunosawa” (湯野沢) is another such site of hot springs baths, which Ariyo writes of:

Morobito wo  Yunosawa of the gods  
sachie tamawaru  of Mount Iwaki  
kusuri yu no  is a medicinal bath  
Iwaki no yama no  bringing blessings

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418 Ibid. Folio 8 back.
Kami no yu no sawa to many people\textsuperscript{419}

Yunosawa is described as belonging to the gods of Mount Iwaki. With this divine association, the “medicinal bath” or “kusuri yu” (薬湯), offers blessings to visitors and healing for weary visitors and the ill. While the hot spring baths are the subject of this poem, the general notion of bestowing blessings on many people, is one consistent with the sacred and prosperous image portrayed of this sacred mountain.

Despite the presence of shugendō and Buddhism on Mount Iwaki, its sacralisation through association with the kami, or gods, of the “Shinto” tradition\textsuperscript{420} is further reinforced in the following poem, categorized under the “Autumn” season, in which Ariyo makes associations between this mountain and Japanese divine myth:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
Amagumo wo & Parting the way, parting the way \\
(itsu no) chiwaki ni chiwaki te & through the heavenly clouds \\
Iwaki ne no & let us climb the rocky peaks \\
Iwane noborau & of Iwaki peaks \\
Masurao no tomo & manly friends\textsuperscript{421}
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

The expression, “Parting the way, parting the way” (chiwaki ni chiwaki te), cited from the Kojiki (Record of Ancient Matters, 712 CE), was used to describe how the heavenly deity Ninigi no mikoto, grandson of the solar deity Amaterasu, descended from the High Plain of Heaven (Takamanohara) by order of Heavenly Decree, separating thick cloud, and making a path down toward earth.\textsuperscript{422} Here, Ariyo likens the climb up this rocky mountain covered in cloud to the

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{419} Ibid. Folio 11 front.
\textsuperscript{420} I acknowledge that religious tradition associated with Mount Iwaki is diverse and complex, including shugendō, Buddhism, Shinto, and other popular beliefs. However, in my discussion here, I focus on Ariyo’s stance of Shintokokugaku opposite, primarily, Buddhism. For a well-nuanced study on the diverse religious traditions associated with the mountain, see Liscutin, Nicola. “Mapping the Sacred Body: Shinto versus popular beliefs at Mt. Iwaki in Tsugaru,” Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami. Eds. John Breen, Mark Teeuwen. Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000.
\textsuperscript{421} Tsuruya Ariyo, Iwaki san sanbyaku shu. Folio 18 front.
\textsuperscript{422} For my discussion on Hirata Atsutane’s reference to the same expression, “parting the way, parting the way” (chiwaki ni chiwaki te), see Chapter 2.
\end{footnotesize}
mythic heavenly descent, and he calls out to his “manly friends” to join him in a climb up the mountain.

A series of *tanka* are categorized under “Outlook,” (Chōbō眺望) describing the views of Mount Iwaki from varying perspectives, many from afar. Building on my earlier discussion of Mount Iwaki’s orientation within the “country of Tsugaru” within Imperial Japan, relative to enemies and outsiders, I now site the following two poems to further illustrate this mountain’s strategic place within the region:

| Haruka naru                      | These are the Iwaki peaks |
| Ezo no Chishima mo               | seen at a glance          |
| Kagirohino                       | in the haze               |
| hitome ni miyuru                 | from the Kuriles          |
| Iwaki ne zo kore                 | of Ezo far away           |

| Mutsu no                         | Forever standing          |
| Tsugaru oguni ni                 | in the small country of Tsugaru |
| Aritatsuru                      | within Mutsu              |
| itsu no mitate no               | the mighty shield         |
| Iwaki yama kami                 | the gods of Mount Iwaki    |

The first poem calls attention to the fact that Mount Tsugaru on the northern tip of the island of Honshu, was visible from the northern island of Ezo, even, presumably, from the northern Kuril Isles. As discussed in chapters two and three, the northern island of Ezochi or Ezo territory, had been undergoing colonization by the Tokugawa state through the Tokugawa period, where a “Japanese territory” under jurisdiction of Matsumae domain and the Tokugawa bakufu was being developed opposite “Ezo territory” or territory of the aboriginal Ainu inhabitants. In this way, the island of Ezo represented both “Japan” and a frontier to “foreign” lands, making it an important buffer in the Tokugawa state’s security. Seen from the northern islands, Mount Iwaki would appear as a landmark of “Japan” proper, and an important symbol of sovereignty of Hirosaki.

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423 Ibid. Folio 21 back.
424 Ibid. Folio 22 front.
domain. The next poem further reinforces the mountain’s place in the “small country” Tsugaru within the province of Mutsu. The mountain is, again, depicted as a “mighty shield” defending against enemies and outsiders, particularly from the north, and is once more described as “godly.”

The final two poems I examine from the collection come from the category of “Divine Spirit” (Shinrei 神霊). These poems reflect the characteristics of sacred mountain beliefs by depicting Mount Iwaki as both an abode for gods, as well as, in the words of Hori, a “passageway from this world to the next, from the profane to the sacred and from earth to heaven.” However, Ariyo’s clear Shinto-kokugaku stance comes to the fore in his privileging of deities and assertion of the spiritual realm:

Mitsune (三峰) naru The Imperial god
Iwaki no yama no among the three gods
Mitsu kami no atop Mount Iwaki
Sumera mikami wa of three peaks is
Okuni mitama the Great Spirit of Ōkuni

Tadabito no Though invisible
me ni wa mienedo to the eye of common people
Iwaki ne no How can one doubt
Kami no Yūfu wo the Spirit Realm of gods
Utugau beshiya of the Iwaki peaks?

Ariyo declares that the Imperial god (Sumera mikami 皇御神) among the three gods of the three peaks is the Great Spirit of Ōkuni. From premodern times, three deities were associated with the three peaks: Kunitokotachi no mikoto, was believed to occupy the central peak of Iwaki-san; Ōkuninushi no mikoto was believed to reside on the southern peak, Chōkaisan; and Kuniyasutamahime no mikoto, a local female deity also known as Anjuhime, was associated

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425 Folio 25 front.
426 Folio 25 back.
with the northern peak.\footnote{Liscutin, Nicola. “Mapping the Sacred Body: Shinto versus popular beliefs at Mt. Iwaki in Tsugaru,” Shinto in History: Ways of the Kami. Eds. John Breen, Mark Tceeuen. Surrey: Curzon Press, 2000. p. 194.} From his Shinto-kokugaku stance, Ariyo proclaims Ōkuninushi as the central deity of the peaks, and asserts the real existence of the “Spirit Realm” of gods of the Iwaki peaks, invisible to common people. While he could have chosen from a variety of terms and Chinese characters to depict the spiritual realm, he chose “Yūfu” (幽府) which Rosen made the subject of his magnum opus, Yūfu shinron (『幽府新論』), completed a year earlier in 1865, based directly on Atsutane’s theories of the kakuriyo spirit realm in Kishin shinron (New Thesis on Spirits). Here, Ariyo reinforces Rosen’s argument for the existence and activity of the spiritual realm, while suggesting Mount Iwaki provides a link between the visible realm and the invisible other world. The portrayal of this mountain as a link between the multiple realms, and Ariyo’s concern for the Spirit Realm are consistent throughout his thought as we will examine in his other writings.

\textbf{The Gods and Mount Iwaki}

Continuing my examination of Ariyo’s portrayal of Mount Iwaki, I next take up his Iwaki san shinreiki (『岩木山神霊記』), or Mount Iwaki Divine Records, also completed in 1866.\footnote{Tsuruya Ariyo. Iwaki san shinreiki (『岩木山神霊記』) or Mount Iwaki Divine Records, Hirosaki City Library Archives, 1866.} Ariyo explains in the opening of Iwaki san shinreiki, that he wrote this work as well as another entitled Iwaki no yama fumi (『岩木の山ふみ』), or Mount Iwaki Writings in response to Engi (『縁起』) written by friend and fellow poet and Hirata disciple, Iwama Shitatari, which Ariyo cites at length in his own writings.\footnote{Ibid. Folio 2 front, to Folio 3 front.} Shitatari’s Engi contains accounts which state that Mount
Iwaki was a small mountain originally, but that from the Hōki (宝亀) years spanning from 770 to 780 CE, it miraculously grew into a “large mountain.” When a “kaichō” (開帳), or exhibit of temple relics, was held on Mount Iwaki in 1784 (Tenmei 3), it was noted that 1008 years had passed since the seventh year of Hōki (776). Ariyo takes exception to such accounts, noting that such shrine and temple records often contain inaccuracies, and he especially criticizes Buddhist documents for their unreliability.

Furthermore, the accounts cited in Shitatari’s text state that Mount Iwaki had been an early spiritual site (reijō 霊場) from the year 796 (Enryaku 15) during the reign of the 50th emperor Kammu. It notes after Mount Iwaki became a “large mountain,” Buddhas as Original Prototypes (honji 本地) were designated for its three peaks: Amida nyorai on its central peak of Iwaki san, Kanzeon Bodhisatva on its “left” (northern) peak of Ganki san, and Yakushi nyorai on its “right” (southern) peak. These three deities combined are said to be worshipped as the Great Avatar of the Three Shrines of Mount Iwaki (Iwaki san sansha daigongen 岩木山三社大権現). However, Ariyo criticizes these claims, and rejects the Honji suijaku (本地垂跡) theory of “Original Prototype, Local Manifestation” as unsubstantiated and false. Ariyo opposes this Buddhist theory which claims that Princess Anju (安寿姫) (also referred to as Kuniyasutamahime no mikoto) was the local manifestation of the original prototypes of these three Buddhist deities, and he contends this view was based upon a “theory that is blind to the next world” (後世).

He insists that Mount Iwaki would not exist without the workings of the gods (kami), and he goes on to state that the notion of associating the three Buddhist deities who...
“have only name and no existence” (有名無実) as central deities (本尊) is an idea that cause the gods (kami) to grieve deeply. Therefore, as seen also in his waka poems, Ariyo asserts the presence and workings of the “indigenous” gods of Japan atop Mount Iwaki peaks, over those of Buddhist deities.

Ariyo cites a series of stories are cited associated with Mount Iwaki, many of them tales involving spiritual and supernatural episodes involving the mountain. One such illustrative story involves the samurai Uchikoshi Jōzaemon (打越常左衛門), who lived around the reign of the fourth daimyo Tsugaru Nobumasa (r. 1656-1710). Jōzaemon was climbing Mount Iwaki, accompanied by two retainers, when suddenly the skies became overcast, it began to thunder and rain heavily “as if the heavenly streams (天河) were overturned,” the wind blew fiercely, and it became dark. When the weather cleared and it became light again, Jōzaemon was nowhere to be seen. His two retainers thought this was mysterious and pondered committing ritual disembowelment, for they felt it would be unacceptable to let their master die alone. They continued to search for Jōzaemon, and hurriedly climbed from Tanemaki Nawashiro up to the summit. And there was Jōzaemon at the summit, kneeling on a rock, and beating his sword blade. The two retainers approached their lord and asked if he had been abducted by a mononoke (物怪) spirit, but received no answer.

In offering commentary on this mysterious story about Jōzaemon, Ariyo makes reference to Atsutane’s Kishin shinron or New Thesis on Spirits, making note that his “teacher” cited various people in his discussion on kishin spirits, including Zhang Hengqu (張横渠, 1020-1077) of Song Period China. Ariyo further cites a story about this same Zhang Hengqu, who sent his lower official to try to damage (毁) a shrine (祠), but this official became lame in both
legs, and was rendered unable to walk. So, the official rode a palanquin, arrived at the shrine, and cracked open the idol. When he looked inside, he saw a box and discovered a large white insect running out. He captured and killed the insect by pouring hot oil on it. Then, the lower official suddenly felt the pain in his legs subside and was healed. Ariyo laments that people with flighty minds (逸心) who do not consider things deeply, erroneously compare matters of truly remarkable and precious gods (kami) to such acts of courage by humans. Ariyo comments that after Jōzaemon disappeared following the storm, and was found again on the summit, that only he saw the sight of an evil spirit (禍鬼) which remained invisible to the other two men. Just as Ariyo asserted in a tanka poem the real existence of the “Spirit Realm” (Yūfu) of gods of Mount Iwaki, invisible to common people, he provides this example of Jōzaemon and his retainers straddling the boundaries of the visible and invisible realms in their mystical experience on the Iwaki peaks.

Ken’yū rakuron (Treatise on Enjoyment in the Visible and Invisible Realms)

I now proceed to examine Ariyo’s thought devoted to the visible and invisible realms, life in the contemporary world and afterlife, and his adoption of Atsutane’s views and elaboration of his own thesis expressed in Ken’yū rakuron (『顕幽楽論』), or Treatise on Enjoyment in the Visible and Invisible Realms. As I highlighted in chapter three, Ariyo’s “Gakusoku” or “Regulations for Learning” contains 43 rules or guidelines for everyday worship, proper attitude and conduct in daily life and scholarship, and views of the world. The nature of these guidelines gives a sense of group leader Ariyo’s earnest approach to life and scholarship, his adoption of

432 This story is cited from Xingli Ziyi (『性理字義』) by Chen Chun (陳淳, 1159-1223).
Hirata kokugaku, and religious thought and practice, and reflects also the attitudes and practices of the group. The tenth article of this document best articulates Ariyo’s originality in thought, stating, “The unopposing nature (muteki) of the visible and invisible is the root of my way.” While Atsutane asserted that the visible realm arahaniyo of the living and invisible realm kakuriyo of deities, spirits, and souls of the dead overlapped and occupied the same space, Ariyo takes Atsutane’s thesis further with his original thesis emphasizing continuity between life and death.

This emphasis on continuity from life in this world to the afterlife beyond death is the central thesis in Ariyo’s most important work entitled Ken'yū rakuron (『顕幽楽論』), or Treatise on Enjoyment in the Visible and Invisible Realms, which he completed in the fourth month of 1867 (Keio 3) at age 60. Ariyo here builds on Atsutane’s thesis of the afterlife in the invisible realm kakuriyo, that people are not necessarily doomed to a hellish Yomi underworld, but rather emphasizes the enjoyment one can experience in the current life and carry over into the next one after death. This work is based on Atsutane’s theories articulated in such works as Tama no mihashira (『霊能真柱』), or The August Pillar of the Soul and Maiasa shinhaishiki (『毎朝神拝詞記』) or Morning Order for Worship, and confronts Rakuron (『楽論』) or Treatise on Enjoyment, by Neo-Confucian scholar Kaibara Ekiken (1630-1714), criticizing him for spreading teachings on “enjoyment,” while being ignorant of the Imperial divine Way and limiting the discussion to this life, with no mention of the invisible realm kakuriyo.

The originality of Ariyo’s treatise lies in this emphasis on living life in this world and the next with enjoyment. He begins with the following poem, “The visible realm and the invisible realm are both enjoyable, the Way of our ancestral deities is the right way,” followed with a
purpose for living with such enjoyment. Ariyo maintains a kokugaku argument that humans are created from the heavenly ancestral deity Takamimusubi no kami, the imperial deity of creation, and that accordingly, all people have the inborn nature of the virtues—reverence, love, righteousness, benevolence, wisdom, and courage—as well as “enjoyment” which has been bestowed from the beginning. He cites ignorance of such knowledge as well as ignorance of people descending from the deities and of inheriting “supreme treasures” from their ancestors as the root of needless suffering and pain. According to Ariyo, this ignorance and lack of awareness lead to a wasted life and needless suffering in this life and life after death.

Ariyo’s optimism and urge for proactive living in the present exceeds even Atsutane’s teachings of living a good life now for a rewarding place in the afterlife. Ariyo stresses the present, stating:

Knowing that the future does not measure up to the present, one should harbour no regrets from the past, but treasure each day and moment and not live even a single day aimlessly. One should not end today saying there will be a tomorrow and feel enjoyment in it. One should treasure the contents of each day, every day.  

Indeed, one of the keys to having enjoyment, despite seemingly disadvantaged or adverse conditions, is that optimistic perspective. Furthermore, Ariyo explains the importance of people understanding their “role” (bun 分) or position in society. Understanding the “role” one was born into in society, allows one to “accept ones role, and not resent heaven or blame people.”

Ken’yū rakuron’s concluding passage sheds light on what follows death:

As long as we are all born of the deities of the divine country, we should have enjoyment to the fullest, and when we die, on the surface we become Ōkuninushi no kami’s people,

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433 Ariyo, Ken’yū rakuron, Aomori kenshi, p. 538.
434 Ibid. p. 543
435 Ibid.
Ariyo reiterates that those born in the divine country Japan, should have “enjoyment to the fullest,” and after death they officially become people of the deity governing the invisible realm, Ōkuninushi no kami, as established by Atsutane, as well as serve the deities of birth and fertility Ubusuna no kami. In stressing close, personal relationships, Ariyo also identifies the role of the spirits of the dead in serving ancestors and parents, and blessing their descendants. He extols the life of enjoyment that overcomes adversity and that ultimately “perfect[s] our enjoyment for eternity.”

To this point, I have illustrated how Ariyo adopted Atsutane’s views of the spiritual kakuriyo realm, and stressed the importance of “enjoyment” and the meaning this gives to life in this realm, and its continuity to the next. In the next passage, Ariyo quotes Atsutane’s views on the hierarchy of authority in the visible world led by the Emperor, and that of Ōkuninushi no kami in the invisible realm:

The Lord (Ōkimi) dwells and presides over the great foundation of divine governance. Just as he appoints people to govern their allotted provinces and places, the great foundation of divine realm matters are governed by Ōkuninushi no kami, and that beyond is apportioned to and presided over by deities of the world in the Guardian deity (Chinju no kami), tutelary deities (uji gami), Ubusuna no kami. And to say nothing more about the time lived in the society, they govern people even before birth and after death.”

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436 Ibid. p. 556
437 Ken ’yū rakuron, p. 554
As seen here, Atsutane asserted that the hierarchy of authority starting with the Emperor above, and lesser rulers appointed over provinces and places, mirrors governance within the divine realm, with Okuninushi no kami at the top, and below him, deities of the world, such as the Guardian deity, tutelary deities, and *ubusuna* deities. These structures of authority in both the visible *arahaniyo* realm, and invisible *kakuriyo* realm, make up Imperial Japan according to Hirata *kokugaku*. A closer look at how Ariyo and the Tsugaru group adopted the religiosity of Hirata *Kokugaku*, particularly in practice, will be seen next in an examination of Ariyo’s *norito* liturgies.

**Reception of *Kokugaku* Religiosity and its Practice**

The religiosity of Atsutane and his Hirata academy is demonstrated well in his liturgical text, *Maiasa shinhaishiki*, or *Morning Order for Worship* which provides instruction on the reverent worship of deities, shrines, and ancestors, whose publication of almost fourteen thousand by early Meiji, made it the most highly produced and disseminated of all works from the Hirata academy. Atsutane himself is known to have practiced this worship each morning, purifying himself and facing the directions of the various shrines and clapping his hands in prayer. While major deities and shrines throughout Japan and the classical texts are taken up throughout the liturgy, Atsutane also devotes articles twelve through fourteen out of twentyfive in total to *kami* worship at the local level as well as in the home. In article twelve, Atsutane instructs one to, “Next face the direction of the chief tutelary shrine (「一ノ宮」 *ichinomiya*) in

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that province, and worship as (above),” then, to “With sincerity, fearfully, fearfully revere and worship from a distance before the chief tutelary shrine of those divine shrines of the regions, settled in those counties of those provinces.” So in generic terms, Atsutane instructs one to worship a “chief tutelary shrine” of a local region, encouraging his disciples and other adherents of this liturgy to worship their local shrines. In the ensuing article thirteen, Atsutane similarly instructs one to face the direction of the “protectorate deity” (Chinju no kami 鎮守神) of that place, and to sincerely revere and worship before the local “Ubusuna no okami who protects over the whole of this village.” In article fourteen, Atsutane directs one to face the kami altars within one’s home, and to worship as above, erecting partitions (himorogi 神籬) around this worship alcove (or “altar,” kamitoko 神座). One is to worship daily, first the great deities of the dual shrines at Ise, the solar deity Amaterasu and the deity governing food, Toyouke hime. Then one is to worship the eight million deities from the heavenly deities (amatsu kami) to the earthly deities (kunitsu kami), shrines large and small, and other lesser deities and shrines.

Such a structure is seen also in Ariyo’s collection of norito liturgy that make up the first part of Tsuruya bunshū. The following are the titles of the first 12 norito among 28 total in the collection.

