The Nationalization of Confucianism: Academism, Examinations and Bureaucratic Governance in the Late Tokugawa State

Paramore, K.N.

KIRI PARAMORE

The Nationalization of Confucianism: Academism, Examinations, and Bureaucratic Governance in the Late Tokugawa State

Abstract: This article examines the causes and effects of the shogunate's establishment of a state academy and examination system from 1788 onward. It concentrates on the role of state academicians in reforming Tokugawa processes of governance, suggesting that they effected the creation of a new structural engagement between knowledge and power which had surprisingly "modern" characteristics. Countering arguments that Neo-Confucian political thought encouraged social stasis and authoritarianism in early modern East Asia, I argue that reforms advanced by Confucians in the late Tokugawa state were usually designed to open government structures to bottom-up input in an attempt to make government more socially responsive.

In 1798 the Tokugawa shogunate nationalized the Hayashi Confucian Academy in Edo, renaming it the Shōheizaka Academy (Shōheizaka Gakumonjo) and bringing it directly under the control of the government.[1] Matsudaira

Thanks to Benjamin Elman, Peter Flueckiger, Barend ter Haar, Koichiro Matsuda, and Timon Screech for early comment and discussion. Special thanks to Ronald Toby, Luke Roberts, and the anonymous JJS reviewers for close reading and detailed criticism of the article.

1. I use the word "nationalization" here to denote state takeover of a formerly private institution. This is the word's standard meaning, as seen, for instance, in relation to the "nationalization of banks" carried out in most developed countries during the recent financial crisis. This has no relation to the more specialized academic usage of the nouns "nation" and "nationalism" in theoretical discussions on political modernity in works such as Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), and Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983). The year of establishment of the Shōheizaka Gakumonjo is often given as 1797 because establishment occurred in the lunar year Kansei 9, most of which fell in the Gregorian 1797. But the establishment occurred in the final month of Kansei 9, which fell in early 1798. See Paul Yachita Tsuchihashi, *Japanese Chronological Tables: From 601 to 1872 A.D.* (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 1952), p. 110.

Journal of Japanese Studies, 38:1

Sadanobu had laid the groundwork for this action during the Kansei reforms. Directly on coming to power, he appointed a range of new Confucian teachers to the academy from outside Edo. These appointees, in particular the so-called "Three Kansei Professors"—Shibano Ritsuzan (1736–1807), Bitō Jishū (1747–1813), and Koga Seiri (1750–1817)—had developed in private academies in Osaka and Kyoto, and tested in the regional states (*han*), a range of new ideas to reform the bureaucratic functions and mechanisms of government. Matsudaira asserted state control over the academy by putting it under the control of these new scholars and facilitated the academy's ability to influence government through establishing an examination system that influenced appointments in the growing bureaucracy of the central state.

While the period of the Tokugawa shogunate is often considered the high point of Confucianism in Japan, it was not until the 1790s that the central state directly integrated Confucianism into the bureaucratic apparatus of government or used a Confucian-based examination system in bureaucratic appointments. This decision was motivated in part by an increasing awareness of Western imperial expansion and a desire to create a ruling bureaucracy capable of dealing with this and other challenges. The nationalization of Confucianism was therefore closely linked to the attempt to create a partly professionalized and meritocratic bureaucracy in order to strengthen state administrative systems in the face of international change and increasing internal financial complexity.

In this article I analyze reforms to the machinery of shogunate governance led by the Shōheizaka Academy. I examine how Shōheizaka Academy scholars affected the development in the shogunal state of: (1) a more systematically bureaucratic, professionalized approach to government; (2) an institutionalized position for the academy where it affected the appointment of bureaucrats through the installation of an examination system; and (3) a new, more aggressive approach to the international situation which sought to increase the acquisition and deployment of specialist knowledge. I also inquire into the sources of these policies and innovations, thereby demonstrating the extent to which both Shōheizaka Academy scholars and their political programs were influenced by contemporary East Asian political thought, particularly that of Qing China. I link the Shōheizaka Academy nationalization to three major themes of late Tokugawa shogunal government reform: bureaucratization, intellectualization (state academism and examinations), and internationalization.

The main historical significance of this reform was that it sought to increase central state power and to open decision-making processes to a broader array of people, allowing bottom-up input into governance. In other words, it shows how increasing state power in an early modern feudal context, rather than simply increasing authoritarianism, can also be seen as an

attempt to generate more socially engaged, inclusive, and responsive governance. It reveals that reforms designed to increase centralization and state power should not necessarily be interpreted as attempts to strengthen top-down power, or institute authoritarianism, but can instead be seen as means of effecting bottom-up input into governance.

In the conclusion, I link this investigation to recent research by scholars who have thought about the historical significance of the tension between bureaucratic and feudal forms of governance in the political development of Vietnam, China, Korea, and Japan.[2] I also locate its significance in relation to recent scholarship on the role of orthodoxy in Confucian thought and consider the significance of Confucian thought in late early modern governance and modernization, as discussed by scholars including Benjamin Elman, Kwang-Ching Liu, and William Theodore de Bary.[3]

English-language scholarship has paid scant attention to the contribution of Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism in the development of the later shogunal state.[4] Although the Kansei reforms (*Kansei kaikaku*) and the so-called Kansei Prohibition of Heterodoxy (*Kansei igaku no kin*) are commonly mentioned in the secondary literature, they tend to be presented primarily as a reactionary movement that sought to limit freedom of thought and the development of new ideas.[5] This has led to the Kansei reforms being seen as a conservative reaction rather than a positive reform attempt. One

2. See, for example, Alexander Woodside, *Lost Modernities: China, Vietnam, Korea, and the Hazards of World History* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006), and Zhang Xiang and Sonoda Hidehiro, eds., *"Hōken" "gunken" saikō: Higashi Ajia shakai taiseiron no shinsō* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2006).

3. Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside, eds., *Education and Society in Late Imperial China, 1600–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Kwang-Ching Liu, *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); and William Theodore de Bary, *Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy and the Learning of the Mind-and-Heart* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981).

4. I use the term "Neo-Confucian" in this article following English-language scholarly convention on Tokugawa Japan to refer to the so-called Zhu Xi-ist (*shushigaku*) tendency in Japanese Confucianism. The word "Neo-Confucianism" in English-language scholarship needs to be treated carefully, as for some scholars of Chinese Confucianism it can refer to a wider range of scholarship—including Wang Yangming, other Ming critics of Zhu Xi, and sometimes even extending to any Confucians after the Song period.

5. See, for instance, Tsuji Tatsuya, "Politics in the Eighteenth Century," in John Whitney Hall, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan, Vol. 4: Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 468–70, on the *Kansei igaku no kin*. This mentions the introduction of examination systems positively but is typical for its overriding emphasis on the reforms as a limitation on freedom and attempt to establish shogunate ideological control. One wonders if the preponderance of this particular approach, particularly in U.S. literature, might be related to the enduring influence of John W. Hall's at times almost hagiographic work, *Tanuma Okitsugu: Forerunner of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1955).

of the few intellectual histories to nuance this position was Herman Ooms's first book, *Charismatic Bureaucrat: A Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu 1758–1829.* Ooms painted a more balanced picture of the Kansei reforms and also of the Shōheizaka scholars' aims and roles in the establishment of a Neo-Confucian orthodoxy at the academy.[6] Even Ooms, however, ultimately described the intellectual movement of the Kansei reforms as inherently conservative, claiming that, "Neo-Confucianism was primarily a convenient ideology . . . to assure political integration without altering established institutions" and that "Sadanobu never seriously questioned the adequacy of the political system."[7]

Other than Ooms's book, the only major study of the political ideas of the Shōheizaka scholars in English is a series of articles by Robert L. Backus. These articles also tend to hold to the anti-Neo-Confucian line common in postwar U.S. scholarship on Japanese intellectual history.[8] This line, telegraphed from G. W. F. Hegel and Max Weber through Maruyama Masao's wartime writings of the 1940s into the mainstream of postwar U.S. scholarship through translation in 1974, presented late Tokugawa Neo-Confucian thinkers and their conception of orthodoxy as being necessarily synonymous with social stasis.[9] I argue to the contrary, that institutional

6. Herman Ooms, *Charismatic Bureaucrat: A Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu 1758–1829* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 122–50.

7. Ibid., p. 133.

8. Robert L. Backus, "The Kansei Prohibition of Heterodoxy and Its Effects on Education," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies,* Vol. 39 (1979), pp. 55–106; Backus, "The Motivation of Confucian Orthodoxy in Tokugawa Japan," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies,* Vol. 39 (1979), pp. 275–338; Backus, "The Relationship of Confucianism to the Tokugawa Bakufu as Revealed in the Kansei Educational Reform," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies,* Vol. 34 (1974), pp. 97–162.