- Each morning facing the direction of the Mountain of the All Guardian deities
- Worshipping before the All Guardian deity of Hirosaki
- Worshipping the shrine of the August Deity Amaterasu
- Facing the direction of the chief tutelary shrine of Mutsu Province
- Each morning facing the shrine of the Great Deity Ubusuna
- Each morning worshipping before the Great Deity of Sugawara
- Worshipping all shrines
- And offering prayer
- Each morning worshipping before Master Utsumi
- Each morning worshipping before the image of late parents
- Worshipping before the Great Master Hirata

440 Ibid.
Uttered on day of meeting

As seen here, there are a wide variety of norito liturgies, some to be recited each morning, and some worshipping different deities. The first norito on the list instructs one to face the local sacred mountain of Hirosaki domain, Mt. Iwaki, and its Guardian deities, followed by norito worshipping the Guardian deity of Hirosaki, the Ise Grand Shrine of Amaterasu, the chief tutelary shrine of Mutsu Province, shrine of the Great Deity Ubusuna, the Great Deity of Sugawara, all shrines, Ariyo’s earlier instructor Master Utsumi Sōha, Ariyo’s parents, Master Hirata Atsutane, a prayer to be uttered on the day when the group of Hirata disciples gather, and so on.

Taking a look at the second norito on the list, entitled, “Worshipping before the All Guardian deity of Hirosaki”, it reads:

I solemnly pay respects before the Great Deity of Hirohata no Hachiman who guards and blesses this Hirosaki. If I should commit faults, please watch over, listen to and correct me, please make my family and grandchildren prosper continually and increasingly. May our lives endure like a firm rock and everlasting stone, prevent many evil matters, be our protector by night, our protector by day, and bless us. I worship with fear and reverence.441

If we look at this particular localized norito among the wide ranging collection, we can see that Ariyo, through worshipping Hirohata no Hachiman as a guardian of Hirosaki, shows that he too is taking part in upholding Hirosaki’s position within a larger divine and Imperial Japan, which itself is governed by the emperor and lesser rulers in the visible realm, and Ōkuni nushi and a whole pantheon of deities in the invisible realm. This effort of locating Hirosaki domain or Tsugaru region within the spiritual landscape of Imperial Japan, parallels also with Ariyo’s

441 Tsuruya Ariyo, Tsuruya bunshū, Hirosaki City Library, front of folio 1.
efforts, through his *waka* poems, to sacrilize Mount Iwaki as a “sacred site” within the “sacred space” of Tsugaru, and to further crystallize Tsugaru’s place within the “sacred nation” of Imperial Japan.

**Conclusion**

As I have shown in this chapter, during a concentrated period at the very end of the Tokugawa period from 1866 to 1867, Ariyo compiled his anthology on *waka* poems, *Iwaki san sanbyaku shu*, or *Three Hundred Poems of Mount Iwaki* on Mount Iwaki, depicting Mount Iwaki as a spiritual symbol of the “country of Tsugaru.” He identifies this mountain as a towering, central pillar of the region, visible even from the northern Kuriles, making it analogous to an *axis mundi* in the cosmic centre of the Tsugaru region. The three peaks are described as soaring heavenward, like sword blades, and depicted as a “mighty shield,” to defend the region from external enemies. In the tradition of sacred mountains, Mount Iwaki is depicted as an abode for the gods, and represents also a “passageway” to the “Spirit Realm” of the gods. Therefore, presented as a shield of the northern frontier in Honshu, an abode for the gods, and “passageway” to a larger spiritual world, Mount Iwaki as a “sacred site” further helps to secure Tsugaru’s place within the “sacred nation” of Imperial Japan.

Through *Iwaki san shinrei ki* or *Mount Iwaki Divine Records*, Ariyo further establishes the rule of these “great gods” or *kami* on Mount Iwaki, particularly that of the “Imperial deity” Ōkuninushi no kami, over the three Buddhas, Amida nyorai, Kanzeon Bodhisatva, and Yakushi nyorai, worshipped collectively as the Great Avatar. In this way, we can see Ariyo asserting *kami* rule and jurisdiction over Buddhist deities on Mount Iwaki and in Tsugaru territory, as if
anticipating the *Shinbutsu bunri*, or Separation of Kami and Buddhas movement which would be officially carried out from the beginning of the Meiji period. In this regard, Ariyo is considerably more resistant to “foreign” Buddhism, and assertive of the position of the “indigenous” kami than Rosen, who argued the existence and workings of kami and spirits, but did not overtly call for kami-Buddha separation.

While confirming Mount Iwaki’s central position as the sacred symbol of the “country of Tsugaru,” based on the divine presence atop its peaks, and the very protection provided by the mountain itself, Ariyo also makes the connections, between life in this world and the afterlife, through the central concept of “enjoyment.” In *Ken’yu rakuron* or *Treatise on Enjoyment in the Visible and Invisible Realms*, Ariyo confirms Atsutane’s ideas of the invisible afterlife in which souls of the deceased are active and serve Ōkuninushi no kami. He takes this thesis even further by stressing the “enjoyment” one should experience in life and after death into the next existence. This promotion of living a good, industrious, and pious life in this world, with awareness of a fulfilling afterlife, adds greater meaning to the veneration and worship of both deities and ancestors in the present life. Such vigorous practice of deity and ancestor veneration is seen in Ariyo’s *norito* liturgies. These also combine deities and shrines of Imperial Japan, with those of the local Tsugaru community, as an extension of the religiosity of Hirata Atsutane, which placed priority in practice and devoted attention to the local scene.

It can be said that by virtue of being merchant townspeople, Ariyo and Rosen, in a time of considerable socio-political change in the late-Tokugawa period, were able to continually devote themselves to spirituality—that of Imperial Japan and Tsugaru—as well as that of life in this world and the next. Ariyo, like Rosen, placed his concern in the invisible spiritual realm of *kakuriyo* ruled by Ōkuninushi no kami, a major focus of Hirata *kokugaku*, which is shown,
through research to date, to have been eclipsed, and even surpassed, in immediate relevance and concern by other concerns, such as the primacy of the solar deity Amaterasu and the creator deities with the ever-emerging authority of the emperor and the imperial cause in politics of this world.\footnote{See Harootunian, Harry D. \textit{Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism}; Katsurajima, Nobuhiro. \textit{Bakumatsu minshū shisō no kenkyū: bakumatsu kokugaku to minshū shūkyō}. Bunrikaku. 2005.}

As a commoner, Ariyo was, after all, like Rosen, an observer of the changes of late-Tokugawa, the Restoration, and early Meiji years, more so than a political actor.\footnote{For an discussion which shows that the commoner classes of townspeople were very much observers of the Meiji Restoration moreso than socio-political players involved in bringing about change—a role carried out primarily by samurai—see Steele, William. “Chapter 5 “Edo in 1868,” in \textit{Alternative Narratives in Modern Japanese History}. London: Routledge, 2003. Or, “Edo in 1868. The View from Below,” \textit{Monumenta Nipponica}, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Summer, 1990), pp. 127-155.} Ariyo and Rosen continue to observe both spirits and spiritual realm as well as the tumultuous socio-political developments of the Restoration and Meiji periods. However, it is in the ensuing years 1868 and 1869 that we see how members of the Tsugaru community of disciples “act” and partake in the Restoration, namely through fighting for the Imperial cause in the Boshin War and also through conducting funerary rites in the \textit{Shōkonsai} at the war’s conclusion for the fallen soldiers of the domain. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

\footnotetext[443]{For an discussion which shows that the commoner classes of townspeople were very much observers of the Meiji Restoration moreso than socio-political players involved in bringing about change—a role carried out primarily by samurai—see Steele, William. “Chapter 5 “Edo in 1868,” in \textit{Alternative Narratives in Modern Japanese History}. London: Routledge, 2003. Or, “Edo in 1868. The View from Below,” \textit{Monumenta Nipponica}, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Summer, 1990), pp. 127-155.}
Chapter 7  The Restoration Years: The Boshin War and Shōkonsai ritual

Overview

This chapter looks at the history of the Restoration Years in Hirosaki domain and northern Japan, particularly in the context of the Boshin War of 1868 to 1869, and the ensuing shōkonsai ritual to “call back” and reverently worship the soldiers that died in battle for the imperial cause. I pay attention to how Hirosaki domain switched its military and political allegiance in the Boshin War from the failing bakufu forces to the emerging new government forces, and how the Hirosaki army contributed to the imperial cause in the Battle of Noheji. I then examine how the sixty-four soldiers that died for the emperor were worshipped by the domain in the shōkonsai ritual. While providing a broad overview of the events of both these major events, I look closely at documents written by and about the Hirata disciple community of Hirosaki, showing the roles they played in the Restoration, as well as to demonstrate their commitment in placing their domain in the larger scheme of Imperial Japan.

The Boshin War and its Northeastern Front

As Tohoku Boshin War specialist Kudō Takeshi asserts, the Boshin War was fought as a culmination of the political conflicts of late-Tokugawa, and it not only determined changes implemented through the Meiji Restoration, but also left a lasting impression on the consciousness of the victors on the side of the new government, and losers on the side of the
bakufu forces well into the Meiji period, particularly in the Tohoku region. This is certainly the case with Hirosaki domain, whose fate and fortunes in the modern era were greatly affected by the domain’s decision to switch its military and political allegiance from the bakufu forces to the imperial forces midway through the Boshin War.

The Toba-Fushimi battle began on the third day of the first month of 1868, and concluded quickly with the new government claiming victory over the supporters of the Tokugawa government. The victorious new government led by the southwestern domains, Satsuma and Chōshū, declared they would expel the last shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu (徳川慶喜 1837-1913), Aizu daimyo and designated Protector of Kyoto, Matsudaira Katamori (松平容保 1835-1893), and others whom they branded enemies of the court, and urged the various domains to support their cause and come to Kyoto. The battlefront gradually advanced northward. On the 15th of the first month, the court had issued an order to the Tohoku domains including Hirosaki to join the battle against shogun Yoshinobu. Conflicting reports regarding the Toba-Fushimi battle were issued to Hirosaki from both the shogunate and new government, and as a result, there arose confusion as to which side to align themselves with when the domain received a call to arms from both contending sides.

On the 21st of the first month in Hirosaki domain’s Edo residence, the Edo rusui liaison officer issued an order to domainal samurai to return to Hirosaki. Meanwhile on the 24th, back in Hirosaki, samurai were summoned to the castle, where lord Tsugaru Tsuguakira (津軽承昭 1840-1916), based on available information, reported to them on the current situation and sought


unity of the domain. Without stating allegiance to either side in the conflict, Tsuguakira declared the domain would work for the “Imperial country to eternity” (皇国永世) and that if necessary they would dispatch military troops. Though they received requests from both the new government and bakufu side, Hirosaki domain declined to respond to either, citing its remote location, insufficient military preparedness, and the heavy snow preventing a mobilization of troops. The reality was that local leaders questioned the reliability of the various reports on the battles.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 226-227.}

Facing unavoidable civil conflict in the Boshin war, Hirosaki domain in the third month of the same year, established a military office (軍政局) and undertook a reform toward modern militarization.\footnote{Ibid., p. 227.} The Tohoku domains were among the last to modernize their military arms, as evidenced by their disadvantaged position in the impending battles with the Imperial forces. Hirosaki domain urged its samurai to upgrade their weapons to Dutch guns and cannons, even though many samurai insisted on fighting with swords and spears.\footnote{Ibid., p. 228.} However, once Hirosaki entered the Boshin war, it had no choice but to order their troops to use Western guns, and on the fifth day of the second month, the domain ordered 1,000 Gewehr guns despite high costs exacted on the domain’s budget.\footnote{Hasegawa, Hirosaki han. 2004. p. 228.}

The new government forces appointed Minister of the Left (sadaijin) Kujō Michitaka (九条道孝) to the position of Ōu Subduing Governor (奥羽鎮撫総督), the northern provinces of Mutsu and Dewa, toward the end of the second month. The following month, with 500 troops from Satsuma, Chōshū, and Fukuoka, Michikata left Kyoto, sailed from Osaka, and arrived in

\footnote{On the 18th of the third month in 1868, the Hirosaki domain issued an order to abandon their traditional battle formation based on the style of Yamaga Sokō’s military strategy, and began a complete reform to a Dutch style formation armed with Western guns. Hasegawa Seiichi. Tsugaru Matsumae to umi no michi. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2001. p. 122.}

Sendai. Although Kujō ordered a strike on Aizu, neither Sendai nor the other northern domains mobilized, and instead, both Aizu and Tsuruoka domain established the Kaishō alliance (会庄同盟), ready to counter the new government troops. The Ōu Subduing Governor ordered Akita domain to strike Shōnai domain, and for Hirosaki to provide assistance, then sent Chrysanthemum crest banners (菊章旗)—a symbol of the imperial court—to their respective domainal lords Satake Yoshitaka (佐竹義堯 1825-84) and Tsugaru Tsuguakira. The court branded Shōnai domainal lord Sakai Tadaatsu (酒井忠篤 1853-1915) an enemy of the court, and Akita began its attack on Shōnai domain. Sendai and Yonezawa domain requested Kujō to cease his attack on Aizu because its lord was wishing to surrender, and summoned the leaders of Mutsu and Dewa domains to gather in Shiraiishi to discuss Aizu domain’s apology and plea (謝罪歎願). The 25 domains of Ōu (奥羽 Mutsu and Dewa) provinces and six domains of Echigo (越後) province formed the Ōuetsu Domainal Alliance Treaty (奥羽越列藩同盟 Ōuetsu reppan dōmei) in the fifth month, to oppose the new government’s order to strike Aizu domain.450

Despite receiving orders to support the new government forces, Hirosaki domain’s stance was to obscure its allegiances and arm themselves until they could determine the direction of this conflict.451 Although they had signed onto the Ōu Etsu Domainal Alliance Treaty, Hirosaki wavered considerably until rusuiyaku liaison official stationed in Kyoto (京都留守居役), Nishidate Heima (西舘平馬), received a written order from the Konoe house as well as a letter from influential court noble Iwakura Tomomi (岩倉具視 1825-1883) to support the imperial

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450 Ibid.
451 From the start of the Boshin War leading up to the signing of the Ōu Etsu Domainal Alliance, other Tohoku domains such as Sendai and Akita tried repeatedly to persuade Hirosaki to join the alliance in support of the shogunate. Kudō Takeshi has argued that Hirosaki’s response was passive and its attitude characteristic of a “small domain,” and consequently succumbed to these petitions to join the alliance. Kudō Takeshi. “Tohoku sensōki ni okeru Tsugaru han no dōkō” Tsugaru no kisoteki kenkyū, Hasegawa Seiichi ed. Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1984. pp. 431-73.
As discussed in chapter three, the Tsugaru ruling family had since the seventeenth century married daughters into the Konoe clan, the highest-ranking of the five families descending from the noble Fujiwara clan, and thereby created ties to the court to justify their political rule. Tsugaru’s ties to the Konoe help us to understand the extent of their influence. Receiving these orders and hearing reports of the battle from Nishidate, the Hirosaki leadership decided to support the imperial forces and the new government.

Hasegawa parallels the case of Hirosaki domain’s allegiance to the court via Tsugaru’s familial ties to the Konoe family, to Aizu domain’s loyalty to the bakufu for the (ruling family) Matsudaira’s shared lineage with the Tokugawa. Hasegawa asserts that the examples of both the Tsugaru and Matsudaira families show how blood lines shaped Hirosaki and Aizu domain’s sense of self-recognition respectively and influenced their actions through to the end of the Tokugawa period. In this manner, the Hirosaki domain shifted its allegiances from the shogunate in supporting Aizu domain, to the imperial forces led by the new government leaders from Satsuma and Chōshū, albeit, amid some ambivalence. Ultimately, Hirosaki chose the side it sensed was in a better position to win the war, making the survival of the domain their priority. Nevertheless, in the process, the Tsugaru ruling clan confirmed their domain’s loyalty to the court, through honouring their ties with the Konoe family.

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452 Hasegawa, *Hirosak han*. pp. 230-31. Nishidate was stationed in Kyoto from the fall of 1867 in order to gather intelligence for Hirosaki domain, and was even present at Nijō castle to witness Tokunaga Yoshinobu returning political authority to the emperor (大政奉還 Taisei hōkan). Konoe Tadahiro and his son, Konoe Tadafusa, of the Konoe family and relatives of the Tsugaru family, were strong supporters of the imperial house and persuaded Nishidate to support the imperial forces. Hasegawa, *Tsugaru Matsumae to umi no michi*. 2001, pp. 123-24.
454 Ibid., p. 231.
455 Ibid., pp. 7-11.
Yamada Yōnoshin: A Hirata Disciple’s Loyalist Death

After the Hirosaki war office pledged its allegiance to the imperial forces, it immediately sent troops to support Akita domain in its battle with Shōnai domain, where ten of its soldiers died in battle. Then in the eighth month, the new government ordered Hirosaki to strike the neighbouring Morioka domain.⁴⁵⁶ Hirosaki domain complied and waged an attack on Makado guchi (馬門口), Noheji town in Morioka on the domainal border.⁴⁵⁷ Commander Kimura Hanshirō led six platoons, which departed Hirosaki castle town on the 21st day of the ninth month, traveled through the plain, and on the night of the 22nd, divided into three separate battalions and advanced.⁴⁵⁸ Along the way they hastily set fire to Makado village, only to be surrounded by fire, which impeded the advance of their cannons. The battle began near Noheji River, when the Hirosaki forces opened fire with rifle and cannon, causing Morioka troops to flee. Hirosaki forces further pursued the retreating enemy, but as they closed in on Noheji, they were greeted with attack. Morioka domain had set up cannons on high hills from where they confronted the oncoming Hirosaki army, and their troops hid themselves behind trees and houses. With nowhere to hide, the Hirosaki troops sustained casualties. Even though Hirosaki had planned a night attack, they continued to fight into the morning of the 23rd, and sustained a major loss due to a lack of unity and low level of reconnaissance: 49 out of 180 soldiers died, compared to ten deaths in Morioka domain.⁴⁵⁹ While this battle of Noheji is commonly interpreted as the culmination of many years of built-up enmity between the Tsugaru and Nanbu daimyo families, Hasegawa argues that more than anything else, Hirosaki domain launched an attack on Noheji

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 231.
⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.
with the purpose of recovering their trust with the imperial forces and to demonstrate their loyalty.\footnote{Ibid.}

The 49 fallen soldiers of the Hirosaki domainal forces included a Hirata disciple of the Tsugaru group, Yamada Yōnoshin (山田要之進). Yōnoshin died on the second day of the two-day Battle of Noheji which spanned from the 22\textsuperscript{nd} to the 23\textsuperscript{rd} of the ninth month. He had enrolled as a Hirata disciple in the tenth month of 1867 (Keio 3).\footnote{Nakagawa Kazuaki. \textit{Hirata Kokugaku no shiteki kenkyū}. Meicho shuppankai, 2012. pp. 365-367.} As Nakagawa Kazuaki observes, Yōnoshin visited the Ibukinoya in Edo, and directly met with academy head Hirata Kanetane. Kanetane addressed a letter, dated the 23\textsuperscript{rd} day of the tenth month, to another Hirata disciple and Shinto high official instructor (神祇伯王殿家學師) Yano Gendō (矢野玄道 1823-87), who was residing in Kyoto at the time. In this letter, Kanetane explains to Gendō that Yōnoshin will immediately go to the capital on domainal orders and wishes to take up “Loyalist studies” (勤学), so he requests Gendō to instruct the disciple from Hirosaki. In the letter, Kanetane explains that Yōnoshin came to Edo to enrol as a disciple, and that, “in this way, finally, he has become a disciple in Edo. In fact, it is by the Lord’s orders, and it is for the sake of Loyalist studies.”\footnote{“Yano Gendō ate Hirata Kanetane shokan,” \textit{Kokugaku bunken shūkai}, Chūō kōronsha, August 1944, pp. 164-65.} From this fact, we can see that Hirosaki domain regarded Hirata kokugaku highly, so much so that it sent a domainal samurai to Edo to become a Hirata disciple, then onto Kyoto to further pursue kokugaku studies.

In the Noheji battle, Yōnoshin served as a scout (斥候) and proceeded ahead of his battalion to gauge enemy Morioka’s position. On the morning of the 23\textsuperscript{rd}, Yōnoshin was on the battlefield, near Commander Kimura Hanshirō, when he spotted a soldier dash onto a bridge, carrying guns. Yōnoshin fired and killed the Morioka soldier. He then turned back toward his
own troops and called out, “The enemy are retreating already”.463 He gathered the troops and advanced together, along with the commander, the troops entering formation. Yōnoshin warned, “The commander is at risk. I will be your shield for a while.”464 Just before he finished uttering, “Please retreat when you can,” a bullet was fired his way and killed him.465 The commander had been behind Yōnoshin, and is reported to have carried the soldier’s fallen corpse and cried. In later accounts of the events, Tsugaru Major General (津軽少将公用人) Akashi Reijirō (赤石禮次郎) states that of all the deaths on the Hirosaki side, that Yōnoshin’s was most lamentable. He is described as naturally gifted and reliable, without pretence.466

The night before the big attack, Yōnoshin is remembered to have happily expressed to a friend, “In tonight’s attack, for the first time my ongoing anxieties will be dissolved,” swinging his sword in excitement, cutting the doors and walls. He continued, “My brother, even though tomorrow’s battle is not a personal battle, one purpose is to respond to the court’s grace, and another is to destroy detestable enemies since the time of our domainal founders. When we think about that, this is indeed a precious opportunity. Tomorrow, I am determined to fight clean, and I will destroy the hearts and guts of the Nanbu people (南部人 Nanbujin)”.