9. Maruyama, *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan,* pp. 1–6. The relevant quotes from Hegel can be found in Maruyama's text. For Weber, see Max Weber, *The Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism* (New York: Free Press, 1951), pp. 164–67. Note that Maruyama's later work on these issues is much more nuanced and needs to be read as a major contribution to the revision of the second generation. See Maruyama Masao, *Maruyama Masao kōgiroku* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1998–2000), and the comments of Kurozumi Makoto in *Kinsei Nihon shakai to jukyō* (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2003), p. 27. The only significant references to the early Shōheizaka Academy professors Koga Seiri, Shibano Ritsuzan, and Bitō Jishū in English other than by Backus and Ooms occurred in Maruyama, *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan,* pp. 344–45; Tetsuo Najita, *Visions of Virtue in Tokugawa Japan: The Kaitokudō Merchant Academy of Osaka* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 182–85; and Timon Screech, *The Shogun's Painted Culture: Fear and Creativity in the Japanese States, 1760–1829* (London: Reaktion, 2000), pp. 98–99, 258–59. In all three, neither Koga, Shibano, Bitō, nor Shōheizaka Confucianism was the main object of study. Screech has provided fascinating insights into the contemporary public imagination of Shibano Ritsuzan which fit with his role in advancing the study of new (including Western) ideas and technology by showing how he was artistically represented in relation to symbols of mathematics, technology, and time. Screech's book invites further

change was a core part of the Kansei reform agenda and that the Shōheizaka played a major role in that change through reforming appointment and organizational systems within the bureaucracy.

Maruyama Masao's early work during and immediately after World War II represented the first generation in an ongoing postwar dialogue in Japanese scholarship over the political valence and roles of Neo-Confucianism in Japanese history. In the 1970s and 1980s, research from the second postwar generation of Japanese-language scholarship in this field, comprising the works of Watanabe Hiroshi, Kurozumi Makoto, Kojima Yasunori, Maeda Tsutomu, Sawai Keiichi, and Hiraishi Naoaki, significantly reformed Maruyama's earlier vision. Important cumulative works of some of these scholars published in the last two decades have cemented the idea of Confucianism in Japan as a predominantly privatized social force acting upon the state from the outside.[10] Indeed, Kurozumi Makoto suggested the "peripheral" position of Confucianism in Tokugawa political society as one of the defining features of early modern Japanese Confucianism.[11] This argument certainly holds for most of the early and mid-Tokugawa period, but it has also directed attention away from the important minority of Confucians who ended up with central positions in the state in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Second-generation researchers have tended to give precedence in their studies to early and mid-Tokugawa Ancient Learning thinkers such as Itō Jinsai, Ogyū Sorai, and Dazai Shundai or else to Mito or National Learning scholars of the mid- or late Tokugawa period.[12] In this sense, they have continued to focus on the same scholars and movements highlighted by Maruyama, who in turn had analyzed

---

study of the public imagination of Tokugawa political thinkers. In relation to issues around the public imagination of the "Three Kansei Professors" at the time, I am grateful to Constantine Vaporis for pointing out references in samurai diaries to the collection of calligraphy by Koga Seiri during their *sankin kōtai* processions (see Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan* [Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008], p. 214).

10. Kurozumi Makoto, *Fukusūsei no Nihon shisō* (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2006); Kurozumi, *Kinsei Nihon shakai to jukyō;* Maeda Tsutomu, *Edo kōki no shisō kūkan* (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2009); Maeda Tsutomu, *Heigaku to shushigaku, rangaku, kokugaku: kinsei Nihon shisōshi no kōzu* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2006); Maeda Tsutomu, *Kinsei Nihon no jugaku to heigaku* (Tokyo: Perikansha, 1996); Maeda Tsutomu, *Kinsei Shintō to kokugaku* (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2002); Kojima Yasunori, *Soraigaku to han sorai* (Tokyo: Perikansha, 1987); Sawai Keiichi, *Kigō to shite no jugaku* (Tokyo: Kōbōsha, 2000); Watanabe Hiroshi, *Nihon seiji shisōshi 17–19 seiki* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2010).

11. Herman Ooms and Kurozumi Makoto, "Introduction to 'The Nature of Early Tokugawa Confucianism' by Kurozumi Makoto," *Journal of Japanese Studies,* Vol. 20 (1994), pp. 339–42.

12. The main exception is Maeda Tsutomu, *Edo kōki no shisō kūkan*. As Peter Flueckiger has noted, although National Learning scholars tried to distinguish themselves from Confucianism, they often "worked within an essentially Confucian worldview" (Peter Flueckiger,

the same figures chosen by Inoue Tetsujirō at the beginning of the twentieth century.[13] With some important exceptions, most leading English- and French-language scholarship associated with this second-generation wave in Japan has tended to do likewise.[14]

The most recent Japanese scholarship, however, argues that the historiography of the late Tokugawa period has been unfairly skewed toward valorizing these intellectual movements that later became associated with the Meiji Restoration (such as Mito and National Learning) at the expense of taking seriously the achievements of Shōheizaka scholars in shogunal reform.[15] In 2007 Makabe Jin presented a comprehensive study reappraising the long-term political significance and impact of Shōheizaka Acad-

---

"Reflections on the Meaning of Our Country: Kamo no Mabuchi's Kokuikō," *Monumenta Nipponica,* Vol. 63 [2008], p. 212; see also note 3 on the same page).

13. Inoue Tetsujirō, *Nihon yōmeigakuha no tetsugaku* (Tokyo: Tomiyamabō, 1900); Inoue Tetsujirō, *Nihon kogakuha no tetsugaku* (Tokyo: Tomiyamabō, 1903); and Inoue Tetsujirō, *Nihon shushigakuha no tetsugaku* (Tokyo: Tomiyamabō, 1905).

14. See, for instance, work on National Learning by Peter Nosco, *Remembering Paradise: Nativism and Nostalgia in Eighteenth-Century Japan* (Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1990); on Mito Learning by Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, *Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early-Modern Japan: The New Theses of 1825* (Cambridge, Mass: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1986); and on Ancient Learning by John A. Tucker, *Ogyū Sorai's Philosophical Masterworks: The Bendō and Benmei* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), Samuel Hideo Yamashita, *Master Sorai's Responsals: An Annotated Translation of Sorai Sensei Tōmonsho* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1994), Olivier Ansart, *L'empire du rite: la pensée politique d'Ogyû Sorai, Japon 1666–1728* (Genève: Droz, 1998), and Naoki Sakai, *Voices of the Past: The Status of Language in Eighteenth-Century Japanese Discourse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), as well as Harry D. Harootunian, *Toward Restoration: The Growth of Political Consciousness in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), and William Theodore de Bary, *Principle and Practicality: Essays in Neo-Confucianism and Practical Learning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979). Exceptions (cases where Western scholars have made studies of figures from outside the Inoue/Maruyama canonical model) include the works of Willem Jan Boot on Hayashi Razan (*The Adoption and Adaptation of Neo-Confucianism in Japan: The Role of Fujiwara Seika and Hayashi Razan* [Leiden: Lectura, 1982]), by Kate Wildman Nakai on Arai Hakuseki (*Shogunal Politics: Arai Hakuseki and the Premises of Tokugawa Rule* [Cambridge, Mass.: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1988]), and by James McMullen (*Idealism, Protest, and the Tale of Genji: The Confucianism of Kumazawa Banzan [1619–91]* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999]) on Kumazawa Banzan. Nonetheless, none of these has given attention to late Tokugawa Zhu Xi-ists associated with the Shōheizaka Academy.

15. Makabe Jin, *Tokugawa kōki no gakumon to seiji: shōheizaka gakumonjo jusha to bakumatsu gaikō hen'yō* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2007), pp. 31–38. Makabe points out that writings of late Tokugawa Neo-Confucian thinkers associated with the shogunate were often excluded from printed Meiji compilations of Tokugawa writing that became the basis of later historiography. Makabe's point here gels with arguments made by scholars such as Peter Kornicki, who have argued for the importance of studying nonprinted material for a better understanding of Tokugawa history (Peter F. Kornicki, "Manuscript, not Print: Scribal Culture in the Edo Period," *Journal of Japanese Studies,* Vol. 32 [2006], pp. 23–52).

emy scholars and the Neo-Confucian intellectual movement behind them.[16] Makabe's exciting new work, combined with works arguing similar theses by Maeda Tsutomu and Matsuda Koichirō, has effected a revolution in the writing of late Tokugawa political thought history in Japan.[17]

Makabe's work is significantly different from second-generation scholarship in that it acknowledges the political contributions of thinkers associated with the shogunal institutions and bureaucracy. He also acknowledges, and seriously studies, late Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism itself as an intellectual movement by showing its critical interaction with earlier Tokugawa, and also earlier and contemporary late imperial Chinese, political theory. In Makabe's hands, late Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism is no longer a static, primarily Song-influenced ideology, but a dynamic, contemporarily engaged, primarily Qing-influenced, and thereby potentially dynamically transnational political discourse. This new research presents us with an opportunity to (re)integrate Tokugawa Confucianism back into the story of the development of the Japanese state. This is why the new scholarly direction indicated by Makabe's work is a significant, and, as Nakada Yoshikazu has referred to it, "epoch-making" break from past scholarship on this area.[18] Makabe tells the story of late Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism through tracing three generations of the Koga family's service in the Shōheizaka Academy during the nineteenth century. My earlier focus in this article on the late eighteenth century differs from Makabe's in looking beyond the Koga clan and concentrates thematically on three processes that directly effected change in the state: bureaucratization, intellectualization, and internationalization.