Yōnoshin composed on a piece of cloth his farewell poem before death, and tied it to the shoulder of his armour. It reads:

Ochiba nasu
Ada wo minagara
Chirasazuba
Fuki kahesajina

If while watching the foe
Who causes falling leaves
I should remain unscattered
Do not blow back

464 Note that Yōnoshin’s other name Tateo (楯雄) which later makes up his deified name, begins with the Chinese character 標, which means “shield.”
465 Ibid.
466 Ibid., p. 620.
467 Ibid., pp. 620-21.
In this war waged in the autumn season with rival neighbouring Morioka domain and its “Nanbu Jin,” the fierce enemy has caused many “falling leaves” or casualties on the side of the Hirosaki forces. Yet even if he should remain unscattered, Yōnoshin makes a plea to “Soto no hama kaze” (wind of the outer beach) or the wind of Sotonohama (or “Sotogahama”) on the eastern coast of Tsugaru peninsula not to blow back and cause him to retreat. One can imagine the winds blowing in from the ocean which Yōnoshin must have felt in this coastal area. For dying in this battle, Yōnoshin’s spirit is among those of the war dead who are worshipped in the shōkonsai ritual of the following year, as we will examine.

Hirosaki domain suffered a terrible defeat in the Noheji battle, but the new government forces would eventually win the Boshin war. Hirosaki had previously been ambivalent and wavered in its allegiance from the start of the Boshin War and through the Ōu Etsu Domainal Alliance. Even after shifting to the side of the new government, Hirosaki was defeated in the Battle of Noheji due to poor military planning and execution. Nevertheless, it was a decisive battle that demonstrated and confirmed their allegiance to the imperial court, at a large sacrifice of 49 fallen soldiers. As we shall see later, Yamada Yōnoshin’s service and death were also significant, not only for the domain, but for the Tsugaru group of Hirata disciples who would see their fellow kokugaku scholar die for the imperial cause. Morioka continued to carry out negotiations through Akita domain, and on the 25th, two days after the victory at Noheji, Morioka formally submitted a letter of apology and surrender to the Ōu Subduing Governor, announced a ceasefire, and ordered a dissolution of arms. Eventually, the imperial forces managed to pacify the Tohoku region, and they folded their camps stationed throughout the

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468 Shinpen Hirosaki shishi tsūshi hen 3 Kinsei 2. p. 254
region for quelling local resistance groups. On the seventeenth of the tenth month in 1868, the new government announced that Ōu was pacified and ordered their troops to return, signalling the close of the Tohoku theatre of the Boshin war.

The final stage of the Boshin war, the battle of Hakodate, however, remained to be settled. Although the new government in Kyoto had been preoccupied with the Restoration and Boshin war on the main island, in the fourth month of 1868 it finally set up Hakodate constabulary in an effort to control Ezo territory. The new government also ordered Matsumae, Hirosaki, Morioka, Akita, and Sendai domains to carry out the security of Ezo. In 1868, Enomoto Takeaki (榎本武揚 1836-1908) led the shogunal forces in capturing the goryōkaku fortress, which had been built by the shogunate in 1864 as a magistrate office in Hakodate for defending against the north. Enomoto established an independent regime that resisted against the new government, declaring Ezo to be a republic. Hirosaki and other domains unified in an effort to recapture Ezo, and in 1869 the imperial forces attacked the shogunal forces. On the ninth of the fourth month, the Otome division of the new government army began to land on Ezo, on the 17th they recaptured Matsumae, and on the 11th of the fifth month they began a full attack on Hakodate. Eventually, the imperial forces prevailed, and Enomoto and the shogunate forces surrendered on the 18th of the fifth month in 1869, handing over the goryōkaku fortress.

Though remaining in his hometown of Hirosaki, with little direct involvement in these events, Rosen nonetheless reports information on the Boshin War in a letter to friend and fellow Hirata disciple from Tsugaru, Shimozawa Yasumi, who was in Edo at the time:

Ibid. p. 233.
Ibid.
Ibid. 234.
Ibid.
I was surprised to hear the news of our domain which you informed me about. Concerning the uprising in Matsumae, how I worried at first because of the various rumours. Fearfully, the divine punishment for attacking the Emperor (天皇) is unavoidable, and the Imperial forces number at least four thousand (However this is just the soldiers. Counting those carrying luggage and labourers the total rises to ten thousand). In just thirty days, they broke through seven hundred places including narrow roads and difficult terrain without exception. On the eighteenth of the fifth month, the remaining one thousand and two to three hundred of the enemy troops surrendered. 583 of them came to our domain, along with another seven generals (these seven went to Tokyo the other day). On the ninth and eleventh of the sixth month, they came to Hirosaki, and were divided among the seven temples Saishōin, Yakuōin, Kōshunin, Shinkyōji, Teishōji, Hongyōji, Hōritsuji, with the enforcement of heavy security.”

Rosen thus gives a report on the Battle of Hakodate, referring to it as “the uprising in Matsumae.”

He states, “Fearfully, the divine punishment for attacking the Emperor is unavoidable,”

denouncing Enomoto Takeaki and the “rebel” forces who opposed the emperor, citing possible divine punishment for their disloyalty, and thus indirectly expressing his own loyalty to the emperor. He describes the imperial force’s strength, breaking through to the enemy and putting down Takeaki’s troops in about a month, with the latter’s surrender on the 18th of the fifth month.

Then he reports that the defeated troops came to Hirosaki, where they were divided among seven temples.

Hirosaki domain did well to align itself with the imperial faction in the Boshin War. The new government rewarded Hirosaki domain for breaking with the Ōu Etsu Domainal Alliance, and granted the 12th and last daimyo, Tsugaru Tsuguakira, continued authority over Hirosaki and jurisdiction over Tohoku domains that had suffered defeat, such as Sendai, Morioka, and

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477 Hirao Rosen letter to Shimozawa Yasumi, 11th day, sixth month, (likely) 1869 (Meiji 2). Aomori kenshi shiryō hen kinsei gakugei. Vol. 5. p. 617
In this manner, Hirosaki domain managed to survive through the Meiji Restoration, even if for only a few more years.

**Shōkonsai in Hirosaki: Calling Back the War Dead**

Next, we will examine the *shōkonsai* (招魂祭), or ritual to “call back” and reverently worship the souls of fallen soldiers from the Boshin War. First, let us begin by retracing its historical development from the late-Tokugawa period. As Murakami Shigeyoshi outlines, various developments in the late-Tokugawa period led to the emergence of the *shōkonsai* ritual. During the Kaei years (1848-54), *Mitogaku* scholars held Nankō festivals (楠公祭) to commemorate General Kusunoki Masashige (1294-1336), a symbolic figure celebrated for loyally serving and fighting for Emperor Go-Daigo (1288-1339), dying in the Battle of Minatogawa following the failed Kemmu Restoration (建武中興 1333-35) which attempted to restore the emperor to the centre of politics. Later, those who died loyal deaths (忠死 chūshi) in the late-Tokugawa period would also come to be worshipped in the Nankō festival. After 1853 (Kaei 6), the Chōshū domainal government directly carried out *shōkonsai* to honour those who died loyal deaths in combat or otherwise. From 1863 (Bunkyū 3), Chōshū domain waged military battles with Western powers, as well as with the Tokugawa *bakufu*. Following the carrying out of “expulsion of barbarians,” from 1864 (Bunkyū 4) to 1865 (Keiō 1), a *shōkon* site (招魂場) was erected, where *shōkonsai* came to be conducted. In 1867 (Keiō 1), Tsuwano domainal school Yōrōkan, became the site for a Nankō festival conducted directly by the Tsuwano daimyo. The first Nankō ki (楠公忌) or memorial for General Kusunoki Masashige

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478 Ibid.
conducted after Ōsei fukko (王政復古), the “restoration of monarchical government,” was held on the 25th of the fifth month in 1868 (Meiji 1), when the Jingikan held an elaborate Nankō festival on the Kawa Higashi military training grounds (操練場). Shortly afterwards, on the second day of the sixth month, a shōkonsai was held in Edo castle, to jointly “call back” the war dead from the Boshin war, who had died in the fourth and fifth months.

As Murakami has pointed out, the “concept of calling back the souls of those who died for national affairs,” fostered in the political strife of the late-Tokugawa period, later gives rise to the emergence of “yasukuni” (靖国) thought.\(^{479}\) Murakami further explains that, “the concept of shōkon, along with the establishment of the modern emperor system which unifies every value to the emperor, developed into the concept of yasukuni, in which fallen soldiers who died loyally for the emperor are worshipped and honoured as deities.”\(^{480}\) The first shōkonsai observed on a national level was one held at the Reimeisha (霊明舎) facility for Shinto funerals on Higashiyama Ryōzen in Kyoto on the 24th day of the 12th month in 1862 (Bunkyū 2). A total of 66 people participated in this inaugural shōkonsai for “loyal warriors serving the country” (hōkoku chūshi) conducted in Shinto style. Participants included prominent Hirata disciples, such as Shirakawa house chamberlain (執事) of Kanto (Bandō) region, Furukawa Mitsura (古川躬行 1810-183), Tsuwano domainal samurai Fukuba Bisei (福羽美静 1831-1907), and Chōshū domainal samurai Sera Toshisada (世良利貞 1816-78).\(^{481}\)

Needless to say, Hirosaki could observe a shōkonsai to “call back” and revereently worship the souls of those that died “loyal” deaths for the emperor, because of the domain’s

\(^{479}\) Murakami Shigeyoshi, Irei to shōkon: Yasukuni no shisō. Iwanami shinsho, 1974. p. i. Yasukuni Shrine, located in Kudanshita kita, Chiyoda ward in Tokyo, enshrines the souls of over two and-a-half million people who died in war for Japan. The shōkonsai ritual was conducted in Tokyo Shōkonsha, which in June 1879 (Meiji 12) had its named changed to Yasukuni Shrine.

\(^{480}\) Murakami, p. i.

\(^{481}\) Ibid. p. 7.
decision in the sixth month of 1868 to side with the new government. Nagura Tetsuzō clearly
distinguishes the *shōkonsai* as a ritual inaugurated around the Boshin War, meant exclusively for
the victors, and not including those who died for the “enemy” bakufu forces. Analyzing the
*Bakumatsu ishin zen junnansha meikan* (『幕末維新全殉難者名鑑』), or *Late-Tokugawa Restoration Name List of Loyalist Deaths*, he tabulates those “loyal” souls who died for the
emperor and were thus “called back” as 3,588, while “enemy” souls who died for the *bakufu*, and
were hence not “called back” in the *shōkonsai* numbered over 8,625.482

Now let us examine the *shōkonsai* ritual of Hirosaki held in 1869, and introduce the key
figures involved. The central figure is Osari Nakaakira (長利仲聴 1823-1903), Shinto priest of
Hirosaki Kumano Okuteru Shrine, poet, and *kokugaku* scholar. Nakaakira hails from several
generations of Shinto priests, and his father, Osari Nakayoshi, was also priest of the same
Kumano shrine. From a young age, Nakaakira learned Shinto theology (*神学*), *waka* poetry, and
became known in Hirosaki domain as a notable poet. In 1851 (Kaei 4), he was granted the title
Satsuma no kami (*薩摩守*), or Lord of Satsuma. In the tenth month of 1869 (Meiji 2), Nakaakira
was appointed instructor of Imperial studies (*皇学学士取扱*) of domainal school Keikokan, and
a year later in 1870, he became assistant professor of Imperial studies (*助教皇学掛*). In the ninth
month of that year, for the purpose of Shinto reform (*神祇道改革*), he was sent on domainal
order to Kyoto, where he studied with Hirata Kanetane. He interacted with many other *kokugaku*
scholars and poets, and had hundreds of his own disciples. Nakaakira’s name is not registered in
the Hirata registries *Monjin seishichō* and *Monjin seimei roku* as an official disciple per se,

Vol. 33-9 (August 2005). In this fascinating article, Nagura problematizes Yasukuni shrine and its thought as
discriminatory, for revering and enshrining only those that died “for” Japan’s cause, and furthermore, for jointly
enshrining (合祀) all who fit this category regardless of their wishes or wishes of their family, including Koreans
and Taiwanese who fought for Japan’s cause as subjects of the emperor.
although he is recorded as having “recommended” (紹介) Gotō Takayoshi (後藤孝吉), a Hirosaki domainal samurai who enrolled as a disciple in 1871 (Meiji 4). However, based on his dealings with the Hirata disciples in Hirosaki, as well as with the Hirata academy and its members in Kyoto, we can consider him a vital member of the Hirata disciple community. As we will see in the next chapter, Nakaakira plays a vital role in the Shinto reforms of Hirosaki and eventual Aomori prefecture, particularly in the Shinbutsu bunri or Separation of Kami and Buddhas movement.

As stated above, the Battle of Hakodate, the last battle of the Boshin War, was concluded on the 18th day of the fifth month in 1869 (Meiji 2), with Eno moto Takeaki’s surrender. Shortly after, on the sixth day of the sixth month, the Hirosaki shōkonsai ritual was observed in order to worship and revere the souls of 64 fallen soldiers from Hirosaki domain who died in the Battles of Noheji and Hakodate. The ritual was held on the open field of Uwano (宇和野), located just southwest of Hirosaki castle town, a site used frequently from late-Tokugawa as a military training ground. From here, I will draw upon several documents to reconstruct the event of the shōkonsai ritual, among them Hirosaki domain’s official journal, Goyō dome gaki: goyōnin (giteidō), Osari Nakaakira’s records of the shōkonsai ritual, Meiji ni mi doshi: shōkonsai goyō domeutsushi, and Ono Wakasa’s and Hirao Rosen’s letters addressed to Shimozawa Yasumi.

According to the Hirosaki domainal journal, on the sixth day of the sixth month in 1869 (Meiji 2), domainal lord Tsugaru Tsuguakira took part in a “Uwano dotansai” (宇和野土壇祭),

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483 Although the souls of 64 fallen soldiers were worshipped at the actual shōkonsai ritual, three more domainal samurai died from wounds sustained in battle over the next month, by the seventh day of the seventh month, and so later the list is updated to 67 war dead.

484 Goyō dome gaki: goyōnin (giteidō) (『御用留書 御用人（議定堂）』), Osari Nakaakira’s authored Meiji ni mi doshi: shōkonsai goyō domeutsushi (長利仲聴著『明治二巳年 招魂祭御用留写』), Ono Wakasa’s letter addressed to Shimozawa Yasumi (小野若狭、下澤保躬宛書簡); Hirao Rosen’s letter addressed to Shimozawa Yasumi (平尾魯僊、下澤保躬宛書簡). All of these documents are archived in the Hirosaki City Library.
or “earth mound festival at Uwano.” Nakaakira served as the chief of festival (祭主) conducting the ritual, and serving as assistant chief of festival (副祭主) was Ono Wakasa (小野若狭), priest of Hirosaki Hachiman Shrine and Hirata disciple, who performed the Tsugaru kagura dance. Rosen recounts the events of the day in great detail in his letter to Yasumi, and so I cite it here:

On the sixth of this month in Ueno (上野 [sic.]), there was a ceremony for spirit pacification (魂鎮を祭り) for seventy-three people who died in battle this past spring in Shōnai domain, Nanbu domain, and recently in Matsumae. The chief of festival was Osari Satsuma, and the assistant was Ono Wakasa. As memorials (形代) of the war dead, wood was cut in hexagons, with their common names written on the back, and on the front their title and “spirit” (神霊). (Though upper ranks are written as divinities (霊神), middle ranks as spirits (神霊), and lower ranks as souls (霊魂). Offerings of fresh vegetables, fish, and sweets were prepared, the Lord (上様) conducted rites sitting on his stool, the principal retainers (御家老衆) read aloud the priestly texts (祭文), they called the young soldiers, making them bow in respect, and immediately they accepted those offerings and mementoes, the kagura song and dance concluded, and they returned to the castle, and there was music and various dances by the shrine maiden (神子). At this occasion, once the kagura begins, members of over forty platoons form a procession to the drums, flutes, and trumpets, and camps are formed, and cannon and rifles are fired. Once concluded, everyone bows in reverence to the shrine (霊位), truly everything is strict. And yet, concerning the orders (御触出) for people to pay their respects to this event, there numbered tens of thousands of observers—old and young, male and female—there were that many at spacious Ueno (上野).

Rosen describes the shōkonsai in great detail, as if painting a scene of the day’s events. He describes “memorials” of the fallen soldiers, wood cut into hexagons, with their common name, ranks and “spirit” names written on them, and the ranks of individuals differentiated by the “spirit” names: upper ranks as divinities (霊神); middle as spirits (神霊); and lower as souls (霊魂).

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485 Goyō dome gaki: goyōnin (giteidō), entry for the sixth day, sixth month, 1869 (Meiji 2).
魂). Fresh produce and goods were offered, with daimyo Tsuguakira conducting rites seated on his stool. The principal retainers read the priestly texts, and family and relatives of the fallen soldiers are summoned and made to worship. The Tsugaru kagura and music are performed, while the shrine maiden performed her dance. As the kagura begins, soldiers of over forty platoons form a procession to the playing of the band, and camps are formed. Cannon and rifles are fired, and all bow reverently toward the erected shrines (霊位) where the spirits of the fallen soldiers dwell. Rosen notes that “the observers old and young, male and female were some tens of thousands” gathered at Uwano in a festive atmosphere.

Chief of festival, Nakaakira composed and read a norito liturgy on this occasion, entitled “Kiyomi harae norito,” or “Liturgy for purification and exorcism,” in traditional Man’yōgana script. The norito begins, “Awesomely and fearfully, I offer my plea and praise to the heavenly and earthly gods, the eight million gods, Shinatsu hiko no mikoto and Shinatobe no mikoto487 who sit at the harae do place of exorcism, Seoritsu hime no kami, Haya akitsu hime no kami, Ibukido nushi no kami, and Haya sasura hime no kami.”488 This ritual is observed, Nakaakira then explains, because “our Lord ordered to conduct shōkonsai for those people whose lives ended in military battles from last summer to the fifth month of this year,” confirming it was daimyō Tsugaru Tsuguakira who ordered the conducting of the shōkonsai to worship and honour

487 Shinatsu hiko no mikoto and Shinatobe no mikoto, appearing in the divine age sections of the Kojiki and Nihon shoki are deities that control the wind. According to the Nihon shoki, these two names represent the same deity, which was born when creator deities Izanagi and Izanami were creating the world, when Izanagi blew away the morning fog with his breath.

488 These four deities are known as the four Harae do no kami (祓戸神) or four gods of exorcism that preside over exorcisms at the harae do or place of exorcism. These four deities appear in the Engishiki norito liturgy for the Great Exorcism Rite (大祓 Ōharai) on the last night of the sixth month, and are believed to drive away sin (罪 tsumi) and impurities (穢 kegare).

the domainal soldiers who died in the Boshin war.\textsuperscript{489} The norito even states it was the daimyō who chose the open fields of Uwano as the location. There in the middle of the field, they “piled up the pure soil as a mound, to make a ritual field (斎庭).” Nakaakira also calls upon, among other deities, Kamu naobi no kami Ō naobi no kami, the great rectifying spirits, to erase the evil deeds of the Magatsubi no kami, the deities of evil. Nakaakira, declaring himself to be present before the 64 divinities (神霊) seated in the field of Uwano, also describes in some detail the local events in the Boshin war. He explains that the previous spring, some lords (国主) within Mutsu province rose up against the imperial court, which necessitated punitive attack and subjugation. In response to the imperial court’s order, the Tsugaru daimyo called his Hirosaki troops and commander to raise arms against Morioka’s army and to “expose and correct Nanbu’s sin and to punish them.”

In his letter, Rosen reports that merchants were on hand conducting business, including vendors of snow, water, candy, soba noodles, and tokoroten jelly. Those in attendance enjoyed cloudless, clear skies, and Rosen describes this event as “one spectacle of recent years.”\textsuperscript{490} Finally, he notes that “the manner of the military drill was British-style, and that was something a little detestable,” expressing his dislike for Western things.\textsuperscript{491} A bird’s-eye view diagram of the shōkonsai ritual with individuals, parties, and objects and structures and their positions are laid out in assistant chief of festival Ono Wakasa’s letter to Yasumi written seven days after the event, on the 14\textsuperscript{th} day of the sixth month in 1869.\textsuperscript{492}

The 64 fallen soldiers whose souls are being “called” or “invited back,” have their individual names and spirit names (神号) written on wooden markers in order of rank, beginning

\begin{footnotesize}
489 Ibid.
490 Aomori kenshi shiryōhen kinsei gakugei kankei. p. 618.
491 Ibid.
492 Ono Wakasa letter to Shimozawa Yasumi. 14\textsuperscript{th} day, sixth month, 1869 (Meiji 2). Hirosaki City Library.
\end{footnotesize}
with Commander Kojima Sakon (司令小嶋左近), Narita Kyūma (成田求馬), Takasugi Sazen (高杉左膳), Commander of Half Battalion Taniguchi Nagayoshi (半隊司令士谷口永吉), Chief Flag Bearer Fujita Toranosuke (藤田虎之助). 493 Then, sixth on this list of fallen soldiers from the Hirosaki domainal army is Yamada Yōnoshin. He is listed as “second son of Hirayoshi,” and received the spirit name (神号) of “Tateo spirit” (楯雄神霊), a middle-rank as aforementioned. Rosen, in the same letter of the eleventh day of the sixth month in 1869, writes of Yōnoshin in the context of the Tsugaru group’s dealings with the Hirata academy, stating that in the previous year when a peer Nakamura Yorozuya (中村万弥) went to Tokyo, he delivered Yōnoshin’s work, *Amakudari no kō* (『天降考』 On Heavenly Descent) to have it viewed by the “current Master” (今の大人) of the Ibukinoya. 494 Rosen continues that though he has not heard back about the text, barring any complications, he sincerely desires that this work be published, adding, “Indeed, if it is published in such a way, how happy Yōnoshin’s soul would be!” 495 So, between Rosen, Nakamura Yorozuya, and Shimozawa Yasumi, an effort was made by the Hirosaki Hirata disciples to arrange for the honouring of their fellow Yōnoshin’s writing through its publication, with the desire of at least Rosen to please “Yōnoshin’s soul” in the afterlife. Thus in this way, members of the Hirata disciple community in Hirosaki were closely involved in the *shōkonsai* ritual. The two Shinto priests Osari Nakaakira and Ono Wakasa conducted the ritual as chief of festival and assistant chief of festival, with the latter also performing the *kagura* dance. Merchant townsman Hirao Rosen took part in and observed the “festivities,” and he along with Wakasa, meticulously reported the events in his letter to Yasumi. Finally, Yamada Yōnoshin who had

493 “Hirosaki shōkonsha hōsai shimei”, name list. Aomori ken gokoku jinja.
495 Ibid.
sacrificed his life in the Boshin War, became a deified object of worship through the *shōkonsai* ritual.

In the year following the *shōkonsai*, on the ninth day of the third month in 1870 (Meiji 3), a *shōkondō* or soul-inviting hall of fourteen *tsubo* was erected in Tomita village, next to Hirosaki castle town. The souls of over two hundred soldiers from Hirosaki along with supporting troops from Kumamoto domainal soldiers who had been dispatched to the Northeast, but were killed in a shipwreck off the coast of Kazusa province (present-day Chiba), and soldiers from other domains who died in the Boshin war, were jointly worshipped (合祀) at this *shōkondō*. In December 1888 (Meiji 21), the *shōkondō* was moved to Kami Shiragin machi in Hirosaki city, then in January 1910 (Meiji 43) it was transferred to its current location inside Hirosaki Park, on the former grounds of Hirosaki Castle, where it was renamed Hirosaki *shōkonsha* (弘前招魂社) or Hirosaki “soul-inviting” shrine. Amid the Second Sino-Japanese War in 1936 (Showa 11), this shrine was renamed Aomori ken *shōkonsha* (青森県招魂社), and around the start of the Second World War in 1939, by the twelfth edict of the Home Ministry, this shrine became *Aomori ken gokoku jinja* (青森縣護國神社), or Aomori Prefecture Nation-Protecting Shrine. Currently, the *Aomori ken gokoku jinja*, retaining its name from prewar times, is an official religious institution, where the souls of 29,171 individuals who died in military service are worshipped.

This evolution unfolding in Hirosaki of the original site for the *shōkon* ritual into a *shōkondō*—a “soul-inviting” hall in early Meiji, then later into a *shōkonsha*—a “soul-inviting” shrine, and eventually into a *gokoku jinja*—a Nation-Protecting Shrine in wartime, reflects one local stream in a nationwide development of State Shinto. Helen Hardacre succinctly describes

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496 “Aomori ken gokoku jinja” pamphlet, Aomori ken gokoku jinja.
this process of creating Nation-Protecting Shrines centered around the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo:

The emperor and politicians, the military and the general populace simultaneously observed rites at this shrine [Yasukuni] and its prefectural branches, the Nation-Protecting Shrines (gokoku jinja). This nationwide orchestration of ritual was an attempt at the most daring social engineering. Here was a plan to use religion to unify the people in a single cult, headed by the emperor as head priest, focused upon his ancestors (and later the war dead), who had also been declared national deities. 497

The “nationwide orchestration of ritual,” including those to worship the war dead, and the construction of the system of gokoku jinja throughout Japan centered around Yasukuni were indeed mobilized to unify the people under the emperor as head priest. Following this, Japan underwent rapid modernization, becoming an Imperial power which would embark on overseas expansion and increased militarization toward the end of the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I examined Hirosaki domain in the Restoration years, namely the Boshin War, with the toppling of the bakufu and rise of the new government rallying around the emperor. Once confirming the new government forces were favoured to win the war, Hirosaki domain honoured its ties to the Konoe family, declared allegiance to the court, left the Ōu Etsu Domainal Alliance, and ultimately fought for the emperor. This major decision by the domain leadership determined Hirosaki’s fate, as well as those of the Hirata disciples. Hirosaki suffered large war casualties, especially in the Battle of Noheji, but ultimately their side, the new government won

the war, and Yamada Yōnoshin, and others had the honour of serving the imperial cause, in his case, paying the ultimate sacrifice. Osari Nakaakira and Ono Iwane, through conducting the shōkonsai, deified 64 souls including Yōnoshin, and immortalized them in the pantheon of war dead which would grow significantly in the following decades within the new prefecture and nationwide. Indeed these short two years from 1868 to 1869, rapidly advanced Hirosaki in its place in Imperial Japan.

In the next chapter, I examine further developments in the emerging State Shinto, beginning with Shinbutsu bunri (神仏分離), the Separation of Kami and Buddhas. From there, I proceed to examine the new forming Meiji society and modernization, and the visions of a “New Dawn” upheld by the Hirata kokugaku scholars, as well as the hard realities they would face.
Chapter 8: Rise and Decline of *Kokugaku*: Tsugaru Disciples and Modern Society

Overview

This final chapter examines how the Hirata disciples in Tsugaru observed and experienced modernization in the early Meiji period, particularly how they experienced the transformation of their local “country” of Tsugaru—Hirosaki domain—parallel to developments in “Imperial” Japan, in the years following the Restoration. To begin, I chronicle major historical developments in Hirosaki, particularly its transformation from domain to prefecture, through the amalgamation of neighbouring territories, then the eventual formation of Aomori prefecture in 1871. Highlighted are the role of the last daimyo and first governor Tsugaru Tsuguakira and the transition of domainal school Keikokan into the modern academy Tōōgijuku, as representative of modernization of local society and adoption of Western thought and education.

The Hirata academy grows rapidly in the first few years of Meiji in terms of discipleship and its participation in state building, peaking at around 1871, before facing conflict with governmental authorities and encountering a sudden decline. The Tsugaru disciples were active in early Meiji in Hirosaki, Tokyo, and Kyoto, but their community would face a major turning point with the death of group leader Tsuruya Ariyo, in that pivotal year of 1871. Members of the Tsugaru group, variously experienced, contributed to, and or resisted modernity in their local Hirosaki community. Rosen, perhaps more than any other member of this group, at first expresses excitement over the promises of an emerging Imperial Japan, and then laments the sudden shift he observes in local and national society which embraces Western thought and institutions, while abandoning the traditional ideas and values which the nativists had celebrated. I also briefly examine the activities of others within the Tsugaru group, like Osari Nakaakira and
Ono Iwane, who headed the *Shinbutsu bunri*, or the “Separation of Kami and Buddhas” religious reform, and Shimozawa Yasumi, who was commissioned by the final daimyo Tsuguakira to immortalize the poetry and history of Tsugaru. Finally, I examine the later years of Rosen’s life, and how he negotiated changes to the dynamics between local and national community, as well as the tensions between traditional and modern values.

**History of Meiji Period Hirosaki**

Following the Imperial army’s victory over the *bakufu* forces in the Boshin War, which concluded with the Battle of Hakodate on the eighteenth of the fifth month in 1869, Hirosaki domain was rewarded by the Meiji government for its support in the civil war. Within the year, Hirosaki domain was recognized as a “Distinguished Imperial Domain” (Kinnō shukō han 勤皇殊功藩), and for its achievements in the Tohoku Boshin War, the final daimyo Tsugaru Tsuguakira was awarded a “permanent stipend” (永世禄) of ten thousand *koku*, as well as a separate three-year payment of ten thousand *koku* for his involvement in the Battle of Hakodate.\(^{498}\) The domainal samurai who fought in the various battles also received prizes from the twelfth month of 1869 into 1870, but, these were small amounts divided up from the award received by Tsuguakira, and this led to discontent among the recipients.

In the following years, Hirosaki domain and Japan underwent drastic changes as the institutions of the toppled shogunate were gradually replaced by new ones. In the seventh month of 1870, the town office (*machiyaku*) in Hirosaki was abolished, and a *gonin gumi*, or five-

people, mutually-responsible group was formed to take its place. The domainial school, Keikokan, was renamed a kogakkō (古学校) or “old school,” and in 1870 became the Tōōgijuku. Changes were implemented in transportation, with the building of new bridges, and swamp lands were drained and developed as grounds for nine elementary schools, as well as for Tōōgijuku. The Hanseki hōkan (版籍奉還) reform of 1869, ordered that domainal land be symbolically returned to the central authority and converted domainal lords into domainal governors. Furthering these reform measures, on the fourteenth day of the seventh month in 1871, the Meiji government announced Haihan chiken (廃藩置県), or the “Dissolution of Domains and Establishment of Prefectures.” On this day, former daimyo and now domainal governor Tsugaru Tsuguakira visited the capital of Tokyo along with 261 governors, and received the imperial edict for the “Dissolution of Domains and Establishment of Prefectures” from the Dajōkan (太政官), or Council of State, which grouped the roughly 260 domains throughout Japan into seventy-five prefectures.

In the ninth month that same year, Hirosaki prefecture was formed by combining Hirosaki, Kuroishi, Shichinohe, Hachinohe, Tonami domains, and Tate prefecture (建県旧老 Matsumae domain) to create a large prefecture that spanned from present-day south Hokkaido to northern Iwate. Under haihan chiken, the old governors of the domains were assembled in Tokyo, and new prefectural officials were sent from the central government to govern the prefectures. In Hirosaki, Noda Hiromichi (野田豁通 1844-1913) was appointed as councillor in the ninth month of 1871, and he quickly transferred the prefectural office from Hirosaki to

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499 Ibid. p. 247.
500 Ibid.
502 Ibid. Then from the ninth month of 1872, Hokkaido developmental office (kaitaku-shi) began the task of colonizing and developing Hokkaido.
503 Ibid. p. 249.
Aomori where it opened in the twelfth month, and he successfully petitioned for the new prefecture to be renamed Aomori. Ninohe-gun was absorbed into Iwate prefecture, and Aomori prefecture with its current-day territory came into existence from the fifth month of 1876.

Tsugaru Tsuguakira: Last Daimyo, First Governor

Hirosaki domain’s twelfth and final daimyo Tsugaru Tsuguakira (津軽承昭 1840-1916) was born the fourth son to lord of Kumamoto domain, Hosokawa Narimori Lord of Etchū (細川越中守齊護) on the twelfth day of the eighth month in 1840 (Tenpō 11) in the domainal residence in Edo. At age five, the boy moved to Kumamoto domain where he was raised in the castle, receiving superior education in the civil and military arts. Hirosaki’s eleventh daimyo Tsugaru Yukitsugu, sought to adopt a boy to become his successor from among the Konoe, Tayasu, and other related families, and eventually adopted the boy Tsuguakira from the Hosokawa family. This agreement was reached in the eighth month of 1856 (Ansei 3), and was approved by the bakufu in the following year. Young Tsuguakira arrived in Hirosaki castle in the seventh month of 1857.

As seen in earlier chapters, since becoming the twelfth daimyo for Hirosaki domain in 1859, Tsuguakira led the domain through a series of major decisions and developments. Tsuguakira led the domain’s management and security of Western Ezo territory, and sent troops in the defence of Kyoto. He headed military reform in late-Tokugawa, ordering the production of modern weapons. Following the Meiji Restoration and the outbreak of the Boshin War,

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504 Ibid.
Tsuguakira followed the order from the Konoe family in Kyoto, and ultimately led the domainal government to direct military allegiance from the bakufu forces to the imperial cause.

Furthermore, in 1870, the final daimyo and now governor enacted the Kiden hō (帰田法) or “Return to Land Law,” whereby the government forcibly purchased farm land from wealthy merchants and distributed it to samurai, for them to develop. As will be seen through his involvement with domainal school Keikokan which later becomes Tōōgijuku academy, Tsuguakira was a supporter of Western learning, and was aware of the domain’s, and later the prefecture’s need to borrow from the West to make itself modern and competitive. Eventually, in the first month of 1872 (Meiji 5), even Tsuguakira himself took up English language study from Hirooka Torajirō of Kumamoto prefecture, and continued studying for several years. His biographer notes, “the Lord (公) observed the times, and recognized that English studies would become necessary, and so elected a group of youth and made them study.”

The Transformation of an Educational Institution

Social and intellectual change in Hirosaki may be gauged in part through the transformation undergone by the domainial school, Keikokan, eventually becoming Tōōgijuku private academy in 1872. As described in chapter three, the domainal school, opened in 1796, educated primarily retainers’ children, but later taught a limited number of commoners, in such subjects as Confucianism, military science, history, law, astronomy, writing, mathematics, and general martial arts. Western studies were incorporated into the curriculum from late-Tokugawa, with the addition of medical studies in 1858, Dutch Learning in 1859, and English language

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506 Ibid. p. 336.
education in 1866. When eleventh daimyo Yukitsugu established a hall for Dutch Learning in Keikokan in 1859, he encouraged the research of Dutch Learning, and supported samurai and town physicians with scholarships.\textsuperscript{507} The school also published actively, including Chinese classics, writings by Confucian scholar and military strategist Yamaga Sokō (山鹿素行) and one-time professor of the school, Yamazaki Ranshū (山崎蘭州 1733-1799), and even its own “Keikokan calendar.” In the eleventh month of 1872, under the new Aomori prefectural government, the school became a private institution, the Tōōgijuku.\textsuperscript{508} Kanako Kitagawa explains that although Tōōgijuku had changed its name and relocated from the old school house to the former military office, by virtue of its establishment through funds from the last daimyo Tsugaru, and the adoption of textbooks and teaching materials from the domainal school, it remained in essence the “domainal school.”\textsuperscript{509}

The transformation of Keikokan to Tōōgijuku represents a process of modernization and transition in intellectual thought at the most fundamental level of education and scholarship. After Keikokan added to its curriculum Western medicine, Dutch Learning, and English language education in late-Tokugawa, the Tōōgijuku further adopted Western studies in the 1870s. As Kitahara has observed, a comparison of the “academy regulations” and curriculums of Tōōgijuku and Keio Academy of Tokyo founded by Fukuzawa Yukichi in 1858, reveals considerable influence from this central school which specialized in Western Learning. Core members of Tōōgijuku after its establishment were Yoshikawa Yasujirō (吉川泰次郎), who was sent there from Keio Academy, as well as Narita Isoho (成田五十穂) and Kikuchi Kyūrō (菊池

\textsuperscript{507} Tsugaru Tsuguakira kōden, p. 4.  
\textsuperscript{508} Ibid. p. 175.  
九郎) who had studied at Keio, imparting a strong Keio flavour to the academy. This adoption of Western Learning was furthered through the hiring of foreign instructors, such as John Ing (1840-1920), who used methods common in the U.S. school system with English textbooks.

Some prominent graduates of the private academy include Chinda Sutemi (珍田捨巳 1856-1929) and Sato Aimaro (砂糖愛麿 1857-1934), both Japanese ambassadors to the U.S., and famous newspaper journalist Kuga Katsunan (陸羯南 1857-1907). Starting in 1877, many students from Tōōgijuku, like Chinda and Sato, traveled abroad to the U.S. to study in universities. Most of the foreign instructors invited to teach at Tōōgijuku were missionaries, and while they were hired to educate, they also saw their posts as an opportunity to disseminate their Protestant faith. The education order issued by the Meiji government in 1872 established the “modern education system,” and the first step of this process was an order to close all ex-domain schools, of which there were around 250 throughout Japan. As argued by Kanbe Yasumitsu, some schools merely changed their names, while others tried to adjust their system to adapt to the new social conditions: Tōōgijuku fell under the second category. Tōōgijuku was a

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510 Ibid. pp. 31-37.
511 Ibid., p. 37.
512 Ibid. Kuga Katsunan worked at the documentation bureau of the Council of State (Dajōkan) and founded the newspaper, Tōkyō Denpō (Tokyo Telegram), which he later renamed Nihon (Japan). He opposed many of the government’s Westernizing policies, and wrote from a nationalistic perspective. Suzuki Hirotaka has chronicled Kuga’s experiences during this modernizing period and transition in self-recognition from Tsugaru inhabitant (Tsugarujin) to Japanese (Nihonjin). Suzuki Hirotaka. “Kyūhan no chōetsu: Meiji jūnendai no Kuga Katsunan wo daizai to shite,” Rekishi, Vol. 106. April 2006. pp. 97-121.
513 Kitahara Kanako, “Christianity in the Tsugaru District,” Tsugaru: Regional Identity on Japan’s Northern Periphery. Eds. Guo, Nanyan, Seiichi Hasegawa, Henry Johnson, Hidemichi Kawanishi, Kanako Kitahara, Anthony Rausch. University of Otago Press, 2005. p. 37. The foreign instructors hired at Tōōgijuku played a large role in arranging studies abroad. In 1877, John Ing arranged for five students including Chinda and Sato to study at his alma mater, Indiana Ashbury University in the U.S. The three other students, however, died during their stay abroad. Ibid. 44.
514 Ibid., p. 37.
515 Ibid., p. 38.
unique case because of the financial support it received from Hirosaki’s last daimyo, Tsugaru Tsuguakira (1840-1916), which enabled its survival.

Kitadai Masaomi (北代正臣), an early Aomori prefectural governor, argued that education was the key to freeing Aomori from being “backward and conservative and that, influenced by Ezo,” Tōōgijuku would serve as an important institution for this purpose. The local government petitioned to the Meiji government to fund the school to continue operation, but it remained a private institution. Another early educator and principal of Tōōgijuku, Honda Yōichi (本田庸一 1848-1912), a Methodist active in ministry, is also quoted of promoting the merits of education in this region:

Our hometown is very inferior to other places of Japan because of the cold winter climate, the dullness of the people, the lack of political power and the poor economy. Education is the only way to save this district. We believe that the most important thing for Tsugaru is simply education.

In this manner, local politicians and educators alike perceived Aomori prefecture’s place within Japan as disadvantaged and backward and, consequently, placed great weight on the education offered at Tōōgijuku, as a means of saving this region and its people.

The hiring of foreign instructors (oyatoi gaikokujin) gave Tōōgijuku a sense of credibility and status associated with Western learning at the time. An early student of the school spoke of its competitiveness with those in Tokyo: “At that time, we wanted to go to Tokyo to study. So, before the haihan chiken we sometimes talked about it to the domain officers. But the arrival of foreign teachers at Tōōgijuku gave us the possibility of studying at a higher level even here in

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517 Ibid.
518 Ibid. Kikuchi Kyūrō (1847-1926) was an important founder and financer of Tōōgijuku in the early years.
519 Honda Yōichi (本田庸一) Christian, leader of Japanese Methodist Church, educator, politician. Born in Hirosaki to a domainal samurai. He studied in Yokohama under James Hamilton Ballagh, received baptism, took part in revival of the Yokohama Band, and commenced his ministry. In 1874, he returned to Hirosaki and became the principal of Tōōgijuku academy. Honda carried out ministry with John Ing, and was a part of the “Hirosaki Band” revival. He along with Ing established Hirosaki Church. Honda devoted his life to education, ministry, and politics.
520 Ibid.
There were five foreign instructors invited to teach at Tōōgijuku, and among them were missionaries, Charles H. H. Wolff (1840-1919), Arthur C. Maclay (1853-1930), and John Ing (1840-1920). John Ing, an American missionary from the Methodist Mission, was well respected as a superior teacher who redesigned the curriculum, teaching oratory skills which trained students to participate in the Liberal People’s Rights Movements in the 1880s. During his tenure, Ing baptized at least thirty-five people, but despite his popularity with students and administration, there emerged various anti-Christian movements. When financial assistance from the local government ceased in 1883, the Methodist Mission helped to fund the school, and in 1888, John Wier, a principle missionary was elected to be school principal. While administrators struggled to keep Tōōgijuku a private school, in 1900 it came under the control of Hirosaki city as a public school, and closed its doors in 1913. Kitahara asserts that the reception of Western Learning in Tsugaru was fueled, in large part, by two major forces: one, the former samurai class of Hirosaki endeavouring to modernize their region through education; and two, the Christian missionaries using this school as a basis for which to proselytize.