Bureaucratization

The Tokugawa state was proudly feudal.[19] The basic state structure of contemporaneous Qing China, certainly in the southern regions which had

16. Makabe, *Tokugawa kōki no gakumon to seiji*. See also Rai Ki'ichi, *Kinsei kōki shushigakuha no kenkyū* (Hiroshima: Keisuisha, 1986), the first significant monograph on late-Tokugawa Zhu Xi-ist Neo-Confucianism and a major influence on Makabe's work.

17. Matsuda Kōichirō, *Edo no chishiki kara Meiji no seiji e* (Tokyo: Perikansha, 2008). This 2009 Suntory Prize–winning treatise linking late Tokugawa academism and Meiji politics is laced with subtle comparisons to case studies from British political history. See also Maeda, *Edo kōki no shisō kūkan*.

18. Nakada Yoshikazu, "Tokugawa-kōki no gakumon to seiji: shōheizaka gakumonjo-jusha to bakumatsu gaikō hen'yō," *Social Science Japan Journal,* Vol. 13 (2010), p. 182.

19. I use the words "feudal" and "feudalism" in this article, to quote Howell, "in a limited sense to refer to the ties of vassalage that bound the samurai, including the daimyō, to their lords and to the shōgun." I agree with Howell, however, that the term is also useful in describing socioeconomic aspects of the Tokugawa state more broadly (David Howell, "Territoriality and Collective Identity in Tokugawa Japan," *Daedalus,* Vol. 127, No. 3 [1998], pp. 116–17). Fujii Jōji has pointed out that even from the mid-seventeenth century the Tokugawa regime could be regarded as having moved from a purely feudal to a somewhat bureaucratic appoint-

most contact with Japan, was based nominally on an ideal of absolutist bureaucratic rule in the name of the sovereign. This rule was supposed to be carried out by a bureaucracy appointed through examinations based on Confucian knowledge. Intriguingly, many Japanese Confucians considered this to be a callous and "loveless" form of rule.[20] Japanese Confucian thinkers, particularly those of the Sorai school, dominant in the years Koga Seiri was educated in his home, Saga *han,* unerringly defended feudalism, not simply because it was the system of their masters, but because, as they correctly pointed out, it was the system of rule that Confucius himself had idealized in his praise of the ancient sage kings.[21] Confucian political thought should be based on the sanctity of filial and loyal relations between sovereign and vassal as the basis of good government. These were individual relations of loyalty. The Tokugawa shogunate and the *han* states beneath it often acted administratively, for instance in terms of the flow of communication, through individual vassal relationships.[22] This was usually seen as a positive. This focus on individual relations was regarded as giving feudalism its humane character.[23]

Koga Seiri and Shibano Ritsuzan, however, were highly critical of the reliance on lone individuals inherent in this system. Their primary recommendation for the reform of administrative governance was the establishment of a more professional bureaucratic structure. This recommendation, together with most of the other elements of the reform agenda they brought to Edo, is readily discernible in memorials they produced directly before their shogunal appointments: Shibano Ritsuzan's *Ritsuzan jōsho* (Ritsuzan's memorial), written the year he left his position as Confucian advisor

---

ment system because the appointment of senior officials was not done on a solely hereditary basis (Fujii Jōji, *Edo jidai no kanryōsei* [Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1999]; Fujii Jōji, "Nihon kinsei shakai ni okeru kanryō to guntai," in Umesao Tadao and Matsubara Masatake, eds., *Tōchi kikō no bunmeigaku* [Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1986], pp. 25–55). This is true but was relevant only for some higher positions. Furthermore, as Hashimoto Akihiko has pointed out, despite Tokugawa Yoshimune's attempts during the Kyōho reforms (1716–45), intellectual endeavor and administrative and advisory capacity were not systematically taken into account in shogunate appointments at all until the Kansei reforms (from 1794 onward) (Hashimoto Akihiko, *Edo bakufu shiken seidoshi no kenkyū* [Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1993], p. 11). Even then, as discussed below, meeting basic hereditary requirements was still a necessary prerequisite for appointment. Examinations were used primarily to differentiate between the increasingly large numbers of candidates who were hereditarily qualified for a correspondingly insufficient number of available positions.

20. This term is used by Ogyū Sorai in *Bendō,* in *Ogyū Sorai,* Nihon shisō taikei, Vol. 36 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1973), p. 22.

21. Ibid., p. 41.

22. Mark Ravina, "State-Building and Political Economy in Early-modern Japan," *Journal of Asian Studies,* Vol. 54 (1995), p. 1008.

23. Ogyū, *Bendō,* pp. 17, 21–22.

to the Awa *han* in Shikoku and took up his appointment to the shogunate in 1788, and Koga Seiri's *Jūjikai* (Explication of 10 matters), written in 1789 while he was state Confucian scholar and head of the Confucian Kōdōkan Academy in his home *han* of Hizen Saga on Kyushu.[24]

For Koga, the complexity of modern governance was more than any individual could handle alone and demanded that bureaucratic structures be professionalized: "Those who stand above the people, who have the responsibility of governing the country and succoring the masses, due to the weighty nature of their positions, could not carry out even one of their tasks if it was left all to the personal knowledge of just this one individual."[25] Alone, no one, no matter how talented, could possibly have enough knowledge to succeed. Progress requires the exchange of information and knowledge, a cooperative professional approach to governance carried out by groups of people rather than individuals, and the training of people capable of directing and working within this system. Koga insisted that tasks of the highest importance could not be adequately carried out by individuals alone but required larger pools of knowledge. One important example he gave relates to the responsibility for communicating information from the lower orders up to the leaders.

> The path for the reception of information should not be restricted to one office. Elders, and also especially people of skill, should be invited as partners in discussion, to consult on matters large and small when the affairs of state allow time for this. Extracting the good from these kinds of discussions should be the pleasure of an exemplary leader.[26]

Only through a more professional structure that allowed access to the leader from a range of specialists ("people of skill") could the openness of communication be achieved that would ensure just rule. This is a key argument that linked the works of Shibano Ritsuzan and Koga Seiri. Shibano

24. The date of writing of *Ritsuzan jōsho* is disputed. Hashimoto Akihiko suggests that Kaneko Tokunosuke's argument that it was written around 1763 is reasonably convincing (Hashimoto, *Edo bakufu shiken seidoshi no kenkyū,* p. 13; Kaneko Tokunosuke, "Kansei igaku no kin no kenkyū," *Koten kenkyū* [Yūzankaku], Series 4, Vol. 10, No. 4 [1937]). The primary text I have consulted for the research on this article is Shibano Ritsuzan, *Ritsuzan jōsho* (1788) (manuscript in Nanki Bunko collection in the General Library of the University of Tokyo). However, for the reader's ease of reference, in citations I give page number references to the more widely available printed edition in Takimoto Sei'ichi, ed., *Nihon keizai sōsho,* Vol. 17 (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Sōsho Kankōkai, 1917). There are significant omissions and faults in this *Nihon Keizai Sōsho* volume which are not found in most of the numerous manuscript editions.

25. Koga Seiri, *Jūjikai* (1789), in Takimoto, ed., *Nihon keizai sōsho,* Vol. 17, p. 156.

26. Ibid., p. 157.

was eloquently direct about defining what kind of information and communication that professional structure needed to provide:

> "The prince is like a boat, the masses like the water. The water can support a boat well, but can also overturn it. The masses can live well under the rule of a prince, or they can destroy him." The winds and waves of the masses rise when the sentiments of the masses are obstructed. For this reason, since antiquity, making sure the sentiments of the masses are communicated has been the primary business of governance. "Communicating the sentiments of the masses" means ensuring the sovereign is informed about the suffering of the masses.[27]

Here, Shibano emphasized the importance of taking due account of the "sentiments of the masses" (Ch. *xiaqing,* J. *kajō*). In a note directly after the sentences quoted above, Shibano mentions a number of the later classic references for this turn of phrase in Chinese dynastic histories like the *Han shu* (Book of the Han).[28] The quote that opens this paragraph, "the prince is like a boat, the people like the water," although existing in earlier texts like *Xunzi,* is famously contained in the traditional house records of Confucius in the *Hou Han shu* (Book of the later Han). Through his quotation of this phrase and his emphasis on the importance of the "sentiments of the masses," an idea originating in legalist thought but most heavily cited in the *Han shu* and *Hou Han shu,* Shibano appealed to Chinese traditions emphasizing the ruler's requirement to listen to the people. His use of concepts, vocabulary, and quotations preferred by notable Han scholar and editor of the *Han shu,* Ban Gu (32–92), is also noteworthy. The trend to employ Ban Gu heavily is associated in Chinese texts and the examination culture of

27. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* pp. 106–7. The quote that opens this section is traditionally attributed to Confucius through the lost text *Kongzi jiayu,* contained in the *Hou Han shu* (Fan Ye, *Xin Jiao Ben Hou Han Shu Bing Fu Bian Shi San Zhong* [Taipei: Ding Wen Shu Ju, 1985], p. 2132). It is also contained in *Xunzi*.

28. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* p. 107. The phrase is well used in *Han shu* edited by Ban Gu, and in *Hou Han shu,* as well as in other works by Ban Gu such as *Liangdufu*. In *Han shu* and the later dynastic history *Hou Han shu,* the term is often used in combination with the word 通 *tong* (*tsū*) (communicate) or 上通 *shangtong* (*jōtsū*) (communicate upward) (Ban Gu and Dingyi Zhuang, *Xin Jiao Ben Han Shu Bing Fu Bian Er Zhong* [Taipei: Ding Wen Shu Ju, 1985], pp. 247, 1421, 4170, 50, 82, 111, 1398, 1556, 1766, 1910). The term originates in the legalist writings of Guanzi. This again could be seen as showing the influence of pre-Song ideas in Qing Neo-Confucian writing. The phrase is also attributed to traditional histories/myths associated with the Japanese Emperor Jinmu, contained in the *Nihon seiki,* which was compiled as histories by Rai Shunsui's son Rai Sanyō. The most common reference for these is Rai Sanyō's *Nihon gaishi* (published from the 1830s). Given the link between Rai Shunsui and Koga and Shibano, it is interesting to see the term playing such a large role in the work of these latter two, decades before the appearance of Sanyō's most famous work.

late imperial China with the switch from the Ming to the Qing empire.[29] In other words, this preference of Shibano, albeit for a number of phrases and ideas of a Han scholar, is a hint to contemporary Qing influence—an issue I return to later.

Shibano proceeds from this quote to explain how a state that is responsive to this requirement can be achieved through structural reform. The main solution he suggests, in a section reminiscent of Koga, is to make sure the responsibility and capability for communicating situations on the ground up to the senior leadership rest with multiple rather than individual officers. In other words, instead of a system of individual, exclusive relations typical of a feudal hierarchy, Shibano recommends a more professional approach to the delivery of recent intelligence and information, as well as the all-important "sentiments of the masses," to the leadership through the bureaucracy.[30]

Koga gave a similar political justification for his plan to corporatize the bureaucracy, arguing for the importance of increasing bottom-up input into the political system through reference to the key Confucian concept of "remonstration" (using a construction of the term favored by Ban Gu).[31] Koga argued that the only way the sovereign could ensure that remonstration was carried out was to reform the structures. He argued for this reform in a surprisingly radical manner by suggesting that the entire tradition of "remonstration," something key to good governance in Confucianism, was traditionally lacking in Japan and thereby also in its current (feudal) structures of power.

> In Japan particularly, the custom of remonstration is not performed. Lines of communication are normally closed and the sentiments of the masses

29. Benjamin Elman has noted that one of the major differences in the textual interpretation sought in imperial examinations between the Ming and the Qing was the Qing emphasis on Ban Gu (Benjamin A. Elman, *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000], p. xxxv).

30. Shibano, *Ritsuzan Jōsho,* p. 108. Luke Roberts discusses the link between calling for political input from the common people and the use of this input for intelligence purposes—particularly in terms of identifying corrupt officials. In the same article, he summarizes the history of commoners contributing their sentiments to political leaders in the Tokugawa period through the petition-box system (Luke S. Roberts, "The Petition Box in Eighteenth-Century Tosa," *Journal of Japanese Studies,* Vol. 20 [1994], p. 428).

31. For "remonstration," Koga uses the two-character combination 諫諍 *jianzheng* (*kansō*). This combination first appears in isolated usage in the writing of Xunzi. It is used earliest in a frequent manner to denote Confucian remonstration in *Han shu,* edited by Ban Gu, such as in the twenty-third volume, "The Sage King appoints vassals who remonstrate." The single character representation 諫 *jian* (*kan*), appears initially in *Zhouli,* twelve times in *Lunyu,* eight times in *Mencius,* also notably in *Kongzi Jiayu* as recorded in *Hou Han shu,* "Confucius said, 'The loyal vassal will remonstrate with the prince.'"

> are not communicated up to those on high. This is because the path of education is not propagated. A sovereign who would leave behind the bad practices of former years and set right the state must first collect the knowledge of many people. To do this, there is nothing more urgent than opening the channels of communication. [Currently] retainers and those below them with important offices and positions of service are used as a matter of course, and all others are not. [Yet] by utilizing them, all functions could be thoroughly carried out, the virtue of the sovereign assisted, and hindrances to the truth reaching the ears of the sovereign removed.[32]

Koga here not only displayed the political motivation for a more professional and rationalized bureaucracy but also showed how radical his ideas for government reform were by linking office to function. He suggested that the allocation of position should be linked to the utility of the role performed. In contemporary late imperial China, there had been for at least a couple of centuries disquiet over the fact that the conferment of imperial rank (achieved through examination results) was not necessarily directly linked to the allocation of post. Benjamin Elman has written about the way the Ming and Qing states attempted to regulate the numbers of people who would take imperial rank through changes to the examination pass quotas.[33] A highly visible and growing disparity emerged between the number of people with basic examination grade status and the number of functions available. Thus, a discourse had arisen linking rank to function, a discourse Koga would have been aware of.

This debate continued as an issue in late imperial Chinese society. The allocation of rank, even without appointment to a post, could still be attractive to rulers because it played the role of placating the precocious and locally powerful gentry. In the feudal context of Tokugawa Japan, the allocation of rank—not of course through examination, but through appointment related to hereditary and other family ties—also worked as a way to placate senior vassals who might come from high families but have no particular post. Appointment as "superfluous officers" (Jp. *jō'in;* Ch. *rongyuan*)—a phrase in the Chinese, especially Ming and Qing, discourse, adopted by Koga to describe officials in Japan receiving a stipend while holding no function—could thereby be seen to play an important pragmatic political role in both contexts. The negative impact of this practice in the Chinese context was that it then devalued the imperial rank. In the Japanese context, where these

32. Koga, *Jūjikai,* pp. 156–57.

33. Elman, *Cultural History of Civil Examinations,* pp. 138–42. Elman also described a kind of late imperial examination inflation where the number of licentiates increased while the number of positions fell (Elman and Woodside, *Education and Society in Late Imperial China,* p. 113).

appointments were linked to extra stipends, the practice was even more seriously deleterious, potentially siphoning off resources from the limited pool of monies available for central government administration.[34]

Koga hit out at these superfluous appointments, which he brazenly stated displayed the ruler's "weakness of will."[35] The maintenance or extension of appointments should be directly related to functional requirements of governance. Unnecessary functions should be abolished so the number of functionaries could be limited. Koga's statement that "the requirements of governance may rise or fall depending on the times and situations, and this may then require the appointment of more or fewer bureaucrats," argued that appointment should be based on administrative demand.[36] This implied something he later made abundantly clear, that "superfluous officers" who had no useful function, appointed by "weak-willed" leaders out of a misplaced sense of personal allegiance, would need to be cut.

> It is said that adding one advantage is not equal to eliminating one disadvantage. Adding one position is not equal to eliminating one function. Adding officers should not be preferred. It should rather be ably assessed why the number of functions is more than before. If it is unavoidable, then increased numbers should be appointed, but functions of no utility should also be cut so that the number of officers does not become too many.[37]

This was a radical suggestion in a society and state based on the principles of hereditary right to position and status. As an idea, it potentially cut to the core of the hereditary traditions of appointment that underlay the Tokugawa state by suggesting that the imperative for an appointment should be the nature of the task to be performed rather than the status of the person being appointed. The impact of Koga, Shibano, and their Shōheizaka Academy colleagues on appointments is most evident through the process of academic institutionalization of their ideas that occurred through the nationalization of the Shōheizaka Academy and the role it was given in the education and examination of prospective shogunate officers.

Intellectualization (I): The Examination Orthodoxy

> As our country is under a regime of generals, the path of selection/election is closed. Particularly in *han* such as ours [Saga], the damage of the hereditary system is not to be avoided. Those with hereditary status are negligent,

34. As Elman has noted, financial compensation on a lower level was also given to licentiates (*Cultural History of Civil Examinations,* p. 138), and they also benefited from other preferential treatment such as tax exemptions (pp. 241–42, 298).

35. Koga, *Jūjikai,* p. 158.

36. Ibid., p. 157.

37. Ibid., p. 158.

> and those without do not serve. This is why the spirit of the gentleman/samurai cannot be enacted and why custom can so degenerate.[38]

Through the Shōheizaka Academy, Koga and Shibano introduced an examination system that significantly influenced appointments to the shogunate bureaucracy. But that does not mean that a meritocracy was introduced. Nor should quotes like the one above from Koga be taken to connote that he and his colleagues believed in what we might call a meritocracy or in the introduction of a Chinese-style examination system.[39] Although the examination system administered by the Shōheizaka Academy became a powerful fast track to appointment, the right to be in the selection pool was still tied to hereditary status. The examinations simply introduced an element of competition linked to performance in training.