The Hirata Academy in Early Meiji

Following the establishment of the Meiji government, the policy of Saisei itchi (祭政一 致), or “Unity of Rites and Government” was proclaimed by Fukuba Bisei (1831-1907), Ōkuni

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521 Ibid., p. 42.
522 In the Meiji imperial procession to Tohoku region from June 2 to July 21, 1876, Emperor Meiji praised the high quality of education at Tōōgijuku, and gave the students five yen to buy dictionaries. The emperor even offered John Ing an imperial audience. Ibid., pp. 45-46.
523 Ibid., p. 48.
524 Ibid., p. 47. Kitahara argues three reasons for Tōōgijuku administration to employ foreign Christian missionaries despite prevailing anti-Christian sentiment: (1) the admirable personalities and high teaching abilities of the missionaries; (2) the notion that Christianity embodied Western learning, and that adopting it would allow the inhabitants of Hirosaki to overcome social isolation and cultural inferiority by way of education; and (3) simply a desire for the introduction and dissemination of Christianity as a religion. Ibid., p. 48.
Takamasa (1792-1871), and their faction of *kokugaku* activists within government authority, thereby asserting the emperor’s dual role as both priest and political head of the Japanese state. As a part of this state-building policy, the Jingikan (神祇官), or Council of Shinto Affairs, an institution from the eighth-century Ritsuryō state was resurrected in 1868. At first, the Jingikan was positioned within the Dajōkan (太政官), or Council of State, however, on the eighth day of the seventh month in 1869 (Meiji 2), it was made independent from the Dajōkan and furthermore made superior to it. This institution played an important role in administering *Shinbutsu bunri*, or the Separation of Kami and Buddhas policy throughout the country. These rapid developments with the promotion of “Shinto” and the *kami*, as well as the role of the emperor, signalled the arrival of a new “dawn” to *kokugaku* scholars, especially the Hirata disciples, as depicted in Shimazaki Tōson’s brilliant novel about Hirata disciple Aoyama Hanzō in *Yoake mae* (『夜明け前』) or *Before the Dawn*. Hirata Kanetane and many of the top Hirata disciples asserted themselves, and became appointed for important government and educational posts.

Kanetane took on the role of magistrate in the Jingikan (Jingi Jimukyoku 神祇事務局) and Office of Domestic Affairs (Naikoku jimukyoku 内国事務局). Along with *kokugaku* scholars Tamamatsu Misao (1810-1872) and Hirata disciple Yano Gendō (1823-1887), Kanetane successfully petitioned for the establishment in 1868 of the Kōgakusho (皇学所), or the Institute of Imperial Studies in Kyoto, which specialized in *kokugaku* education, opposite the Kangakusho (漢学所) or Chinese Studies Institute which taught Chinese education. In the ninth month of 526 The rapid rise of the Jingikan was also reversed rather quickly. Although it had been elevated above the Dajōkan in 1869, two years later in August of 1871, the Jingikan (Office of Kami Affairs) was reduced to the Jingishō (神祇省) or Ministry of Kami Affairs. In the third month of the following year, it was absorbed into the Kyōbushō (教部省) or Ministry of Education, and shortly after in the tenth month, this latter ministry was amalgamated with the Monbusho (文部省).
1868, Kanetane received appointment as special consultant at the Kōgakusho, and served a series of important roles such as tutor to the young Emperor Meiji, special consultant on National History, Special Consultant for the Kyōdōkyoku, or Bureau of Preceptors, and Senior Professor of the National University. In the eighth month of 1869, the Daigakkō (大学校), or National University was established in Edo (soon to be Tokyo) for studies on Japan, as well as Chinese and Western studies, and Kanetane was influential in its establishment, and served as an administrator. Kanetane assumed the role of titular head, assisted by his son Nobutane, while the top Hirata disciples joined the faculty. Due to conflict with governmental authorities, however, the National University was closed in 1870, a decision which Fukuba Bisei and his faction were responsible for. However, in 1879, Kanetane was appointed Senior Prefect of Instruction (Taikyōsei) in the Meiji state’s Great Promulgation Campaign (Taikyō senpu 大教宣布).

The first four to five years of the Meiji period saw tumultuous change in the Japanese state as it underwent modernization, and the Hirata disciples certainly experienced both the highs and lows, as both observers and participants of this history. An examination of the *Ibukinoya monjincho* or *Ibukinoya Disciple Registry* shows a sharp increase in disciple enrolment from the early 1860s, with steadily strong enrolment continuing, and booming in the early Meiji years. The Restoration year of 1868 witnessed a peak in enrolment in the Ibukinoya with 988 new disciples, followed by 756 new disciples added in 1869, 458 more in 1870, dropping down to

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270 in 1871, then in an astonishing descent, a mere eight newly enrolled disciples in 1872.\textsuperscript{529} These simple numbers narrate, in part, the story of the Hirata disciples and Meiji society.

As demonstrated through these figures of disciple enrolment, 1871, the fourth year of Meiji, represents a watershed year for state building as well as for the Hirata academy. It was the year the \textit{Haihan chiken}, the “Dissolution of domains and establishment of prefectures” policy was implemented, drastically altering the geopolitical and social landscape in the country’s transition from a feudal to modern state. This was also the year that the majority of the Meiji governmental leaders and students embarked on the Iwakura Mission overseas to study European and American political, social, educational, legal, and industrial institutions over the course of a year and ten months. Such major events symbolized the direction Meiji Japan would take in advancing its policy of “Civilization and Enlightenment,” thus increasingly adopting Western thought and institutions. Amid such a backdrop, the Hirata academy also experienced a sharp peak in momentum in enrolment and participation in state building, in the first three years of Meiji, then a sharp decline also around 1871. A combination of such developments in domestic politics and the death of Hirata Kanetane’s son, Hirata Nobutane, a key administrator of the academy, on the twenty-fourth day of the first month of 1872 (Meiji 5), served a major blow to the Ibukinoya and its national network.

In the early years of Meiji, there developed a conflict between the Hirata disciples on one side and Fukuba Bisei and his followers on the other. As mentioned above, Bisei and his faction promoted the \textit{“Saisei itchi”} (祭政一致) or “Unity of Rites and Government” policy which called for the harmonious unification of the worship of gods (\textit{sai} 祭) and politics of the state (\textit{sei} 政). At the core of this principle was the emperor who served both a religious role as head priest of

modern Shinto, as well as a political role as head of the Japanese state. Following the Restoration, the Meiji Emperor became increasingly active in performing religious ritual, as well as in being consulted, albeit in largely a ceremonious nature, on legislation. As observed in research to date, the Hirata disciples supported representation of a broader pantheon of kami including earthly kami (kunitsukami) and stood for a more popular, commoner representation of kami worship.\textsuperscript{530}

In contrast, the faction led by the Bisei and Ōkuni Takamasa faction are perceived as causing a divide between the people on one hand, and government leadership and the emperor on the other. Yano Gendō became a leading spokesperson for the Hirata faction, himself an influential disciple in the academy, who held spiritual concerns, writing on spirits and the kakuriyo realm.

These tensions led to the “Offense against National Affairs Incident” (\textit{Kokuji ihan jiken 国事違反事件}) of 1871, an event which presented a major crisis for the Hirata academy, and marked their decline in that fourth year of Meiji. Gendō, the leader of the Hirata faction, insisted that the enthronement ceremony for the emperor be performed in Kyoto, a suggestion which Bisei rejected, as obstruction to progress and enlightenment.\textsuperscript{531} In addition, a radical faction of angry grassroots activists schemed to return the emperor to Kyoto by force. However, their plot was discovered, giving government authorities a reason to punish the dissidents in the “Offense against National Affairs Incident.” In 1871, government authorities punished 257 people, executed nine, and permitted two nobles to commit suicide.\textsuperscript{532} As Anne Walthall shows, this incident—including the arrests of Gendō and others, combined with the government closing

\textsuperscript{531} Walthall, p. 300.
\textsuperscript{532} Ibid.
down the National University, by Bisei’s influence—marked an end to the nativists’ ambitions to leave a lasting impact on the modern Meiji state.\footnote{\textit{Ibid}. p. 301.}

The Tsugaru Disciples in Meiji

I now turn my attention to the thought and actions of the Tsugaru disciples in the Meiji period. Perhaps more than any other member of the Tsugaru group, Hirao Rosen expresses his hopes and disappointment over changes he observed in Meiji society nationally and locally. In chapter five, I examined the ethnographic and nativist dimensions of Rosen’s scholarship, culminating with an analysis of his \textit{magnum opus}, \textit{Yūfu shinron}. Here, I pick up with \textit{Yūfu shinron} again, to begin chronicling Rosen’s experience of the Restoration and early Meiji society, and to consider how Rosen addresses change and responds to the challenges brought on by modernization in Hirosaki. As I discussed in chapter five, Rosen sent a manuscript of \textit{Yūfu shinron} to the Ibukinoya and received a formal review from Kanetane’s son, Hirata Nobutane (1828-72), dated the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month in 1867 (Keio 3), which was very favourable, and included an endorsement to publish and disseminate the text widely in Japanese society. Nobutane’s review is entitled, “Review of \textit{Tsugarujin} (Tsugaru Resident) Hirao Rosen’s work, \textit{Yūfu shinron}”\footnote{Hirata Nobutane, “Tsugarujin Hirao Rosen no chojutsu Yūfu shinron no hyō,” \textit{Aomori kenshi}. p. 600.} (「津軽人平尾魯仙の著述幽府新論の評」), showing the Hirata school’s recognition of Rosen, the author of this major work, as “Tsugarujin” or “Tsugaru Resident.” Nobutane writes:

\begin{quote}
Concerning \textit{Yūfu shinron}, while it is indeed \textit{Yūfu shinron} that will rend the hearts of the close-minded, vulgar Confucians who say that spirits in the world are the good workings of the dual forces, I wish you will disseminate [this work] widely in society, if possible,
\end{quote}
Nobutane of the Ibukinoya praises this text for its potential to correct the “vulgar Confucians” who explain that spirits in the world are actually the positive workings of Yin Yang forces. Nobutane devotes almost the entire review to urging Rosen to reconsider his interpretations of solar and lunar eclipses. Nobutane insists that eclipses are not heavenly warnings of misfortune, as Rosen contends, but that they are celestial phenomena that can be predicted through astrological means. While offering such comments, Nobutane encourages him to publish this work “widely in society,” referring to Tokugawa society at large. In this way, while Rosen cited people of Tsugaru and “my friends who are unaware of deities (kami)” as the primary targets of his work, he furthermore received official recommendation from the head school in Edo to spread his writings to a wider audience in Japan, including Confucians. Rosen was encouraged by this, even expressing personal ambition toward publication in a letter he wrote the following year to friend and fellow Hirata nativist of the Tsugaru group, Shimoza Yasumi, dated the eleventh day of the sixth month of 1869 (Meiji 1). In this letter, Rosen lists his major works he had written until then, and echoes Nobutane’s endorsement to publish widely, stating, “I wish to spread them as widely in society as possible.”

While the official endorsement from Edo to publish, and Rosen’s ambition to bring this into fruition present an opportunity to introduce Tsugaru kokugaku to a broader, more national readership, however, in the very same letter, Rosen rationalizes why he is unwilling to travel to Tokyo in order to publish:

535 Ibid. p. 601.
536 Rosen lists his major works in this letter, including Yōfu shinron, Fude no susabi (Jottings of the Pen), Tani no hibiki (Echoes of the Valley), Gappo kidan (Tales of Gappo), Yōi meiwa (Account of Foreigners), Hakodate kikō (Hakodate Travelogue), and artwork in Sansuikan (Landscape view), and plant and flower images in four seasons.
Moreover, although I wish to penetrate into the depths of the Way and enlighten people ignorant of the precious reason for the Imperial country to be called the Imperial country, I nevertheless am aging, weakening, and am unable to walk, and because I am poor I cannot afford the cost of travel, and I can only lament.  

Rosen expresses his resolve to continue research “into the depths of the Way” and to educate people on the reason for Imperial Japan to be called so. However, he declines his friend’s invitation to travel to the center of academic activity in Tokyo, citing reasons of age, declining health, mobility, and financial constraints as his excuses for not venturing out, though notably, he does not specify one particular illness or definitive reason. Despite all his travels within his domain and to Tokyo, Rosen at age sixty-two in 1869, expresses physical constraints which keep him from venturing out to Edo in the Restoration Years. Perhaps also, the shock of seeing the “world” so real and immanent in Ezo, as well as Japan’s place in it back in 1855, reminded him of the fearful unknown he could encounter on another journey. In any event, Rosen here declares his intent to spend his remaining academic career and life in Tsugaru. From 1871 onward, Rosen requested Yasumi to return the manuscript of *Yūfu shinron* from the Hirata academy once corrections were finished. Then in 1874, he apologizes to Yasumi for being indecisive regarding proposals to publish his major work, and cites reasons of expenses and the text being “roundabout” or outdated, to essentially declare that he would not publish it.

In that lengthy letter of 1869, Rosen also expresses concern over future succession to the leadership role of the Tsugaru group. After admitting his physical, that inhibited him from visiting the Ibukinoya academy in Edo, he acknowledges that group leader Tsuruya Ariyo is also

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538 Ibid.  
aging and declining in health, and admits, “I have yet to see anyone who would succeed him, in
the event that he retires.”

With such a concern, Rosen praises Yasumi as having “sound memory” and being “reliable,” and “blessed by the gods to receive an order to ascend to the
capital of Tokyo.” Rosen continues:

because you are near the Great Master (Kanetane), and can moreover receive the
distinguished teachings of high disciples, please study as much as you can, unlock the
great meaning (大義) of Imperial Studies, and devote yourself especially to establishing a
respectable name in the world.

Rosen, at age sixty-two, urges Yasumi, thirty years his junior at age thirty-two, to take advantage of his position in Tokyo, to learn directly from Kanetane and the elite disciples of the Hirata
Academy there, to make advances in his kokugaku research, and establish himself as a renowned scholar. As if to suggest that Yasumi take on a core role within the Tsugaru group, Rosen urges him to make “his studies number one,” placing priority on it above “the Way of Poetry.” As it turns out, Yasumi would be busy in his service to the domain and prefecture, as a scribe, historian, and editor, and would not take up such a role of successor to Ariyo, that Rosen seems to suggest for him here. Nonetheless, we see that in 1869, that Rosen is very much cognizant of the question of the Tsugaru group’s future, with its elder, core members aging.

In observing changes in local society in 1871, Rosen expresses his concern for the decline in attention devoted to Kokugaku studies and, in contrast, the emergence of Western studies:

Imperial Studies (皇學) are in great decline and there is a one-sided tendency toward Western studies (洋學) which is something truly lamentable. How are the Imperial Studies in Tokyo at this time? Please fill me in.

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542 Ibid.
Rosen laments the decline in “Imperial Studies” in Hirosaki in the year 1871—again, a threshold year in Meiji Japan—which sees modernization and increased abandonment of traditional ideas and institutions, as well as greater adoption of Western ideas and institutions. The deaths of Ibukinoya academy administrator Hirata Nobutane in 1872 and Tsugaru group leader Ariyo the year before have much to do with this decline in momentum. As examined earlier, however, Hirosaki domain supported Western Learning in the domainal school, and last domainal lord and first governor Tsuguakira also sponsored Western studies in the same school, later named Tōōgijuku academy. Rosen may have been referring to such trends of increased education on Western languages and sciences in the local academy, as well as the considerable influence from Keio Academy of Tokyo which specialized in Western studies, and from American instructors who also imparted Western education. Nakagawa Kazuaki astutely points out that from 1861 (Bunkyū 1) to 1871, twenty-seven people from Hirosaki travelled to Edo/Tokyo to register with Keio Academy.543

In the same letter, Rosen requests Yasumi to offer information on the state of Imperial Studies in Tokyo. On the subject of the decline of Kokugaku studies in Hirosaki, Rosen discusses the death of Ariyo and his own emotional struggles in coping with the passing of his good friend and group leader:

Well, Ariyo passed away in the fourth month this year, but as the remaining community (外社中) are all devoted to their activities, I believe inquiring about [his death] would only cause commotion, and so I do not pursue it. I myself (一人) from “downtown” (下町) have been reclusive and show no signs of overcoming melancholy, and simply mourn over the world; as a result, there are many who have yet to see the numerous works by Sensei. Currently, I am running a school by inviting a group of children from among neighbours. It is unlike what I had first imagined; it has been active and lively, and considerably good for overcoming melancholy. It has helped to rest my aging body, and so I am personally rejoicing over it. Please be reassured.

Rosen expresses his reluctance to discuss the matter of Ariyo’s death with the rest of the local disciple community who remain occupied with their own activities. Nevertheless, Rosen shares with Yasumi his melancholic state and how he became isolated from society, admitting he had failed to actively distribute “Sensei” Yasumi’s writings to others. Here he discusses his successes with running an academy—this one for children—when in early Meiji he succumbed to the requests of others and built a school house in the backyard of his residence where he taught neighbourhood children. He says teaching these children helped him to uplift his spirits and refresh his aging body. Rosen produced his own textbooks on moral education for the children, including Dōmō kyōkunka and Hatsugaku sanyu (『童蒙教訓歌・初学三諭』) or Educational Poems for Children and Three Teachings for Early Education, both contained in a single volume. His students included both boys and girls, and some of them went on to graduate from higher normal school (高等師範学校) and became teachers themselves.

The emotional and physical lift gained through educating children, notwithstanding, Rosen continued to struggle with sadness caused by Ariyo’s death, social upheaval, and old age. Sometime after Ariyo’s death, Rosen wrote a poem in his honour, introduced by the words, “Prostrating myself before Ariyo’s grave.” The ninety-fourth poem contained in Hirao Rosen kashū reads:

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\begin{align*}
\text{Utsushiyo to} & \quad \text{Although there may be} \\
\text{waki wa aretomo} & \quad \text{a wall with the present world} \\
\text{kami ni negite} & \quad \text{I pray to the gods} \\
\text{otozure kosene} & \quad \text{please send me word} \\
\text{yume ni naritomo} & \quad \text{even though it be a dream}
\end{align*}
\]

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544 Nakamura, pp. 10-11.  
545 Hirao Rosen, Dōmō kyōkunka and Hatsugaku sanyu (『童蒙教訓歌・初学三諭』), Hirosaki City Library Archives. 
546 Hirao Rosen, Hirao Rosen kashū, p. 7. See also my “Hirao Rosen cho Hirao Rosen kashū ni tsuite: (Honkoku) Hirosaki shiritsu toshokanzō Hirao Rosen kashū,” p. 79.
Rosen acknowledges the “wall” between this “present world” and the invisible *kakuriyo* spiritual realm where Ariyo now dwells—a major subject of both of their scholarly inquiries. With their lines of communication cut as a result of his death, Rosen prays to the gods—the entities which dwell and act in the spiritual realm, while able to influence and interfere with the visible realm of humans—to send word from the place where Ariyo’s spirit now resides.

The death of Tsuruya Ariyo in April 1871, proved a major blow to the Tsugaru community of Hirata disciples. Ariyo was the group’s undisputed leader and administrator. After he died on the ninth day of the fourth month in 1871 (Meiji 4), Rosen deeply mourned his loss and painted a portrait of Ariyo’s likeness, which he mounted and sent to Hirata Kanetane, via Yasumi, requesting that he inscribe on it some words of praise. Kanetane composed the following *waka* poem in response:

Waga michi ni
mi wo tsukushitaru
Tsurunoya no
Ariyo no oji ga
akashi sugata zo

A brilliant figure
is that of Old Man Ariyo
of the “House of Cranes”
who devoted himself
to the Way of ours

One can imagine how this poem, composed by the Academy head in praise of the late Ariyo as “a brilliant figure,” must have brought honour to Ariyo’s family and the Tsugaru group.

Kanetane’s appreciation of Ariyo for “devoting himself” to the Way of Atsutane and the Hirata descendants, echoes sentiments and gratitude similar to those expressed in his early letters to Ariyo from 1856 to 1860, for the Tsugaru leader’s devoted study on the Imperial Way through Atsutane’s writings from such a distance as Hirosaki domain.\(^{549}\)

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\(^{547}\) Here, “House of Cranes” is a literal translation of the original “Tsurunoya,” which of course is simply another rendering of Ariyo’s family name “Tsuruya,” with a particle “no” (の) inserted to fulfill the proper five syllables.

\(^{548}\) *Michinoku sōsho daisankan, Tsugaru han kyū kidenrui*, p. 488.

\(^{549}\) Please see chapter three.
Osari Nakaakira, Ono Iwane, and Shinbutsu bunri

In continuing my discussion of modernization in Hirosaki and the Tsugaru group, I next examine religious reform carried out in Hirosaki as a part of national policy, in which group members played major roles. In the third month of 1868, the new Meiji government, as part of its policy of promoting Shinto doctrine nationwide (Shintokoku kyōka), issued the Shinbutsu bunri rei or Order to Separate Kami and Buddhas.550 The objective of this order was to remove Buddhist elements—images and relics—from Shinto shrines and to preserve a “pure” Shinto. The Meiji government issued the shinbutsu bunri order to Hirosaki domain in the fifth month of 1868.551 However, preoccupied with fighting in the Boshin war, the domain did not immediately enforce this religious reform.552 From the second month of 1869, however, the order was announced throughout the domain, and the Commission for Shrine and Temple Affairs (jisha bugyō 寺社奉行) was transformed to the Shrine and Temple Office (shaji goyōsho 社寺御用所), and a new Shinto priesthood was formed that was made independent of Buddhist priests (bettō jiin).553

Heads of the local shrines were appointed in Ono Iwane 小野磐根, formerly Wakasa (若狭), head of the old Hachiman Shrine, Osari Nakaakira (長利仲聴 or Satsuo 薩雄) of the old Kumano Shrine, and Saitō Nagato (斎藤長門) of the old Shinmei Shrine. From the ninth month of 1869, shinbutsu bunri was carried out under the leadership of these three, beginning with the large shrines, and moving on to smaller shrines in villages. Other Hirata disciples in Hirosaki who were also active in carrying out shinbutsu bunri include Inomata Hisayoshi (猪股久吉).

550 Hasegawa, Hirosak han. p. 245.
551 Ibid. p. 246.
552 Tanaka, Bakumatsu ishinki ni okeru shūkyō to chiiki shakai . p. 203.
553 Hasegawa, Hirosak han. p. 246.
priest of Itou Shrine (善知鳥神社), Koyamauchi Azusa (小山内梓) priest of Mount Iwaki Shrine, and Gotō Takayoshi (後藤孝吉) priest of Takateru Shrine. The basic policy carried out in Hirosaki, did not include the all-out destruction of Buddhist statues, relics, and temples, in the form of Haibutsu kishaku (廃仏毀釈) or the destruction of Buddhism, as described in other regions. Rather, the policy in Hirosaki held as its primary objective the separation of Buddhist elements from shrines and to leave behind the local tutelary deities, the ubusuna kami, or name of “original” kami of worship there and make it a “purely” Shinto shrine. In the case of Mount Iwaki Shrine, which had contained both Kami and Buddhist elements, all Buddhist elements were relocated to nearby Hyakutakuji Temple (百沢寺), which was eventually eliminated, and Mount Iwaki Shrine was made a uniformly “Shinto” Shrine.

Tanaka Hidekazu notes that these local ubusuna kami were a vital part of the pantheon of kami in statewide Shinto, which had at its top the solar deity Amaterasu. In the case of small shrines, ubusuna kami that had a long local tradition were preserved, and smaller shrines were eliminated, creating for the most part one shrine per village. In this manner, the new Japanese state reorganized the priesthood and shrines to establish modern Shinto in Aomori prefecture by

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554 An important study on Shinbutsu bunri in Meiji is James Edward Ketelaar’s Of Heretics and Martyrs in Meiji Japan: Buddhism and Its Persecution (Princeton University Press, 1990), wherein he describes anti-Buddhist policies carried out in varying degrees by region. Satsuma and Mito are identified as domains with strong implementation of anti-Buddhist campaigns. Ketelaar also explains that the “institutional fall of Nativism” in early Meiji was caused by two aspects of Hirata nativism: the “spiritualization” of the Emperor’s role in politics; and “organized attacks upon Buddhism.” In this way, he argues, Nativism showed itself to be too religious to rule in politics, and Buddhism was too integrated in society and economy to be eliminated. Ketelaar, p. 130. See also Thal, Sarah. Rearranging the Landscape of the Gods: The Politics of a Pilgrimage Site in Japan, 1573-1912. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

555 Tanaka, Bakumatsu ishinki ni okeru shōkyō to chiiki shakai, p. 207.


557 Tanaka also points out there was public opposition to this new reorganization of shrines, specifically when the locality (zaichisei) of a shrine was lost: There was a belief that shrine belonged specifically to a village, and this could be disrupted if the locations for shrines were determined according to the new ward system. Tanaka, “Kindai jinja seido no seiritsu katei—Tsugaru chihō no shinbutsu bunri to jinja kaisei,” pp. 313-352.
the fourth month of 1873.\textsuperscript{558} During the Boshin War, examined in the previous chapter, Hirosaki Hachiman Shrine carried out formal prayers on seven different occasions. Following the war and conclusion of Hirosaki’s security roles in Ezo, these came to be limited to prayers for good weather and crops, and prayers for the welfare of the domainal lord’s family.\textsuperscript{559} After Tsugaru Tsuguakira was relieved of his role as domainal governor, there came to an end such official prayers offered at shrines concerning domainal matters.

The appointment of Ono Iwane, a Hirata disciple, as one of the heads to carry out the \textit{shinbutsu bunri} policy in Hirosaki, allowed the priesthood to directly correspond with the Jingikan, the Council of Kami Affairs,\textsuperscript{560} which ruled over shrines and \textit{kami} affairs.\textsuperscript{561} Iwane exchanged letters with Hirata Kanetane, who had been appointed a magistrate within the Jingikan in 1868. Drawing upon research by Tanaka, John Breen has depicted the experience of Ono Iwane (also Masafusa) of Hachiman shrine, and the struggles he faced in carrying out national policy at the local level. In the late-Tokugawa period, Iwane had travelled to the Yoshida Shrine in Kyoto and obtained a license, ritual training, and clerical garments.\textsuperscript{562} Many shrines in the early modern period were located within the compound of a Buddhist temple, and the Ono family was subordinate to the clergy of the Tendai temple Saishōin. However, the Ono family was also one of two \textit{shakegashira} (社家頭), elite shrine households, responsible for ensuring that shrines correctly performed ritual duties, holding study sessions, and conveying

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{558} Ibid. p. 345.
  \item \textsuperscript{559} Tanaka, \textit{Bakumatsu ishinki ni okeru shūkyō to chiiki shakai}. p. 183.
  \item \textsuperscript{560} The \textit{Jingikan} (神祇官), the Council of Kami Affairs was established through the Taihō Code of 701, and exercised control over Kami affairs and religious rites. It stood opposite the Dajōkan (太政官) or Council of State. This Jingikan was resurrected in the fourth month of 1868 following the Meiji Restoration, and presided over Kami affairs, rites, and shrines. In 1871, it was reduced in status and was renamed Jingishō (神祇省) or Ministry of Kami Affairs, and was abolished the following year.
  \item \textsuperscript{561} Ibid. p. 204.
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instructions. In the summer of 1869, Iwane received orders from the domain which he passed onto shrines in his jurisdiction, and he was also notified that he was freed from the authority of the Saishōin temple and its priests. Iwane commenced touring shrines under his control, making sure that there were “no obvious signs of mixing [Shinto and Buddhism],” and his non-rigorous stance reflected attitudes of both the domain office and the Jingikan in Tokyo at the time, which emphasized that “the appearance of mixing” be avoided.\textsuperscript{563}

By summer and autumn of 1870, Iwane experienced frustration over the question of conducting shrine rites. This was because Buddhist priests were now prohibited from performing rites at “Shinto” shrines, the Yoshida shrine which granted him license and training had lost prestige in early Meiji, and the Hirata academy which was expected to take a lead role in ritual matters was actually in a state of bitter conflict between the factions of Fukuba Bisei and Hirata Kanetane within the Jingikan.\textsuperscript{564} Despite correspondence with Jingikan, he was neither made aware of the tumultuous state of the Jingikan, nor received instruction on shrine rituals. In autumn of 1870, bureaucrats were sent from Tokyo to their new appointments in Hirosaki, as part of domainal reforms, and Iwane was dismissed from his post of shakegashira by these newly arrived officials loyal to the central government. Because these bureaucrats were hardly qualified to carry out religious reform, however, Iwane was reinstated, and this time, he carried out what became a more rigorous policy on Shinto shrines. A tutelary shrine containing Buddhist symbols would have to be removed and transferred to the Saishōin temple, while having its “original” deity reinstated. On the other hand, shrines that were not tutelary (ujigami) were to be destroyed, and their Shinto symbols were removed and transferred to the closest tutelary shrine. In 1870, 246 out of 252 non-tutelary shrines in Hirosaki were destroyed.

\textsuperscript{563} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{564} Breen, pp. 244-245.
Shugendō practitioners and the shrines and temples they controlled, were also targeted: practitioners were forced to cede shrines to shrine priests, and Shugendō practitioners who suffered financially were allowed to seek permission to “convert” to Shinto priests. Iwane and other shrine priests faced financial hardships as shrine stipends were cut drastically, caused by the strains of domainal reform. This caused multiple protests by Iwane and other priests against the Shrine and Temple Office (*shaji goyōsho*) of Hirosaki in late 1870. Iwane also petitioned to the prefectural authorities in the eleventh month of 1871 to provide financial assistance to priests who were expelled from their shrines.  

Iwane was sorely disappointed that the government was evidently not fulfilling its promises of *saisei itchi*, or the “unity of rites and government,” as shrine priests faced cuts in financial support, and priests displaced from their shrines also struggled. The domain proceeded to dismiss many long-serving priests in favour of “skilled” new priests who would be salaried to carry out state ritual. Iwane too was relieved of his role in the twelfth month of 1871. That day, he made an impassioned statement to the prefecture, citing that he was the thirteenth generation of Ono priests to serve at Hachiman shrine, but that now he was being suddenly and sadly dismissed. He admits to working diligently and tirelessly, stating, “I can not [sic.] recall having laboured so hard or suffered so much in all my life.”

Iwane’s experience of *shinbutsu bunri* to the end of 1871, as demonstrated through studies by Tanaka and Breen, shows how local shrine priests experienced uncertainty and hardship, even while being the agents of national policy at the local scene, because they still represented the local religious tradition from the perspective of the central government. Iwane was disappointed to discover that the promises of Hirata kokugaku’s “new dawn” were denied by the conflicts within the Jingikan that controlled the shrines nationwide. Neither was the proposal

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565 Ibid. p. 247.
566 Ibid. p. 248.
for *saisei itchi* met, as local priests including Iwane were cut off financially, and in many cases dismissed from their long-held positions of many generations.

**Shimozawa Yasumi: Immortalizing “Tsugaru”**

While Osari Nakaakira and Ono Iwane participated in carrying out *shinbutsu bunri*, as a part of the state’s religious reform policy in the local community, another member of their community, Shimozawa Yasumi, was commissioned by the final daimyo Tsuguakira to edit and compile histories and poetry anthologies to preserve the memory of the Tsugaru family and the domain they ruled. Shimozawa Yasumi (下澤保躬) was born in 1838 (Tenpō 9) as the eldest son to a samurai of Hirosaki domain, Shimozawa Washizō (鷲蔵). Yasumi studied poetry under Osari Nakaakira, and studied nativism under Hirata Kanetane, officially registering as a Hirata disciple on the twenty-eighth day of the eleventh month in 1869 (Meiji 2), with a formal introduction from Ariyo. Shimozawa was a poet, scholar, Shinto priest, and historian. He was appointed a scribe for the Hirosaki domainal residence in Kyoto (弘前藩京都詰合公用方取次役並筆生), and in this role served Lord Konoe Tadahiro (近衛忠熈 1808-1898), under whom he also studied poetry. As discussed in chapter six, Hirosaki domain’s close connection with the noble Konoe family, was instrumental in influencing the domain’s decision to support the Imperial cause in the Boshin War and Restoration. Rosen sent a copy of his *Anmon kikō zu* (*Anmon travelogue and images*) to Konoe Tadahiro in Kyoto through Yasumi, and was, in return,

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567 Yasumi also goes by his common name of Hatsusaburō (八三郎), and his pen names of Kan’un (閑雲), Kyōkorō (鏡湖樓), Kain (花蔭), Genfū (玄風).

568 Miyamoto, pp. 191-192.
honoured with the gift of a poem on a tanzaku sheet. Later, Yasumi served as scribe (accountant) for records of Hirosaki domain shrine and temple, and also served as priest at the Mount Iwaki Shrine. Eventually, Yasumi was commissioned by the domain’s twelfth and final daimyo Tsugaru Tsuguakira to edit various histories and poetry anthologies of the Tsugaru family and Hirosaki domain.

On a national scale, Shimozawa Yasumi made a major contribution to Japanese literature by helping to popularize the annual New Year Poetry Ceremony (Outa kai hajime 御歌会始) held at the Imperial Court. After consultation with Fukuba Bisei, Yasumi in the twelfth month of 1873 (Meiji 6) submitted a petition (建白書), care of Bisei, to the Imperial Household Ministry (宮内省), urging the acceptance of poems by commoners in the annual ceremony. As a result, in the first month of the following year, the Ministry issued a notice, “On the occasion of the New Year Poetry Celebration in the first month of every year, poetry submitted indiscriminate of officials (官員), peers (華士族), and commoners (平民) will be collected and recorded (採録), and offered to the monarch for his review.” In this way, Yasumi contributed to making the emperor more accessible to the common people through poetry composition and ritual.

The very act of Yasumi editing histories and poetry anthologies commissioned by daimyo Tsuguakira, represented an exercise in immortalizing the Tsugaru daimyo as well as the history of Hirosaki domain during the fading early modern period. A representative poetry anthology

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569 Hirao Rosen letter to Shimozawa Yasumi, dated 11th day, sixth month, 1869 (Meiji 2), Aomori kenshi. p. 617.
571 Ibid. p. 10. As Miyamoto outlines, the New Year Poetry Ceremony was limited to high ranking poets until the end of the Tokugawa period. However, from 1869 (Meiji) officials from the Meiji government also submitted poems, from 1870 Imperial officials (勅任官) were permitted to contribute poems, from 1872 junior officials (判任官) came to participate also. Ibid. p. 187.
which Yasumi was commissioned to edit was *Tsugaru kokin taisei kashū* (『津軽古今大成歌集』) or *Collection of Old and New Poems of Tsugaru*. This collection is comprised of twenty volumes of thirty-one-syllable *waka* poems composed from the mid-sixteenth century through to the early years of Meiji, and represents through the arrangement and ordering of poems the socio-political standing of important historical figures within the domain. Volume one is a collection of poems by the founding figures of Hirosaki domainal history, beginning with Grand Minister of State Konoe Sakihisa (近衛前久 1536-1612) (太政大臣従一位前嗣公近衛龍山公), head of the noble Konoe family, and Ōura Tamenobu, or “Fujiwara Tamenobu” (従四位下藤原為信朝臣) known as founder and first daimyo of Hirosaki domain. These are then followed by several poems by second daimyo, Tsugaru Nobuhira (r. 1607-1631 従五位下藤原信枚朝臣), third daimyo, Nobuyoshi (信義), then suddenly, twelfth and final daimyo Tsuguakira (正四位勲三等藤原承昭朝臣). The following volumes contain more *waka* poems by former daimyo, daimyo’s wives, domainal samurai, and various notable figures of Hirosaki domainal history.

The first of the Hirata disciple community to appear in this set are those of highest social rank—the samurai, who also served as Shinto priests, beginning with Inomata Shigenaga (Hisayoshi 猪俣繁永（久吉）) in volume five. Next is Osari Nakaakira, again, an integral member of the Tsugaru disciple community though not officially a registered disciple, whose poems appear at the beginning of volume six. Volume fifteen of the set carries poems by the

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573 Konoe Sakihisa (近衛前久 1536-1612) Court noble who lived from the Azuchi-Momoyama to Tokugawa periods. Head of the Konoe noble family, one of the five families descending from the aristocratic Fujiwara clan. Served as Grand Minister of State. He was well versed in Chinese and Japanese poetry.
574 For a general history on the founding of Hirosaki domain and Tamenobu’s role, see Chapter Three.
townspeople among the Tsugaru discipleship, headed by Tsuruya Ariyo, Ueda Masatake (植田正健), and Hirao Rosen.  

This effort to immortalize figures of domainal history is also seen in a biographical collection edited by Yasumi—Tsugaru han kyū kidenrui (『津軽藩旧記伝類』) or Biographies from Former Tsugaru Domain—which also displays the Tsugaru authorities’ “official” categorization of individuals from domainal history and assessments of their social rank. In 1874 (Meiji 4), the last daimyo Tsuguakira ordered Yasumi, Higuchi Tateyoshi (樋口建良), Kanematsu Seigon (兼松成言), and others to consult various documents in order to compile biographies of the Tsugaru lords from the domain’s foundation until its abolition in 1871.  

This work, with a similar but slightly different title, Tsugaru han kyū kirui (『津軽藩旧記類』) or Personal Records from Former Tsugaru Domain, highlights major events and accomplishments by the Tsugaru lords and was completed in 1877. These “main” volumes were followed by “successive” volumes devoted to daimyo wives and domainal vassals, in a series entitled Tsugaru han kyū kidenrui (Biographies from Former Tsugaru Domain).  

Eight volumes make up this latter half of “Biographies,” and the first two volumes are devoted to nobles (公族), with the second volume also introducing wives of the daimyo, while volumes three to six write about the lives of domainal samurai. The seventh volume recognizes individuals who excelled in literature, military strategy, archery, horsemanship, spearing, and cannonry, while volume eight

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575 The 47 poems by Hirao Rosen contained in this collection were selected from among the 116 poems in Hirao Rosen kashū. See my “Hirao Rosen cho Hirao Rosen kashū ni tsuite: (Honkoku) Hirosaki shiritsu toshokanzō Hirao Rosen kashū,” Hirosaki daigaku kokugo bungaku. Vol. 32 (March 20, 2011) pp. 54-81.


577 As Narita explains in his introduction, this set of main and successive volumes were kept in the Tsugaru household and remained unpublished, and they are presumed lost, perhaps destroyed in fires during World War II. The transcription I have used, published by Kokusho kankōkai, is based on a manuscript archived in Hirosaki City Library. This manuscript was copied from the original lent to the library by the Tsugaru family, as part of the Ministry of Education’s (Monbushō) recognition of this library’s excellence in 1928. Ibid.
recognizes those accomplished in ceremonial rites, filial piety, and promotion of agriculture, as well as physicians, *waka* poets, writers, artists, Buddhist priests, tea masters, artisans, and *haikai* poets. 164 major figures and over 280 in total, including lesser individuals, are taken up in this valuable, comprehensive account, a “who’s who” in early modern Tsugaru history.

Similar to the poetry anthology seen above, this “official” biographical survey also introduces the Hirata disciples toward the end, beginning again with Inomata Hisayoshi Shigenaga in the “Literature Section” of volume seven, followed by samurai and Shinto priest Osari Nakaakira in the “Waka Poets Section” of volume eight. Later in that same volume, Hirao Rosen is introduced in the “Artists Section,” followed by his disciple artist Mikami Sennen (三千年) and art, writing, and literary teacher Momokawa Gakuan (百川学庵). Based on anecdotal detail offered in this relatively substantial passage devoted to Rosen’s life and achievements, it is evident Yasumi and the other editors consulted the biography *Rosenshi*, edited by Mikami Senshi in 1877, which they cite as “*Rosen koden*” (『魯仙古伝略』), and the second half is credited to friend and fellow Hirata disciple, Iwama Shitatari. 578

Tsugaru group leader Tsuruya Ariyo is the fourth and last of the group taken up here, appearing toward the end, in the “Haikai Poets Section.” Yasumi is credited for editing this section on Ariyo, and he states about the group leader:

Ariyo favoured Imperial Studies, and in 1857 (Ansei 4), he became a disciple of Hirata “the great scholar” (Daigaku 大学) Kanetane, along with his disciple Imamura Mitane, whose common name is Yōtarō, and several others. They cooperated with each other, and invested thousands of gold pieces, purchasing books and largely expanding Imperial Studies. 579

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579 Ibid. p. 488.
The praise for Ariyo’s endeavors in transmitting Hirata kokugaku to Hirosaki, notwithstanding, his appearance in the end of this biographical collection reinforced the notion explored in chapter three, that despite Ariyo’s leadership role within the voluntary association of the Tsugaru group, within Hirosaki domain he was seen as a townsperson of relative low social standing, albeit, one of considerable cultural accomplishment.

**Hirao Rosen: The Twilight Years**

In contrast to Nakaakira and Iwane who carried out official state religious policy in Hirosaki, or Yasumi who was officially commissioned to compile poetry and histories of the local scene, Rosen of commoner class had to navigate his own way through changing times. In recollections of her grandfather, Rosen’s granddaughter Doki Yasuko (土岐安子) recalls that Rosen in his sixties, arose early in the morning, and always washed his face with cold water, never using hot water even in cold weather. She noticed that he paid particularly close attention in washing his eyes. Rosen would then go to the living room ( ima), where he would kneel, close his eyes, and clap his hands in reverence to the kami (敬神). Breakfast would be served on a dining table ( shokutaku), and it was Yasuko’s role to bring out his tobacco and pipe. After his meal, Rosen smoked his pipe, then entered his study until night, finally retiring at nine o’clock. He kept this exact routine every day, which, Yasuko remarks, was not always productive, as commissioned paintings would often pile up. When Rosen’s wife pressed him

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580 In a personal view of his grandfather, Rosen’s grandson Mikami Omoikiyo (三上思清) recollects that in the early Meiji years his grandfather enjoyed drinking tea, as well as sake, in “modest” amounts of two cups (gō). Rosen’s favourite fish and seafoods included perch ( suzuki) sashimi, squid, raw herring roe, carp (funu) wrapped in kelp ( konbu), and cod grilled in miso. His favourite foods also included nattō (fermented soy bean) soup, tofu, eggplant, bean sprouts, and thinly cut udon noodles. He rarely ate between meals, kept a conscientious diet, and maintained good health. Rosen was known to be frugal, using paper with care, reusing one piece multiple times. Nakamura, p. 43.
about this, he would scold her for their lack of appreciation for an artist’s struggle, saying, “Do you think I can paint just as long as my hands are free? It is not that simple!”