This fit with Koga's and Shibano's approach to the use of competition and examinations in appointment. In eighteenth-century Japan, some Confucian scholars, Dazai Shundai for instance, called for the introduction of a fully competitive, literary-based examination system.[40] Koga and Shibano stood against this call. Shibano condemned the Chinese imperial examination system, which was a completely literary affair, as impractical and reliant on literary games. This fit perfectly with the main intellectual argument that Shōheizaka Confucians had against Japanese Sorai learning, that it was too literary and not practical enough.[41] Shibano recommended that appointments should be related to a system of "reward and punishment" based on performance in training exercises as well as administrative and military tasks.[42] Shibano and Koga did not recommend a relationship between governance and impractical, purely literary knowledge. Rather, influenced by Chinese criticism of the too-literary examinations in that country[43] and of the tradition of writing about the nexus between intellectualism and the warrior tradition in Tokugawa Japan, they advocated a system of diverse, practical training, backed by a standardized (and thereby necessarily orthodox) general education in Confucian ethics.[44]

The relationship between the traditional justification for the privileged position of the samurai caste as warriors and their major Tokugawa-era

38. Ibid., p. 160. Note that Koga here used the word *han* 藩 to indicate Saga *han* and *kuni* 邦 to indicate Japan under the shogunate.

39. Of course, the late imperial Chinese examination system was also clearly not a meritocracy (Elman, *Cultural History of Civil Examinations,* pp. xxix, 248).

40. See, in particular, references to ideas about "competition" from Dazai Shundai, Ogyū Sorai's premier student, in Matsuda, *Edo no chishiki kara Meiji no seiji e,* p. 81.

41. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* pp. 135–36.

42. Ibid., p. 146.

43. See, for instance, writings by Chen Qixin, quoted in Elman, *Cultural History of Civil Examinations,* p. 215.

44. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* pp. 143–47.

role as civil administrators had been a major topic of scholarly discussion throughout the Tokugawa period. The text cited as one of the main Tokugawa sources on the "Way of the Samurai," Yamaga Sokō's (1622–85) *Shidō,* ironically opens with a Confucian discussion on the ethical responsibilities of the samurai and their requirement to develop through intellectual education their "way of culture" alongside their military arts.[45] This continued as a theme in the writing of many of the great political thinkers of the early and mid-Tokugawa period such as Kumazawa Banzan, Nakae Tōju, and Kaibara Ekiken.[46] Koga and Shibano thus inherited a long tradition of packaging or presenting Chinese classical thought in combination with the martial arts as a basis of practical ethics. This tradition they saw as being challenged by the dominant trend following Ogyū Sōrai which emphasized literary theory and purely literary, linguistic, and ritualistic techniques to recover the Confucian "Way."[47] Through first their *han* schools and then the Shōheizaka Academy, Koga, Shibano, and their colleagues institutionalized their practical approach to Confucian learning in state schools and thereby in the bureaucratic education and selection systems of the states. They did that through the establishment of these schools (*han* and later shogunal academies) as institutions and through the institutionalization in these academies of an intellectual "school" (late Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism) as a standardized, institutionalized intellectual orthodoxy realizing ideals of practical, ethical learning (thereby countering the literary trend).

The creation of the Shōheizaka's late Tokugawa Neo-Confucian orthodoxy had surprisingly pluralist roots. Koga Seiri, Bitō Jishū, Shibano Ritsuzan, and Rai Shunsui (1746–1816) had all been part of a movement of independent scholars in Osaka during the 1770s and 1780s that cogently argued against the influence of Sorai-school Confucianism and for a Neo-Confucian orthodoxy. Their vision of a Neo-Confucian orthodoxy, and particularly Matsudaira Sadanobu's state regulation of it through the Kansei Prohibition of Heterodoxy in 1790, attracted the ire of twentieth-century scholars who saw this as a state-imposed limitation on academic freedom and a closure of the market of ideas. It is important to note, however, that the idea for orthodoxy was not originated by the state but was an inherent part of nearly all Confucian discourse in East Asia by this time. The construction of this orthodoxy, moreover, was achieved predominantly by independent scholars in Osaka nearly 20 years prior to the Kansei Prohibition of

45. Yamaga Sokō, *Shidō,* in Yamaga Sokō, *Yamaga Sokō,* Nihon shisō taikei, Vol. 32 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1970), p. 32.

46. All these writers used a term with an even older lineage, *bunbu ryōdō*—"both the literary and military ways," from the *Heike monogatari.*

47. On the history of anti-Sorai writing through the eighteenth century, including references to Bitō Jishū, see Kojima, *Soraigaku to han sorai,* pp. 135–53.

Heterodoxy. Further, it is fairly clear that the motivation behind these scholars' construction of their "Neo-Confucian orthodoxy," and of Shibano's and Matsudaira's utilization of it in the shogunal academy, was primarily to create a standardized field of practical knowledge where knowledge would be utilized and assessed in terms of its functional capacity.[48]

This explains the seeming contradiction of Koga Seiri and his descendants in arguing forcefully for the institutionalized study of Western learning on the one hand, and their view that literary theory related to Sorai-school Confucianism should be excluded from any written examinations on the other.[49] For them, knowledge was something to be used in statecraft. For Koga and his colleagues, the only knowledge that should be included in the curriculum, or required for the examinations, was knowledge that could be shown to have practical application.[50] This approach was not an ideology of closed, static conservatism; rather, it opened up the academies to learning from the Chinese military and legalist classics—genres that had always been popular among Tokugawa samurai Confucians—and eventually to Western learning as well.[51] More important, it stamped into political society as never before the idea of a functional link between knowledge and the performance of government administration.[52]

It also allowed for a greater variety of Confucian interpretation than has often been assumed and encouraged the development of non-Confucian specialist skills and knowledge. Koga himself had been a follower of Confucian theory aligned with Wang Yangming when he first went to study in Kyoto in the mid-1770s. Indeed, many of the political arguments Koga became famous for, including advocacy for a more rational selection system for bureaucrats and an easing of the economic stress on peasants through land reform,[53] had first been championed in the Tokugawa period by scholars identified with the Yangming inclination such as Kumazawa Banzan.[54] But in the mid-1700s, the major intellectual confrontation in Confucianism in Japan was between the ascendant followers of Sorai theory and a new wave of opposition to them that identified itself with Neo-Confucianism of the Zhu Xi school.[55] It is important to understand that the opposition to

48. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* p. 135.

49. On the role of the Koga family in Western learning, see the next section and also Makabe, *Tokugawa kōki no gakumon to seiji,* pp. 219–493.

50. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* pp. 135–37.

51. For openness to military and Western thought in education, see Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* p. 178.

52. Matsuda, *Edo no chishiki kara Meiji no seiji e,* pp. 79–80.

53. Koga, *Jūjikai,* pp. 158–59.

54. McMullen, *Idealism, Protest, and the Tale of Genji,* pp. 108–45.

55. An excellent representation of this conflict depicted through statistics based on the affiliations of *han* schools can be found in Ishikawa, *Nihon gakkōshi no kenkyū,* pp. 258–59. In 1716 to 1788, there were 118 schools aligned with Sorai and 5 with Hayashi or Shōhei; from

Sorai-school Confucianism of this period was not necessarily an opposition to the ideas of Sorai himself,[56] but more to the literary theorism that had developed around the disciples of Sorai in the decades after his death in 1728.[57] The primary criticism that people such as Koga and Shibano had of Sorai Confucianism as they encountered it in the private and regional academies in the mid-eighteenth century was ironically the same criticism they had of the appointment and governance systems of the shogunate: they had no social utility, they did not achieve the reform of state, society, and people necessary to create a more just order. For them, Sorai-school Confucianism had descended into an intellectual game, yet another escapist leisure pursuit of the Edo elite, instead of becoming a blueprint for bettering the world.

Importantly, although Shōheizaka Academic scholars identified themselves as Neo-Confucian, and attempted to exploit the earlier relationship of the Hayashi family to the shogunate, they were positive about most streams of Confucianism in Japan other than the Sorai school. As noted above, the ideas of Koga were clearly influenced by Japanese Confucians who identified themselves with the Yangming tendency. Shibano, in the section of his memorial to the shogunate dealing with education, went further by naming a number of famous Tokugawa Confucians not of the Neo-Confucian school as examples of the kind of "scholarship of the princely way" which could effect cultured remonstration in government. In these terms, he praised by name Arai Hakuseki, Muro Kyūsō, Kumazawa Banzan, Nakae Tōju, Yamazaki Ansai, Itō Jinsai, and Itō Tōgai.[58] Four of these seven were not Neo-Confucian but Yangming-ist (Banzan and Tōju) or from non-Sorai Ancient Learning schools (Jinsai and Tōgai). Moreover, the justification for orthodoxy, and the parameters in terms of which other ideas were criticized, was always in terms of the search for a utilitarian canon of public knowledge that could be used as the basis for public service training—something that could aid the development of senses of "consensus" and "solidarity" among fellows, and "sympathy" for the masses.[59]

This was not a vision of the clash between Sorai-ist and Neo-Confucian inclinations which originated from Matudaira Sadanobu or from his ideas on heterodoxy. It originated earlier with independent scholars in Osaka and Kyoto such as Rai Shunsui and Bitō Jishū in the 1770s and was spread to *han* academies by the likes of Shibano Ritsuzan and Koga Seiri before being taken up into the apparatus of the central state after Shibano's appointment

1789 to 1829, there were 56 aligned with Sorai and 55 with Shōhei; and from 1830 to 1867, 13 were aligned with Sorai and 160 with Shōhei.

56. Shōheizaka scholars were even capable of praising some of Sorai's work; see Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* p. 135.

57. Kojima, *Soraigaku to han sorai,* pp. 47–48.

58. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* p. 136.

59. Ibid., pp. 134, 145.

to the Shōheizaka Academy.[60] The motivation for the origination of this "orthodoxy" also appears to have been anything other than silencing the political voices of scholars. Making sure scholars had political impact, that rulers listened to them, and that systems of government responded to them was a major, perhaps the major, theme of the Three Kansei Professors. For Shibano, the entire process of institutionalizing academia within the state was in order to effect cultured remonstration on the leadership. As he wrote in his memorial to the shogun: "The main goal of princely scholarship is to have the sovereign act upon words of remonstration."[61]

Moreover, these ideas on the necessary utility of Confucianism and the critique of literary theory (associated in Japan with attacks on the Sorai school) were themselves inspired by Chinese Qing Confucian reactions to the effect of Ming literary theory on Confucianism in China.[62] The critique of these contemporary Chinese commentators often pointedly targeted literary theorists of the Ming, such as Wang Shizhen (1526–90), who are regarded as having decisively influenced the development of Ogyū Sorai's own Confucian philosophy of ancient textual study (*kobunjigaku*) in Japan.[63] Criticism of this kind of approach had to itself use evidential scholarship to mount a counterargument. Neo-Confucian argumentation in Qing China, and thereby in late Tokugawa Japan as well, took on what appeared, especially in comparison to earlier Song learning, to be a highly evidential approach. Students were expected to prove an argument through references. This was a far cry from the kind of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy imagined by Hayashi Razan. The textual and proof-based nature of the "orthodoxy" established in the Shōheizaka Academy is evident in any basic perusal of the academy's examinations or rules. For example, the academy's rules state: "To debate the principle of righteousness, or research the profound, there must be a [textual] basis. Unsupported hypothesizing is not allowed."[64]

The intellectual practice of the Shōheizaka Academy was thus evidence based. Although the intellectual inclination was, as Koga and Shibano had made clear, toward the ethics of Neo-Confucianism in order to cultivate

60. In this sense, not only Shibano Ritsuzan, Bitō Jishū, and Koga Seiri but also scholars who were active in that movement in Osaka but did not take up positions at the Shōheizaka Academy or any other state institution could be considered part of the creation of this orthodoxy. One could extend the net to the Rai family, certainly to Shunsui, and also to Minagawa Kien and Nakai Chikuzan.

61. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* p. 137.

62. Makabe, *Tokugawa kōki no gakumon to seiji,* pp. 232–48.

63. David Pollack, *The Fracture of Meaning: Japan's Synthesis of China from the Eighth through the Eighteenth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 222.

64. Bitō Jishū and Inuzuka Son, *Shōheishi* (1792), in Kurokawa Masamichi, ed., *Nihon kyōiku buko, gakkōhen* (Tokyo: Dōbunkan, 1911), pp. 21–23. Makabe, *Tokugawa kōki no gakumon to seiji,* p. 236.

meritorious individual bureaucrats, the method of thinking nurtured was a practical evidential one, which was also supposed to assist in the development and application of the specialized skills that Shibano had made clear were essential for government.[65] This push toward more practical and evidential education was the general context within which the Shōheizaka Academy's examinations came to take on greater sociopolitical meaning by becoming institutionally linked to processes of appointment in the shogunate.

Intellectualization (II): Examinations and Appointment

Ultimately, the Shōheizaka Academy scholars affected shogunal appointment most directly through their role in administering the academy examination system, which exercised an increasing influence on appointment. As Hashimoto Akihito has noted, the complexity of the systems of appointment, coupled with an incompleteness of records from some periods and seeming incongruities between official shogunate records and personal memoirs and diaries, makes a comprehensive assessment of the influence of the post-Kansei examination systems across the breadth of the shogunate bureaucracy difficult.[66] Hashimoto has shown fairly conclusively, however, that from the mid-1790s onward, attainment of the top A (*kinoe*) or B (*kinoto*) grades in the Shōheizaka Academy examinations made a speedy appointment into a bureaucratic post highly likely for those who, by being heads of *hatamoto* households of the shogunate, met the basic hereditary qualifications for consideration for appointment.[67] By the 1790s, the number of these household heads significantly exceeded the number of real positions available in the shogunate. Most were unlikely ever to be appointed to a real position, and the appointments that were attained usually came after a long, unpredictable wait of many years.[68] Hashimoto's research results show, however, that success in the examinations all but ensured the candidate would be appointed into a shogunate position within a couple of years.

Table 1 lists the numbers of *hatamoto* family heads who passed the examinations with an A or B grade between 1794 and 1806, the time it took them to be appointed, and the percentage of the total appointed within ten years of the examination. Hashimoto acknowledges that breaks in the data make it impossible to track possible later appointment of some of these candidates, meaning the statistics represent the most minimalistic assessment of the impact of success in the examinations. The appointment rate may have in fact been significantly higher. Hashimoto believes the impact of ex-

65. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* p. 145.
66. Hashimoto, *Edo bakufu shikken seidoshi no kenkyū,* pp. 138–53.
67. Ibid., pp. 141–42.
68. Ibid., p. 119.

Table 1
Shōheizaka Examinations and Shogunate Appointments

Year	Number of A+B graduates	Appointment within 1 year	Appointment within 3 years	Appointment within 5 years	Total percentage appointed
1794	3	3	-	-	100
1797	11	0	4	4	73[1]
1800	7	0	5	0	86[2]
1803	8	0	5	0	75[3]
1806	7	4	0	2	86

Notes:
1. Two of the candidates in 1797 were not appointed because their fathers were currently serving members of the *kobushin*.
2. One of the candidates in 1800 (Natsume Chōemon) already had an appointment.
3. A sixth candidate was employed six years after the examination.
Source: Hashimoto Akihiko, *Edo bakufu shiken seidoshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1993), pp. 138–53.

aminations on appointments from 1806 rose, although there are insufficient extant data to prove that comprehensively through statistics.

Hashimoto shows, however, that although examination performance usually ensured appointment, it did not advantageously affect what division of the bureaucracy a candidate was appointed into. In fact, he fairly conclusively shows that the bureaucratic destination of examination graduates was determined solely by the agency of appointment of the candidate's father. In other words, candidates whose fathers had worked in high-prestige agencies, such as *metsuke,* would also be appointed into high-prestige agencies, and those whose fathers had worked in lower-prestige agencies, such as *ōban,* would generally also be appointed into such lower prestige agencies.[69] Hashimoto interprets this to suggest that "the ultimate position of appointment for examination graduates had no relation to the level of their examination grades and was determined instead by the employment level of their fathers."[70]

Although Hashimoto seems to have proven fairly conclusively that the destination of the initial appointment of examination graduates was determined by hereditary means, I suggest this does not necessarily mean they did not thereafter have the opportunity for further promotion or transfer, nor that the career effect of their performance in the examinations was limited to their initial appointment. The famous case of Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823) shows opportunity for promotion of successful examination candidates within the bureaucracy after initial appointment, and well beyond their fathers' level.

69. Ibid., p. 147.
70. Ibid., p. 148.

Ōta was one of the three A graduates in the initial 1794 examination and was immediately appointed into a rather low-level position in the guards in line with the status of his father. Within a few years, however, he had been transferred twice to more prestigious agencies, the Kanjō Bugyō and Yūshima Seidō.[71] He was also fairly quickly promoted within the Kanjō Bugyō. Ōta's case also suggests that this promotion was likely influenced by the intellectual prestige associated with the candidate, a prestige the examination results confirmed and institutionalized. Hashimoto's evidence about the initial posting of graduates, therefore, probably does not tell the whole story of the advantageous effect of examination prestige on a candidate's career.

Moreover, beyond this direct influence of ensuring appointment for A and B graduates, lesser success in the examinations or even just good attendance at the academy could assist candidates in their push for appointment. Hashimoto points out, for instance, that exam graduates with a C (*hinoe*) or above would be exempt from elements of the general shogunate selection procedures, thereby allowing them to advance more quickly.[72] Also, Shōheizaka Academy staff would often write recommendations for students, which appeared to affect appointment and promotion.[73] The fact that A and B graduates were basically automatically employed by the shogunate showed that the examinations had an institutionalized position in the appointment process. Further, however, the existence of this latter para-institutional practice of recommendation writing and lobbying by the Shōheizaka Academy for its students shows that even beyond the increased institutional role of the Shōheizaka examinations, attendance at the academy and performance in the examinations likely gave candidates advantages over nonscholars.

The impact of Koga, Shibano, and their Shōheizaka Academy colleagues on appointment, however, should not be assessed only in terms of concrete data on appointment but also in terms of the effect that academic institutionalization and the nationalization of the Shōheizaka Academy had more generally on the education of prospective shogunate officials and on the attitudes of those prospective officials toward education. Appointments based on examination results had more impact than the raw statistics suggest. The institutionalization of appointments based on examination results, despite its limited scope, also served as an important public symbol of the state's promotion of an increasing intellectualization of the bureaucracy and its vassal recruitment base during this period, representing an increasing

71. Hamada Giichirō, *Ōta Nanpo* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1963), pp. 152–74.

72. Hashimoto, *Edo bakufu shiken seidoshi no kenkyū,* pp. 145–46.

73. Ibid., pp. 140–50.

acceptance of intellectual skills as a core factor to be considered in appointment. It was a powerful public symbol of the state's promotion of an increase in the value of scholarship as cultural capital.