Yasuko insists that her grandfather studied not for its own sake, but that he enjoyed his studies, and that it allowed him to forget his worries and aging. He would forget fatigue and idleness, by devoting himself to his painting and writing from morning to night.

Lessons on Japanese history were another highlight in Yasuko’s memories of her grandfather. Interested in history herself, Yasuko would bring a history book with her to the dinner table. Once she finished eating, she would ask Rosen to read from the book. Yasuko did not consider this “studying,” but rather enjoyed listening to him read, then comment on the passage—her grandfather was entertaining and easy to understand, because his explanations were thorough. Seeing his granddaughter shed tears of indignation when learning about the Ashikaga clan’s disloyalty which brought an end to Emperor Go-Daigo’s Kemmu Rule of 1333 to 1336, and a division of the imperial throne into the Northern and Southern Courts, impressed Rosen who also became teary-eyed and remarked: “How precious! [This history] is not just a matter of the past. It is something graceful that is upheld even now with painstaking effort.”

He then proceeded to recite the 14th-century words of Kitabatake Chikafusa:

> Japan is the divine country. The heavenly ancestor it was who first laid its foundations, and the Sun Goddess left her descendants to reign over it forever and ever. This is true only of our country, and nothing similar may be found in foreign lands. That is why it is called the divine country.

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581 Nakamura, p. 49.
583 Ibid. pp. 58.
Yasuko was impressed by these words which her grandfather urged her to learn and memorize, agreeing that Japan was indeed a precious country. Later, she was even more moved to learn they were the opening lines of Jinnō shōtōki (『神皇正統記』) or Chronicles of the Direct Descent of Gods and Sovereigns by Kitabatake Chikafusa (1293-1354).

Rosen was not financially affluent enough to purchase books, and so he borrowed from various people, and copied by hand portions he thought were essential, as seen in his 150-volume Kōsai shōshi (Kōsai’s records). When questions arose, he consulted with specialists on those fields, and pursued his inquiry until he had obtained his answer. He visited Kanematsu Sekkyo (兼松石居) twice in the same day to look at his books. Yasuko also observes that although Rosen professed his devotion to the way of the gods (惟神の道), he respected his wife’s Buddhist faith, and did not object to her offering food and water on the south window of their home to commemorate unmourned spirits of the deceased (無縁仏), or to visiting the temple.585

In private worship and in his writings, Rosen expresses his faith and devotion to the kami, while also marveling at technological advancement of the modern period. The twenty-third poem in Rosen’s poetry anthology, Hirao Rosen kashū, preceded by the introduction, “Viewing various small objects using a microscope,” demonstrates his reaction to the wonders of seeing objects in magnified view:

| Tama chiwahu | The divine works of |
| Takami musubi no | the blessed spirit of |
| Kami waza wa | Takami musubi |
| Tae ni kusubi ni | are so wondrous and mysterious |
| gyō tarawashite | they cannot be described |
| yū ni iwarezu586 | even by adding a line |

585 Nakamura, p. 51.
This poem captures Rosen’s excitement at viewing objects in fine detail through a microscope lens. Yet, while enjoying the “wonders” of modern science and technology, Rosen’s actual poem focuses on the “wondrous and mysterious” nature of the “divine works” of one of the three creator deities Takami musubi no kami, thus, shifting the focus from this Western scientific import to the spiritual wonders caused by Japan’s indigenous deities. By adding the sixth line, comprised of seven syllables, this waka poem takes on the form of bussokuseki katai (仏足石歌体)\textsuperscript{587}, and further emphasizes the awe and appreciation expressed toward this deity’s “divine works.”

A major highlight in Rosen’s later years was having his art work viewed and praised by the emperor. On June 2, 1876 (Meiji 9), Emperor Meiji left Tokyo to embark on an imperial visit through the Tohoku region, accompanied by 230 people, including cabinet ministers, official historians, chamberlains, and physicians. He arrived in Aomori on July 14, for his tour of the prefecture.\textsuperscript{588} On this occasion, the emperor viewed Rosen’s artwork he had offered up for exhibit, including “Anmon bakufu no zu” (Anmon Falls image), “Nishi hama no zu” (Nishi hama image), and “Zue Iwaki san” (Image of Mount Iwaki), and praised Rosen’s works. Rosen excitedly composed the following waka poem on this occasion:

\begin{verbatim}
Waga kakishi
mono nari nagara
ootoshiya
Akitsu Mikami no
mite ni furureba\textsuperscript{589}

going

Although it is
something I drew
how precious it is!
because it touched the hand
of the Living God
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{587} The bussokuseki katai (仏足石歌体), literally, the “poetic form of the Buddha’s footsteps,” is a waka poem consisting of lines of 5/7/5/7/7/7 syllables. Poems commemorating the life of Shakyamuni Buddha were composed in this form and inscribed on tablets at the Yakushiji Temple in Nara.


\textsuperscript{589} Nakamura Ryōnoshin, ed. Hirao Rosen Okina, p. 14.
Rosen remarks that although these images of various scenic locales throughout Tsugaru are his own artistic creation, they are given value by virtue of touching the hand of the “Living God,” Emperor Meiji. This poem reveals Rosen’s sheer awe of having his art work viewed and appreciated in person by the emperor. After many years of “Imperial Studies,” such a “personal” experience for someone of commoner class such as Rosen became possible for the first time in the Meiji period.

In 1875 (Meiji 8) at age 68, Rosen became seriously ill. His disciples were pained by this, and arranged an event at the Tenmangū shrine to celebrate their teacher’s life (壽筵), which hundreds of literati and painters attended, joined by thousands more from the public. Venders who set up shop outdoors on that day profited greatly. A book comprising paintings, poetry, and writings from that day, along with a byōbu screen were offered to the shrine. Rosen, overjoyed by the occasion, composed haiku and waka poems. Rosen lived another five years after that, and died on February 21, 1880 (Meiji 13), at age seventy-three. His funeral was held in Shinto style, and his grave was dug at the Teishōji temple in Shintera machi in Hirosaki. Following the deaths of Ariyo in the fourth month of 1871, and Rosen in 1880, their disciples held a gathering for painting and composing Chinese, waka, and haiku poetry (書画詩歌俳句). Disciples of the two men then built stone monuments adjacent to each other in honour of their teachers in the precincts of the Tenmangū shrine in Nishi Shigemori in Hirosaki, which fulfilled a promise made between Ariyo’s disciples and their teacher during his lifetime. It was on October 25th of the same year 1880 that Ibukinoya head Hirata Kanetane died at age eighty-two. And so, just as Rosen’s passing marked the end of an era in kokugaku studies in Hirosaki, so too did Kanetane’s death signal the end of an era in the Hirata academy as well as in the national network throughout Japan.
Examining Rosen in his later years during Meiji, we see a man who is less active and vibrant than he was leading up to the Restoration, when he traveled Tsugaru and Ezo, and wrote a series of voluminous scholarly texts. Naturally, Rosen is slowed down by aging. Yet, after feeling disappointment over the realization that Japan in Meiji would not be built solely on Shinto-\textit{kokugaku} thought and “indigenous” institutions, but that Western ideas and institutions would be incorporated in state-building, Rosen appears to have grudgingly accepted a fate for local and national society which did not meet the promises of a “new dawn,” heralded by Hirata \textit{kokugaku} in the Restoration and early Meiji years. After his journey to Ezo in 1855, and his eye-opening encounter with the West and observations of Imperial Japan, Qing China, and local Ezo, Rosen neither confronts the West nor the world for that matter, but deeply engages in the dynamic of Tsugaru and Imperial Japan, in efforts to locate his local community in a larger spiritual landscape. Now in his later years, when he again sees the West, this time in its expanding influence over Meiji Japan, and the reality that people in Hirosaki and throughout Japan are abandoning \textit{kokugaku} and Imperial studies, he appears to similarly avoid any real confrontation or engagement with the West or the world. Instead, he retreats again to himself and his immediate environment, continuing his artwork and scholarship, and now teaching neighbourhood children and his own grandchildren on the Imperial history of Japan.

As Kojima Yasunori has described, Rosen was indeed not a man who took up courageous action, like the \textit{shishi}, or “men of will,” nor one who championed a political cause like many imperial loyalist activities within the Hirata academy.\footnote{Kojima Yasunori. “Bakumatsuki Tsugaru no minzokugaku: Hirao Rosen—Hirata Atsutane to Yanagita Kunio no aida,” pp. 27-28.} In addition to being a painter, Rosen was a scholar who until the end pursued truth through scholarship. Through Hirata \textit{kokugaku}, he conducted inquiry on spirits, the human soul, and the spiritual realm. Although its date is
unknown, Rosen composed the following poem, number seventy in his *Hirao Rosen kashū*, introduced by the words, “Upon copying an image of Old Man Hirata”:

| Misugata wa | Though I may capture |
| oyooso utsushi | his image |
| matsuredomo | generally |
| utshi e gataki | the Great Man’s heart |
| Ushi no mikokoro⁵⁹¹ | is difficult to capture |

Rosen states that as an artist he can copy the likeness of his teacher Atsutane to some degree from another image. However, he humbly admits that as a scholar and disciple, the depths and extent of the “Great Man’s heart”—his thought and intentions—are actually difficult to ascertain. We can see that compiling *Yūfu shinron* was Rosen’s attempt to “capture” “the Great Man’s heart” within his own environment in Tsugaru, and he was highly driven and motivated in this project. His mental, emotional, and spiritual investments in Atsutane’s teachings, also proved to be the reason for his struggle and even disappointment in facing changing times in the Meiji years.

In concluding this chapter, I would like to pose the question, what was legacy of the Hirata disciples in Hirosaki domain and Aomori prefecture? I examine an important document which demonstrates the lasting effects of Hirata *kokugaku* in Hirosaki, in the final years of the nineteenth century. A “Namelist of Festival Participants” or “Shukusaiten yūshi meibo” (祝祭典有志名簿) dated thirty years after the Restoration in the fifth month of 1898 (Meiji 31) shows that Osari Nakaakira led annual festivals to venerate the Four Great Men (shiushi 四大人) of *Kokugaku*, well after the initial Shinto Reforms carried out in early Meiji. This document

narrates that every autumn, the members worshipped and praised the merits of the spirit of Kada Azumamaro, Kamo Mabuchi, Motoori Norinaga, and Hirata Atsutane. It proposes to enact the festival again in the upcoming 1898 year, and credits these Four Great Men for establishing “Ancient Studies” (古学) or Kokugaku, editing books, and for “elucidating the Imperial Way (皇道) of the Imperial Country (皇国).” The piece praises the success of the Great Men’s spirits in alerting people to the deception of others, allowing for the intense outburst of patriotism, and the flourishing of the Yamato spirit (Yamato damashii 倭魂).

Nakaakira identifies the effects of the kokugakusha’s, or nativist scholars’, endeavors on the society of Imperial Japan at large, asserting:

> It is not falsehood to say that achieving total victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894 and 1895 (Meiji 27, 28), and illuminating all countries with Imperial authority (皇威) can be attributed to the truth of awakening others to the significance of being the people of the Imperial country.⁵⁹³

After lauding the Great Men of kokugaku for triggering an uplift in morale and the flourishing of the Yamato spirit among the people of Japan, Nakaakira credits their “awakening” to their nature as the “Imperial country” for their major military victory over China in 1894 and 1895. Historically, this victory in the Sino-Japanese War represents for many Japan’s emergence as a world power, and their “illuminating all countries with Imperial authority,” points to Japan’s imperialist expansion and influence which intensify from 1895 onward. Even in Aomori prefecture, Nakaakira makes this connection between the spiritual influence of the kokugaku scholars on military and imperialist successes. He proposes to the members the joint worship (合祀) of the Great Men’s spirits, and asks for fifty sen to worship as past years, and to pay an additional ten sen for each ancestor they wish to venerate. The supporters (補助員) listed are

⁵⁹³ Ibid.
Kudō Mafumi (工藤眞文), Hayashi Bunnoshin (林文之進), and Shimozawa Tadakazu (下澤忠一), and the endorsers (賛成員) are Kikuchi Tatei (菊池楯衛), Doki Yoshihiro (土岐吉広), and Tsuruya Toshiyo (鶴舎年節), son of Ariyo. This impressive list includes Shimozawa Yasumi’s eldest son Tadakazu, the “father” of apple farming in Aomori in Kikuchi, and Tsugaru group leader Ariyo’s son, Tsuruya Toshiyo, showing that this group’s veneration of the kokugaku forerunners and their activities influenced later generations as well as notable members of local society.

Conclusion

This chapter chronicles the history of Hirosaki and its transition into Aomori prefecture in the Meiji period, documents the activities of the Tsugaru group, and considers their historical legacy. I survey the changes undergone in local society as it transforms from a domain within the bakuhans system, through gradual stages, into a prefecture in the new modern state. I highlight the leadership role of final domainal lord and first governor Tsugaru Tsuguakira, and outline an increased adoption of Western learning and institutions, as reflected in the transformation of the domainal school Keikokan into the modern academy Tōōgijuku. In regards to the Tsugaru group, Tsuruya Ariyo continued to serve as group leader and administrator, and was acknowledged for promoting studies on the Imperial Way, by his peers, the local community, and Ibukinoya head Hirata Kanetane. Tsugaru group members were active through the Restoration and into early Meiji, as were their fellow Hirata disciples nationwide, as the academy enjoyed sudden growth in

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594 Kikuchi Tatei (菊池楯衛 1846-1918) Hirosaki domainal samurai and agriculturalist. He was appointed forest surveyor for Aomori prefecture, and began test-planting apples and other Western fruits and vegetables. Researched and taught on apple farming. Known as the “father” or founder of apple cultivation in Aomori.
the first years of Meiji. However, Ariyo’s death in 1871 coincided with a sharp decline in expansion for the national academy, and ended an era of collective scholarly activity by the Tsugaru group, with the loss of their leader.

The remaining members were nevertheless active in their respective fields, some carrying out modernization, while others experienced the struggle brought on by modernity. Ono Iwane and Osari Nakaakira led the implementation of the Meiji policy of Separating Kami from Buddhas (Shinbutsu bunri) in Hirosaki, carrying out a lasting reorganization of shrines and temples. Shimozawa Yasumi memorialized the legacy of the ruling Tsugaru family and domain’s history, when he compiled histories and poetic collections, commissioned by final daimyo and first governor Tsuguakira. Hirao Rosen, corresponded often with Yasumi, and closely monitored the transformation of local and national society. Rosen deeply lamented the Meiji government and society’s turn away from Shinto and “indigenous” ideas and institutions in constructing the state, and deplored the adoption of Western thought and systems. Such developments paralleled kokugaku’s decline across Japan from around 1871, after a few years of rapid growth in early Meiji. Despite major change in society, Rosen continued his artwork and scholarship, and opened up in his backyard an academy to educate neighbourhood children on the Imperial history of Japan. For Rosen, seeking to “capture” Master Atsutane’s “heart” was a source of great motivation and purpose leading up to the Restoration, but after discovering the failed promises of the “new dawn,” he struggles over the difficulty of attaining to ideals which appear to much of society, to have become outdated and irrelevant. Many years after the deaths of Ariyo and Rosen, the legacy of Hirata kokugaku in Tsugaru is seen in a festival commemorating the Great Men of kokugaku and praising their spiritual contributions to society, an event conducted by Nakaakira, descendents of other Tsugaru nativists, and notable members of local society.
Chapter 9: Conclusion

To conclude this study, I shall restate the questions posed at the outset which have directed our discussion to this point. I asked historical questions surrounding community, the individual, and modernity: How did commoners in early modern Japan conceive of the community they inhabited in terms of both their local domain, as well as the larger state? How did individuals identify with these local or “national” communities? And finally, in what ways did individuals experience the transition and transformation of their surroundings from an early modern community to a modern nation?

In scholarship to date, kokugaku, literally the “study of the country, or nation,” has been studied primarily in the singular context of the “country” or “nation” of Japan. In this sense, Ernest Gellner’s assertion that, “It is nationalism which engenders nations,” has lent us insight in considering the importance of nationalism—the “political principle” which maintains that “the political and national unit should be congruent”—as a precursor to the creation of the nation, in our discussion of Hirata kokugaku within the context of transition from early modern to modern Japan. The intellectual exercise pursued by the Hirata disciples in Tsugaru was indeed an “imagining of community”—in the words of Benedict Anderson—and I attempted to demonstrate the “style” in which they imagined their own specific communities.

As an alternative to the conventional approach toward studying nativism, which has focused primarily on the imagining of Japan, the current study has adopted a new perspective toward the discourse of nativist scholars, by shedding light on the multiplicity of community, not limited to the “nation” of “Japan.” As demonstrated in our theoretical surveys of Prasenjit Duara, Mark Ravina, Ronald P. Toby, and others, the early modern notion of community and, more specifically, “country,” is far more multi-dimensional and multi-leveled, encompassing the
“country” of Tokugawa Japan, which may to some degree coincide with an emerging Imperial Japan centered on the emperor, and “countries” of provinces and domains within the *bakuhan* system. We are now increasingly alerted to the multiplicity of community in Japan, in the context of “country,” state, and nation. In this sense, although *kokugaku* broadly refers to the study of Japan, and more narrowly, the study of classical texts to glean an ancient Japanese way, this new realization of the multiple communities, accordingly, calls our attention to the need to study Japan and *kokugaku* in more nuanced and multi-faceted terms.

For the above stated purpose, the *kokugaku* of Hirata Atsutane and his academy become increasingly important as a subject of study. In addition to its “national” dimension, Hirata *kokugaku* carries with it a strong local element, in its scholarly and religious focus. From its emergence in the early nineteenth century, to its prominence surrounding the Restoration and early Meiji years, and its gradual decline thereafter, Hirata *kokugaku* played a significant role during a historical period during which community underwent major transition, and individuals and groups living with traditional values were forced to face the questions and challenges of modernity. And as aware as Atsutane was of Japan, its local community, and even the globe, he also showed concern for commoners, as evidenced by his ethnographic study of common individuals, and his recruitment of the commoner classes—agriculturalists and merchant townspeople—as his disciples. The new Hirata materials made available over the past decade have accentuated these features of Hirata *kokugaku*, to spur a “Hirata boom” which continues to this day.

In previous studies of Hirata *kokugaku*, the local scene did undoubtedly receive attention, but primarily as a source of disciple recruitment where agrarian villages were connected to the Ancient Way and incorporated into a larger community through Hirata nativist ideology, as seen
in Harry Harootunian’s work, or as a stage for disciple activity and participation in a social
movement leading up to the Restoration, as demonstrated by Anne Walthall. The current study
examines the local scene of Tsugaru as very much an “imagined community” in the minds of
Hirata disciples inhabiting the region and active in local society. Susan Burns shows how
nativists “imagined communities” of Japan before the emergence of the modern nation, but the
current study sheds light on the dynamic between the two conceived “countries” of Tsugaru and
Imperial Japan from early modern times. While Wilburn Hansen explores Atsutane’s
ethnography of the other world, in this study, I pursue the relationship between Hirata nativism
and the early modern ethnography conducted by the Tsugaru disciples, in part to understand the
dynamic between the local scene of Tsugaru and the “national” scene of Imperial Japan. The
spirit world of yūmeikai—a major subject of focus in Mark McNally’s work—is also examined
here, with an emphasis on how it was conceived in the local context of Tsugaru. Furthermore, as
Endō Jun and others endeavour to place Hirata nativism and the Ibukinoya academy in the
context of early modern Japanese society, I too have drawn on the new Hirata materials to place
this discourse of Tsugaru and Imperial Japan within the social context of early modern Tsugaru
and Japan.

Thus, the posthumous disciples of Hirata Atsutane in Tsugaru have provided fresh new
data, and have served as a strong case study for the transition of a local community from early
modern to modern state, by virtue of the fact that: (1) these local intellectuals left various
records—many from commoners’ perspective—of their observations and experiences during a
period of modernization; (2) they lived in a region with strong representations of local identity,
and a domain that showed allegiance first to the Tokugawa bakufu then to the imperial court in
the Boshin War of 1868 to 1869; and (3) these intellectuals, within their local settings, engaged
in studies of Hirata kokugaku, which by the mid-nineteenth century had become increasingly ideological in its identity formation of Imperial Japan. With the above historical problems in mind, I conducted analysis of various primary materials produced by Atsutane and the Tsugaru disciples, hitherto overlooked in Japan and new to Western scholarship, in order to contribute new insights to discussions on community, the individual, and modernity, as well as new insights on the dynamics between local and national identities.

Let us now recap this discussion as it has progressed through the main body from chapters two through eight, while I highlight key findings and state final conclusions. In chapter two, I provided a biographical sketch of the life of Hirata Atsutane, and outlined his thought and major works. I noted some key elements in Atsutane’s life and thought that find parallel in the case of his posthumous disciples in Tsugaru. In the early stages of Atsutane’s scholarship, from 1805 through to 1820, he formulated his views on spirits, spirituality, and the invisible spiritual realm of kakuriyo, through his major works such as Shin kishinron and Kishin shinron (New Treatise on Spirits), as well as Tama no mihashira (August Pillar of the Spirit), wherein he drew upon ideas of Motoori Norinaga and Hattori Nakatsune. Following these works, Atsutane produced ethnographic studies on the basis of accounts of the spirit world by commoners, such as Senkyō ibun (Strange Tidings from the World of Immortals) of 1821 and Katsugorō saiseiki (A Recorded Account of Katsugoro’s Rebirth) in 1822, as if to validate his eschatological and cosmological theories with these cases of real life informants.

A concern for the north is evident in the scholarship of Atsutane, who was a native of Akita domain in the northeastern province of Dewa. Atsutane was aware of threats on national security from Russia through the northern island of Ezo, as apparent in his compilation of Chishima no shiranami (White Waves of Kurils) and his many study materials on the Russian
language, made public in the last decade. I also cited a number of passages from his seminal
texts, *Tama no mihashira* and *Koshiden* (*Lectures on Ancient History*), in which he makes
cultural and linguistic references to Akita based on early memory, in interpreting the cryptic
language and imagery of “Japanese” ancient history and divine age. Astutane furthered the
religious element in *kokugaku* scholarship, in both thought and practice. This point is well
demonstrated in his liturgical text, *Maiasa shinhaishiki* (*Morning Order for Worship*) which was
the Hirata academy’s most highly published work with over 13,000 copies produced by early
Meiji, and served to transmit the religiosity of Hirata *kokugaku* to his disciples throughout Japan.

I also described the national network of the Ibukinoya academy, during Atsutane’s time,
and its succession and expansion under management by his son Kanetane, and grandson
Nobutane. To give a sense of representative disciple communities, I described key members and
activities of groups in Shimōsa, Shinano, and Akita. Such characterizations of Atsutane, his
*kokugaku* scholarship, and his national network of disciples set the stage for our discussion, from
the following chapter, on the community of posthumous Hirata disciples in Tsugaru.

Chapter three opened with a broad historical survey of Hirosaki domain in late-Tokugawa
times. We focused here on the conditions which led to change in local agricultural and capitalist
economies, military defence of Ezo against Russia and other Western powers, social life,
domainal education, and religious practice. We documented the reception of Hirata *kokugaku*,
beginning with daimyo Tsugaru Yasuchika’s invitation to Atsutane to give lectures in 1820.
Tsuruya Ariyo is introduced as leader of the Tsugaru group of Hirata disciples, through his
correspondence with academy head Kanetane, his inaugural enrolment, and his introduction of
several locals to the academy in Edo. Ariyo managed the group, making book purchases, leading
study groups on poetry and the ancient Way, and continually exchanging information with Kanetane and Nobutane.

In order to identify characteristics within the Tsugaru group, we compared their case with those of communities in neighbouring domains, Morioka and Akita. I introduced Hirata disciple Kikuchi Masahiko of Morioka and his *Kōso kyūsho kō*, or *On the Palace of Imperial Ancestors*, and Ariyo’s refutation of this work. The large group of disciples in Akita maintained strong ties to the Hirata family, augmented through the visits and extended stays of Atsutane, Kanetane, and Nobutane in Akita. All three disciple communities had connections with the local domainal schools, with Hirata disciples appointed as instructors in these schools, especially the Akita group which had many students serve as instructors in the local school to educate retainers’ children. Nevertheless, the influence from these disciples on local official education is considered limited. The Tsugaru group exhibits an autonomous character, attributable to its original and core members, led by Ariyo, coming from the social class of townspeople. As a civil society based on voluntary participation, with no observable official interference, the Tsugaru disciples were free to pursue poetry and conduct scholarship on the Way. While there was such cultural and scholarly freedom this group enjoyed, its social makeup centered on townspeople, which also accounted for their limited expansion and influence within the local community, especially among the samurai class. Ariyo’s “School rules” clearly show the strong religious element of this group, in its deity and ancestor worship, a topic further examined in chapter six.

In the fourth chapter, we focused on the life and experiences of a core member of the Tsugaru group and the most important figure in this study, Hirao Rosen. Rosen grew up in a merchant family in Hirosaki castle town, and displayed a genius for scholarship, combined with remarkable skill and passion for artwork. Under the tutelage of leading scholars and artists of the
local community, Rosen established himself as an accomplished artist and scholar, and with his wife’s support, overcame poverty. Rosen captured local folk culture of Hirosaki castle town and the surrounding Tsugaru region, through paintings and writings on local life in the cold north, and festivals, such as the Mount Iwaki worship in early autumn to pray for a plentiful harvest.

1855 proved to be a critical year for Rosen, in the development of his thought and scholarship. Following Commodore Perry’s arrival to Edo in 1853, Japan succumbed to Western pressure and signed the Japan-U.S. Amity Treaty in 1854, which led to the “opening of Japan” and the official opening of ports in Shimoda and Hakodate. In 1855, Rosen spent over a month to journey from Hirosaki castle town “overseas” to and from Ezo, including Hakodate, newly opened to foreign ships and visitors. Rosen’s observation of and encounter with Ezo locals and foreign visitors from Europe, the U.S., Qing China, and India allowed him to see the “world,” along with Japan’s relativized place in it. He sees the military might of the Western powers, the reality of defeat of the once mighty Qing Chinese to European powers in the Opium War, and Japan’s military inferiority and vulnerability to potential Western threats.

In his one and only visit away from his home domain, Rosen also observes the daily life and folk culture of Matsumae, Hakodate, and the areas in between, along the southern Ezo coast, which allows him to juxtapose the relative positions of Tsugaru, or Hirosaki domain, and Matsumae domain, within Imperial Japan. This clear separation of his experiences and observations of Tsugaru and Matsumae, and their categorization is evident in the way that he edits and re-edits his records of these travels in a series of travelogues including *Hakodate kikō* (*Hakodate Travelogue*), *Yōi meiwa* (*Account of Foreigners*), and sketchbook of Tsugaru scenery, *Gappo sansuikan* (*Mountain and Water Images of Gappo*). I showed how 1855 was an instrumental year in the thought-development of Rosen, for this “global” experience which re-
enforced the boundaries within his worldview between Japan, the West, and China, as well as those between Tsugaru and Matsumae within Imperial Japan. It was during this same year that Rosen compiled his voluminous 150-book edited collection of excerpts from both classical and more contemporary Japanese and Chinese texts. This was also the year he completed *Gappo kidan* (*Strange Tales of Gappo*), the first of his three major texts to take up spiritual and mysterious matters from both a nativist and ethnographic approach. The dynamic interplay between Rosen’s ethnographic inquiry and his engagement with Hirata *kokugaku* are exhibited starting with *Gappo kidan*, and over the next decade as studied in the successive chapter.

Chapter five examined Rosen’s ethnographic inquiries into strange, mysterious, and spiritual phenomena and objects in his local Tsugaru region and Japan, through analyzing his three most important texts, his *Gappo kidan*, *Tani no hibiki* (*Echoes of the Valley*), and *Yūfu shinron* (*New Treatise on the Spiritual Realm*), completed over a decade from 1855 to 1865. From mid-to-late Tokugawa times, there was a precedent of *kokugaku* scholars engaging also in ethnographic studies, and Atsutane was one important scholar who conducted both *kokugaku* and ethnographic scholarship. I identify Rosen as a unique and versatile scholar who also carried on this tradition, and represented an important link between Atsutane and Yanagita Kunio and Orikuchi Shinobu, the latter two who established ethnography as a modern field, while engaging in what they themselves defined as “new *kokugaku*."

In comparing these three texts, we charted the gradual and increased reflection of Atsutane’s theories on spirits and the spiritual realm of *kakuriyo* in Rosen’s writings, which show his increased engagement with Hirata *kokugaku*. Rosen’s official enrolment into the Hirata academy as a posthumous disciple in 1864, and his completion of *Yūfu shinron* in 1865 mark his full engagement with Atsutane’s teachings. By writing *Yūfu shinron*, Rosen joined an ongoing
discourse on *kishin* spirits, carried out by Chinese and Japanese Confucianists, with the first contribution from a *kokugaku* scholar coming from Atsutane, in the form of his *Kishin shinron*. Rosen expanded on Atsutane’s theories on spirits and the spiritual realm *kakuriyo*, and added a local dimension—Tsugaru—to the debate. Hirata *kokugaku* gave Rosen established theories with which to rationalize the spiritual mysteries of Tsugaru, as detailed in local records and passed down orally as legends, and it served as a means to locate the spiritual landscape of “our land of Tsugaru” (*waga Tsugaru no kuni*) into that of a larger Imperial Japan, through the medium of the *kakuriyo* spiritual realm. Whereas Rosen’s two previous works, *Gappo kidan* and *Tani no hibiki*, focus solely on the local scene of Hirosaki castle town and Tsugaru, *Yūfu shinron* demonstrates his exercise of locating Tsugaru into Imperial Japan, through repeated identification of his locale as “our land of Tsugaru,” out of a necessity to orient the spiritual and mysterious matters of Tsugaru within those cases collected from across a broader sphere throughout Imperial Japan.

Rosen’s efforts to locate Tsugaru within the spiritual landscape of Imperial Japan are paralleled by Tsugaru group leader Tsuruya Ariyo, as demonstrated in the sixth chapter. During a brief period from 1866 to 1867 in the tumultuous years of late-Tokugawa, Ariyo compiled *Iwaki san sanbyaku shu*, or *Three Hundred Poems of Mount Iwaki*, an anthology of *waka* poetry which depicted Mount Iwaki as a spiritual pillar of the “country of Tsugaru” within Imperial Japan. Similar to other sacred mountains in Japan, Ariyo describes Mount Iwaki as a towering, central pillar of the cosmos, or *axis mundi* of the Tsugaru region, as well as an abode for gods, and a “passageway” to the spirit realm. In *Iwaki san shinrei ki* (*Mount Iwaki Divine Records*), Ariyo further asserts the supremacy of the “Imperial deity” Ōkuninushi and other “great gods” of this mountain over the Buddhist deities also associated historically with these peaks. As if anticipating the movement of *Shinbutsu bunri*, or Separating Kami from Buddhas, carried out by
Shinto priests in early Meiji, Ariyo asserts *kami* rule and supremacy over Buddhist deities on Mount Iwaki, a central symbol of the Tsugaru region. Sacrilized in such various ways as a “sacred site,” as described by Allan Grapard, Mount Iwaki further helps to secure Tsugaru’s place within the “sacred nation” of Imperial Japan.

Furthermore, Ariyo bridges the gap between life in this world and the afterlife, through the key concept of “enjoyment,” the core idea of his important work, *Ken’yū rakuron* or *Treatise on Enjoyment in the Visible and Invisible Realms*. In this text, Ariyo validates Atsutane’s view of the afterlife that souls of the deceased are active and serve Ōkuninushi no kami. Ariyo builds on Atsutane’s theories by stressing one should experience “enjoyment” in both life in this world and after death in the next realm. The promotion of living a good, industrious, and pious life in this realm, and being aware of a fulfilling and meaningful afterlife, adds greater significance to the veneration and worship of deities and ancestors in the current life. As seen previously in Ariyo’s “School Rules,” his *norito* liturgies also display deity and ancestor veneration, characteristic of this group’s practices. As an extension of the religiosities of Hirata Atsutane, who valued shrines and deities of the local scene, Ariyo’s *norito* venerates deities and shrines of both Imperial Japan and those of the local Tsugaru community. I note that by virtue of his social status as a townsperson, Ariyo, like Rosen, enjoys the social and intellectual freedom to pursue and inquire into the spiritual realm of *kakuriyo*, ruled by Ōkuninushi no kami, a major focus of the Hirata school, despite alternative movements within this academy and outside it, which were more politically motivated in the late-Tokugawa and Restoration years, and looked upon the solar deity Amaterasu as a central deity.

Chapter seven looked at Hirosaki domain during the Restoration and into the early Meiji years, primarily the Boshin War and its aftermath. With the emergence of the new government
rallying around the emperor, and war declared against the final shogun Tokugawa Yoshinobu, it
took the “Imperial” army from early 1868 into the fifth month of 1869 to battle against and
prevail over the bakufu forces, through the northeastern Tohoku region and into Ezo, and the
final Battle of Hakodate. After assessing the new government was favoured to win the war,
Hirosaki domain abandoned its ambivalent stance and responded to the Konoe family’s order to
switch allegiance from the bakufu toward the imperial court, leaving the Ōu Etsu Domainal
Alliance, and ultimately fighting for the emperor. This decision ultimately determined the fate of
the domain, and that of the Hirata disciples.

Once expressing allegiance to the new government, Hirosaki supported Akita domain in
its battle with Shōnai domain, then was ordered to strike their neighbouring Morioka domain.
Hirosaki suffered large casualties in this Battle of Noheiji against neighbour and rival Morioka,
but ultimately, its contributions helped the new government to win the Boshin War. Hirata
disciple Yamada Yōnoshin, a domainal samurai of Hirosaki, fought at Noheiji and died for the
imperial cause. Following the Imperial army’s victory at Hakodate in the fifth month of 1869,
Shinto priests Osari Nakaakira and Ono Wakasa (later “Iwane”), of the Tsugaru group,
conducted the shōkonsai ritual the following month to “call back” and deify sixty-four soldiers of
the domain, including Yōnoshin, who had sacrificed his life for the emperor. These fallen
soldiers were immortalized in a growing pantheon of war dead, which would grow significantly
in the following decades within the domain and newly-formed Aomori prefecture, as well as
throughout the country. In this way, through 1868 and 1869, the Tsugaru group of Hirata
disciples played an integral role, militarily and spiritually, in ensuring their domain’s place in
this new Imperial Japan, with a soldier fighting and dying for the emperor, and being
immortalized as a deity, through a shōkonsai funerary ritual performed by two priests. Hirao
Rosen was there to closely observe and record the proceedings of the funerary ritual, which honoured the sacrifice of its soldiers, while quietly celebrating Hirosaki’s role in the “Imperial” victory of the new Meiji government over the defeated Tokugawa bakufu.

The eighth and final chapter of the main body chronicles the history of Hirosaki domain in its transition into Aomori prefecture in the Meiji period, documents the activities of the Tsugaru group and considers their historical legacy. We surveyed the transition of the local community from domain within the bakuhan system into a prefecture in the new modern state, and highlighted the leadership role of final domainal lord and first governor Tsugaru Tsuguakira. We furthermore outlined an increased adoption of Western learning and institutions, as represented in the transformation of the domainal school Keikokan into the modern academy Tōōgijuku. Within the Tsugaru group, Tsuruya Ariyo continued to fulfill his role as group leader and administrator, and for this he was acknowledged for spreading studies on the Imperial Way, by his peers, the local community, and Ibukinoya head Hirata Kanetane. As seen in previous chapters, Tsugaru group members were busy and active through the Restoration and early Meiji years, which parallels the explosive growth of the Hirata academy and its discipleship nationwide. Ariyo’s death in 1871 coincided with the decline in growth and momentum for the national academy, however, and signalled the end of an era for group activity by the Tsugaru group, which had lost their leader.

Notwithstanding the loss of the group’s first registered disciple and leader, its members were active in various fields as they both experienced and took part in the modernizing of their local community. After performing the shōkonsai funerary rite in the sixth month of 1869, Ono Iwane and Osari Nakaakira were instrumental in implementing the Meiji government’s national religious policy of Shinbutsu bunri (Separating Kami from Buddhas) in Hirosaki, thereby
reorganizing the shrines and temples of the local religious landscape forever. Shimozawa Yasumi was instrumental in memorializing the legacy of the ruling Tsugaru family and the history of Hirosaki domain, when he compiled histories and poetic collections, commissioned by final daimyo and first governor Tsuguakira.

Hirao Rosen, who corresponded often with Shimozawa, stationed in Tokyo or Kyoto, closely observed the transformation of local and national society. Rosen deeply lamented the Meiji government’s abandonment of a primarily Shinto ideology in the construction of the state, and deplored the increased embrace of Western ideas and institution by the state and society, which also spelled a decline for kokugaku nationally, following its rapid rise from the Restoration to around 1871. Despite such trends as part of modernization, however, Rosen continued his artwork and scholarly pursuits, while opening up an academy of his own to educate children of the neighbourhood on the Imperial history of Japan. Rosen seeks to “capture” “the Great Man’s heart,” an aspiration which motivates him and gives him a sense of purpose leading up to the Restoration. However, facing the failed promises of the “new dawn” in Meiji society, Rosen struggles to attain the ideals championed by Hirata kokugaku, which in the eyes of society have become outdated and irrelevant. Even many years after the deaths of Ariyo and Rosen, however, the legacy of their kokugaku scholarship in local society is manifested in an annual festival to commemorate the Great Men of kokugaku and their works, led by priest Nakaakira, and participated in by other surviving members, their descendents, and prominent members of the community.

In this global and postmodern age, individuals and groups are increasingly identifying themselves by means of a multiplicity of values and through a diverse series of communities alternative to the nation. Through it all, tensions between the traditional and modern,
conservative and liberal unfailingly continue to persist. The present study shed light on how a community of local intellectuals, mostly of commoner class, who lived and produced ideas in nineteenth-century northeastern Japan, similarly engaged in a complex process of self-identification by association with multiple communities. From the late-Tokugawa through the Restoration and early Meiji years, the Tsugaru group experienced self-awareness as residents of Tsugaru, the Tokugawa state, Imperial Japan, and even the wider globe. Through this process, we could see glimpses of the joy, anticipation, struggle, and disappointment expressed by these individuals in records left behind, in their experiences of navigating through transitioning times and spaces.

The insights gained through this study open up new avenues for future research going forward. First, I hope to continue to flesh out Japan’s transition from an early modern to modern society through the discourses and experiences of kokugaku scholars in northeastern Japan, including domains of Akita, Morioka, and Sendai. Contrasting the experiences of Hirata disciples in domains which were loyal to the Imperial cause, such as Hirosaki, versus those in domains whose loyalty remained with the Tokugawa bakufu, would presumably reveal varied results in how nativists of that region identified with their local and national communities. Secondly, while this study has shed light on the dynamics between ethnographic and kokugaku perspectives through the work of Hirao Rosen, there are still many areas to explore in regards to the relationship between kokugaku and ethnographic approaches in the early modern period. This inquiry would require further examination of the works of Atsutane, as well as those of other early modern intellectuals who engaged in both nativist studies and the study of folk life and commoners. Finally, the findings of this study on scholarship conducted on the northeastern
fringe of Japan in both a local and national context, lead to further questions about the social and intellectual networks functioning in northeastern Japan in the early modern to modern period. In documents housed at archives throughout the Tohoku region, there are sure to be found fragments of untapped knowledge about these networks, which facilitated the swift movement of books and ideas between the northeast, Edo, and other regions, that enabled such lively scholarship.
### TABLES

**Table 1. List of Hirata Disciples in Tsugaru**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>No. Japan-wide</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Registration</th>
<th>Age at Registration</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Social Background</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>Tsuruya Otoyoshi (Ariyo) 1808-1871</td>
<td>2/25/1857</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Merchant Townsperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>Iwama Ichitarō (Shitatari) 1811-1884</td>
<td>5/1857</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Merchant Townsperson</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>Mitani Chihei (Ōtari)</td>
<td>5/1857</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Merchant Townsperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>Masuda (Fujioka) Kōtarō (Namiki)</td>
<td>5/1857</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>Ueda Hirayoshi (Masatake)</td>
<td>5/25/1857</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>Imamura Yōtarō (Mitane) 1824-1884</td>
<td>6/11/1857</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Domainal Samurai</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1105</td>
<td>Takeda Seijirō (Chihiro, Hiromichi)</td>
<td>11/16/1862</td>
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<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>1342</td>
<td>Sasaki Awaji (Yoshio)</td>
<td>6/1864</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Shinto Priest</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>1341</td>
<td>Sasaki Kensaku (Yoshiyuki) (Son of Awaji, Yoshio)</td>
<td>7/1864</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Shinto Priest</td>
</tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>1340</td>
<td>Ono Wakasa (Iwane) 1833-1889</td>
<td>8/21/1864</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Merchant Townsperson</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1343</td>
<td>Hirao Hatsusaburō (Sukemune, Rosen) 1808-1880</td>
<td>9/11/1864</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Shinto Priest</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1582</td>
<td>Nakamura Yorozuya Ikuhiko</td>
<td>6/1866</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>1597</td>
<td>Kanehira Kameaya 1815-1878</td>
<td>7/12/1866</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Townsperson</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>Yamada Yōnoshin (Tateo) 1843-1868</td>
<td>10/18/1867</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Nakamura Ikuhiko</td>
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<td>1892</td>
<td>Shimozawa Hatsusaburō (Yasumi) 1838-1896</td>
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<td>3414</td>
<td>Inomata Hisayoshi (Shigenaga)</td>
<td>9/24/1869</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
<td>Shinto Priest</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>3824</td>
<td>Koyama Naishi (Tatemaru)</td>
<td>7/9/1870</td>
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<td>Tsuruya Ariyo</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>4106</td>
<td>Gotō Takayoshi (Kiyū)</td>
<td>1/15/1871</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Osari (Nakaakira)</td>
<td>Shinto Priest</td>
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