This increasing social and political value of scholarship, symbolized through the academy's Confucian examinations, extended to other areas of knowledge promoted by the Shōheizaka scholars. Shibano's emphasis on the development of specialization in education, training, and bureaucracy—especially including practical military, accounting, and civil administration skills—together with the attention of the Koga family to the development of European expansion all pointed toward modern trends that would become more pronounced in the nineteenth century, particularly in relation to engagement with the technologies and sociologies of Western imperialism. Shōheizaka Academy scholars paid very early attention to this area.

Internationalization

The nineteenth century is generally acknowledged as the age of global empire. Through the early modern period, the world economy had become increasingly integrated across regions. This rapidly expanded the flow of information both quantitatively and qualitatively. Tokugawa Japan, especially in the fields of intellectual knowledge and intelligence, was in no way "isolated" from these developments.[74] As pointed out in previous research, throughout the Tokugawa period private intellectuals and doctors showed great enthusiasm for foreign culture and technology, including those from the West.[75] Sometimes overlooked in the historical literature, however, is the great care of the Tokugawa state from the beginning of the shogunate to acquire foreign intelligence. The most systematized access to foreign intelligence was through the Dutch. As Matsukata Fuyuko's work has demonstrated, this was achieved particularly through the institutionalized system of the *fūsetsugaki*.[76] The acquisition of foreign intelligence was increasingly actively sought and systematically institutionalized through the late eighteenth into the nineteenth century, leading ultimately to the establishment of the Bansho Shirabesho (Barbarian Documents Research Institute) in 1856 (renamed Kaiseijo in 1863). The Bansho Shirabesho is famous as

74. On the idea of alleged "isolation" in the Tokugawa period, see Ronald P. Toby, *"Sakoku" to iu gaikō* (Tokyo: Shōgakkan, 2008), and Ronald P. Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

75. See Ivo Smits and Leonard Blusse, eds., *Bridging the Divide: 400 Years, the Netherlands-Japan* (Leiden: Hotei Publishing, 2000); Margarita Winkel, "Discovering Different Dimensions: Explorations of Culture and History in Early Modern Japan" (Ph.D. diss., Leiden University, 2004).

76. Matsukata Fuyuko, *Oranda fūsetsugaki to kinsei Nihon* (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 2007).

the main vehicle for late Tokugawa intelligence on Western politics and technology and as the breeding ground for a large number of the influential political thinkers of the early Meiji period.[77] Often ignored is the fact that the intellectual and institutional roots of these organizations are found in the late eighteenth-century reform of the Shōheizaka Academy itself and thus in the work of Neo-Confucian political advisors of the eighteenth century.

Ten years before the Kansei period, while still an independent scholar studying in the Kansai in 1778, Koga Seiri wrote an influential treatise warning of possible encroachment on Japan's autonomy by foreign (particularly Russian) imperial ambitions and advising the shogunate what action it should take to prevent it. *Kyokuron jiji fūji* (A secret memorial on the urgency of current affairs) seems to have been the first political treatise to systematically address the Western threat issue.[78] Interestingly, it predates the works usually cited on this issue such as Hayashi Shihei's *Sangoku tsūran zusetu* (1786) and *Kaikoku heidan* (1787), and the Mito scholar Fujita Yūkoku's *Seimeiron* (1791).[79] Koga's thesis, like Hayashi Shihei's later works, was advice on how to hold back foreign incursions. The manner through which Koga advised the shogunate to do that, however, is striking for its reformist, engaging, and one might even say daring nature. Koga recommended a diplomatically and militarily expansive policy including engagement with Western technology, arguing that the shogunate should "employ the barbarians to assault the barbarians."[80] This was his recommended approach to the problem of potential Western threat as early as the end of the eighteenth century. His third son and later head of the Shōheizaka Academy, Koga Tōan (1788–1847), continued this work, becoming a major writer on coastal defense alongside his Confucian duties.[81] Tōan's son,

77. Important Meiji intellectuals and leaders with Bansho Shirabesho pedigrees included Nakamura Masanao, Nishi Amane, Tsuda Mamichi, Katō Hiroyuki, Mitsukuri Shūhei, Sugi Kōji, Mitsukuri Rinshō, Shōda Heigorō, Numa Morikazu, and Fukuchi Genichirō.

78. I follow Mikiso Hane's translation of this title as it appears in his translation of Maruyama, *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan,* p. 344.

79. Brett Walker, for instance, uses Hayashi Shihei's 1787 work as the primary reference for the emergence these kinds of ideas (Brett L. Walker, *The Conquest of Ainu Lands: Ecology and Culture in Japanese Expansion, 1590–1800* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001], pp. 164, 169, 264 [note 33]), as does Robert Hellyer (Robert I. Hellyer, *Defining Engagement: Japan and Global Contexts, 1640–1868* [Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009], p. 102).

80. Koga Seiri, *Kyokuron jiji fūji* (1778), in Takimoto Sei'ichi, ed., *Nihon keizai sōsho,* Vol. 17 (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Sōsho Kankōkai, 1917), p. 185. This phrase appears in *Han shu,* in Ban and Dingyi, *Xin Jiao Ben Han Shu Bing Fu Bian Er Zhong,* p. 2281, and *Hou Han shu,* in Fan, *Xin Jiao Ben Hou Han Shu Bing Fu Bian Shi San Zhong,* p. 1576.

81. Koga Tōan's *Kaibō okusoku* (1839) is usually cited as one of the major Tokugawa-era works on coastal defense.

Koga Kin'ichirō (1816–84), did likewise and became an expert in the Dutch language and Western learning in general, as well as being a Confucian professor at the Shōheizaka Academy and the first director of the Bansho Shirabesho.

In his 1778 treatise on the Western threat, Koga Seiri argued that the most urgent reform was to "open the channels of communication."[82] As touched on earlier, this is also one of the most important elements of his advice for general reform of the shogunate bureaucracy contained in his *Jūjikai*.[83] In both works, he refers primarily to communication between different levels of government and society in Japan. In *Jūjikai* it is clear that he calls for a dynamic opening in the capacity of the upper levels to hear the advice of those lower in the hierarchy. In *Kyokuron jiji fūji,* Koga uses this "orthodoxy" to go further than he does in *Jūjikai* by suggesting the opening of the channels of communication not only as a tool of interagency governance but also to imply that the shogunate should seek intelligence and information from outside. The practical implications of this he makes clear in recommending the development of cannon technology and naval forces.[84] The textual basis for this "opening the channels of communication" in *Kyokuron jiji fūji* is none other than a citation from Cheng Yi, the Song philosopher who, together with his brother Cheng Hao and Zhu Xi himself, is regarded as one of three founders of the Zhu Xi school of Neo-Confucianism.[85]

Possibly the most dynamic element of the treatise is not simply this advice to employ naval technologies in response to similar developments in the West but the aggressiveness and thoroughness with which Koga recommended a policy of territorial expansion in the north. Interest in territorial expansion to the north of Japan into the areas now known as Hokkaido, the Kuriles, and Sakhalin was a point in the writing of contemporary figures like Miura Baien.[86] Koga's recommendation of this policy is remarkable in linking this to institutional reform by arguing for the enfeoffment of Japanese lords in this area, and both learning from and utilizing directly barbarians in these areas for military purposes.[87] This clear recommendation to engage foreign technologies and people in organizing for military defense as well as expansion of Japan is one striking element of the treatise

82. Koga, *Kyokuron jiji fūji,* pp. 170–72.

83. Koga, *Jūjikai,* p. 157.

84. Koga, *Kyokuji jiji fūji,* pp. 174–77.

85. Ibid., p. 172. The phrase 開言路 *kai yanlu* (*kai genro; genro o hiraki*) (open the channels of communication) is a direct quote contained in Zhu Xi, *Zhuzi Yu Lei* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shu Ju, 1985), p. 2449. The phrase *yanlu* is used six times by Zhu Xi in this text and also in his commentary on *Confucius Analects* (Zhu Xi, *Si Shu Zhang Ju Ji Zhu* [Beijing: Zhonghua Shu Ju, 1983), p. 290).

86. See Walker, *Conquest of Ainu Lands.*

87. Koga, *Kyokuron jiji fūji,* pp. 183–84.

that goes beyond other writers' ideas of forward defense through occupation of "unused" lands.[88]

The model at this time for Koga's expansive vision of empire appears to have been not so much the West but Qing China. Recent publications on the history of the Manchu Empire have pointed out its success until quite late in its program of territorial expansion—or what some have labeled "imperialism."[89] In his advice on how to deal with the Western threat in the north by "employing the barbarians to assault the barbarians," Koga refers to this approach as "the Chinese model."[90] He borrows the "employing the barbarians to assault the barbarians" phrase from the *Han shu* from a period in Chinese history often compared to the Qing in terms of the extent of expansionist activity. Indeed, contemporaneously, the Manchu Qing empire was "defending" China exactly through this kind of dynamic territorial expansion, bringing it into initially victorious military conflict with Russia—the very same foreign threat that Koga was worried about.[91]

The influence of not only classical, Han, Song, and Ming but also of reasonably contemporary Qing political thinking and writing in the ideas of Koga is interesting when considering the global manner in which he thought about the political issues facing the shogunate. While on the one hand Koga's openness to Western technologies and recommended policy of competing externally with the Western powers militarily is strikingly different from the image that is usually presented of orthodox Neo-Confucians, it is also interesting to note that many influences on this approach to political advice appear to come from an at-this-time still aggressive and expansive (as well as Neo-Confucian) Qing China.[92] Unlike in the early nineteenth-century Mito school writing, where China is perceived as weak, in this

88. Koga uses the term "unused" (*buyō*) in *Kyokuron jiji fūji,* p. 185. The implication that the lack of cultivation of land in the same manner as that practiced by the imperialist power renders the indigenous peoples' land rights null and void was also contemporaneously a classic justification of land appropriation in Western imperialism. The legal construction of *terra nullius* in the case of the British occupation of Australia, which occurred ten years after the writing of *Kyokuron jiji fūji,* is a classic example.

89. Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005). The use of the word "imperialism" and the comparison with contemporary Western imperialism can be found in Kirk W. Larsen, *Tradition, Treaties, and Trade: Qing Imperialism and Chosŏn Korea, 1850–1910* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2008), pp. 1–10.

90. Koga, *Kyokuron jiji fūji,* p. 185.

91. Perdue, *China Marches West,* p. 138.

92. See Makabe's chapters on the effect of Qing Confucian commentaries on the development of Koga Seiri's Confucianism, and the effect of Qing writings on both Koga Seiri's and Koga Tōan's approach to foreign relations (Makabe, *Tokugawa kōki no gakumon to seiji,* pp. 232–81). See also Takehiko Okada's comments on late Tokugawa Neo-Confucians *identifying* themselves (his italics) with late-Ming and early-Qing Confucians (in Peter Nosco,

earlier period writers like Koga associate both Qing China and its Neo-Confucian tradition with global power.

The way the influence of late imperial China played out in the writings and advice of the Shōheizaka Academy scholars was in large part determined by their own critical and complex approach to Chinese government and scholarship. Shibano Ritsuzan in his *Jōsho,* for example, praised Japanese scholars for their translations of Tang political treatises and the Ming legal codes as a great contribution to just government on one page and then condemned mindless copying of Chinese ways on the next.[93] Shōheizaka Academy scholars clearly favored terminology and ideas from Han texts, like those of Ban Gu, regarded as having marked the change in examination curricula from Ming to Qing. At the same time, they used Qing-era criticism of evidential learning to condemn the Sorai-ist scholarship in Japan which demanded a return to sole reliance on Han and pre-Han texts.

In other words, scholars such as Shibano, Koga, and Bitō Jishū were in no sense following anyone else's predetermined state or other orthodoxy. They constructed their stance from a mix of positions picked out of the late imperial polemics on Confucian literary and political theory. They were happy to recommend Qing-favored Han-dynasty political treatises and histories alongside Ming commentaries on Song Neo-Confucian theory that had been recommended by Korean envoys.[94] Their tastes were diverse, transnational, and transdynastic but clearly influenced primarily by late imperial China. This is the main point to emphasize in contrast with the image of Japanese Neo-Confucianism that often holds sway in the secondary literature. Shōheizaka Academy Confucianism, in terms of both political and literary theory, was not primarily Song. It was not stuck in a static discourse set in the twelfth century but was linked directly into the dynamic discourse on politics of the previous two centuries. The immediate and overwhelming influences were Ming and Qing, with an occasional dash of Chosŏn. Much of that influence was delivered through texts written since 1600 and thereby imported into and acting upon Japan through the Tokugawa period. This also points to the transnational character of the development as well as the content of Shōheizaka Academy political thought.

Conclusion

In contrast to most Tokugawa Confucians, the Three Kansei Professors, and those who followed them into leadership positions in the Shōheizaka

ed., *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984], p. 229).

93. Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* pp. 135–36. Shibano praises Japanese scholars' translations of the Tang *Zhenguan zhengyao* and the Ming *Daminglü*.

94. See the discussion on Qiu Jun's (1421–95) *Daxue yanyi* (Jp. *Daigaku engi*) in Shibano, *Ritsuzan jōsho,* p. 137.

Academy, enjoyed a level of institutionalized integration into the machinery of government that allowed them to influence structural political reform to an unprecedented extent. Their reformist vision of bureaucracy had the most comprehensive impact on the machinery of shogunate governance. While accepting the inherent feudal nature of shogunal government, they argued cogently for a more professional approach to the flow of information in government, and through the elevation of the Shōheizaka Academy effected a more important role for knowledge (practical as well as ethical) and advice in government. Through state institutionalization of the academy, and the installation of an examination system affecting bureaucratic appointment, they were able to institutionalize a form of intellectual indoctrination in their approaches to knowledge and government that outlasted their own tenures within the shogunate.

Critically, the approach to knowledge institutionalized at this time, and represented in texts such as *Ritsuzan jōsho* and the *Shōheishi,* was two pronged. One approach was the introduction of a standardized, shared curriculum of ethical education carried out through evidential argument. This was based on a standardized approach to Neo-Confucian learning influenced by Song, Ming, and Qing commentators and provided the "orthodoxy" often mentioned in relation to the Kansei reforms. As Shibano Ritsuzan made abundantly clear, however, this shared corpus of a standardized body of basic ethical knowledge was designed to create a shared ethic, an underlying sense of solidarity among the bureaucratic strata, over which would be lain the development of a range of each bureaucrat's specialist areas of knowledge. This emphasis on developing specialist knowledge among the members of the bureaucratic strata, in fields as diverse as traditional fighting techniques and the reading of Dutch texts, was the other important strand of the educational doctrine of the reforms often missed in previous research. Specialist knowledge, and thereby specialization, was something emphasized by Shibano in his initial memorial to the shogunate, taken up in the organization of the academy, strengthened by its evidential approach to knowledge, and best exemplified by the championing of non-Confucian knowledge by Koga Seiri's descendants in the Shōheizaka and Bansho academies.

In this sense, both the "bureaucracy" and the "knowledge" sought by the reformers, although heavily influenced by Chinese ideas, were in no way attempts to recreate either Chinese bureaucratism or the construction of the kind of Neo-Confucian orthodoxy associated with, for instance, the Ming dynasty's examination system. In fact, Shibano, Koga, and Bitō shared the open hostility of critical Qing commentators to the idea of a form of selection based purely on literary orthodoxy. Their original vision was a mix of feudal and bureaucratic, military and literary, practical and ethical approaches to the construction of good governance. This vision, however, had a transnational pedigree. It arose from, and can be seen as part of, a trans–East Asian discourse on the role of knowledge in government.

This late Tokugawa experience is particularly interesting when considering how feudal and bureaucratic systems of government interact, especially in terms of the issue of later modernization.[95] Chinese and Korean bureaucratism has been seen by some scholars as a roadblock to modernization because of the focus of the examination systems on a closed canonical corpus of old indigenous knowledge. It has been argued that in feudalism, the fact that hereditary status was not linked to knowledge systems perhaps made feudal societies more flexible in picking up new constellations of outside knowledge. But in late Tokugawa Japan, an increase in the role of bureaucratic elements of government, albeit within the feudal system, was clearly designed to effect more engagement by the state with specialized knowledge and the systematic processing of knowledge in a more compartmentalized, specialized manner. In other words, bureaucratization appears to have aided the development of more "modern" forms of information and knowledge management, government organization, and appointment. This topic is worthy of deeper investigation through further research on these late Tokugawa reforms and the operation of the later Shōheizaka Academy.[96]

The role of orthodoxy is another element of this late Tokugawa experience for further consideration. Most theoretical writing on orthodoxy approaches the phenomenon in terms of its history in Western theology. Much writing on the role of orthodoxy in the history of China has also concentrated on the religious connotations of state Confucian orthodoxy.[97] These religious connotations are probably less relevant to Japan, given Japanese society's historically comparative disinterest in the ritual side of Confucianism.[98] However, historians of China have also emphasized the political side of orthodoxy. Benjamin Elman, for instance, has described state-sanctioned Confucian orthodoxy in late imperial China in terms of "a carefully constructed Confucian 'disguise' worn by an autocratic but not yet totalitarian state."[99] He emphasized a top-down vision where orthodoxy is created by those on high to control those below. This is probably the kind of vision of Confucian orthodoxy assumed by most writers on Japan when they mention the Kansei Prohibition of Heterodoxy. The roots of the Kansei orthodoxy,

95. See recent influential works in this field such as Woodside, *Lost Modernities,* and Zhang and Sonoda, *"Hōken" "gunken" saikō.*

96. For such research, Hashimoto Akihito, ed., *Shōheizaka Gakumonjo nikki* (Tokyo: Shibunkai, 1998–2006), is an important resource.

97. Liu, *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China,* pp. 1–24.

98. Kurozumi, *Fukusūsei no Nihon shisō,* pp. 209–11. Note that I write *comparative* disinterest. As the research of James McMullen into the *sekiten* ritual has shown, some Japanese certainly were interested in Confucian ritual. I. J. McMullen, "The Worship of Confucius in Ancient Japan," in Peter Francis Kornicki and James Mullen, eds., *Religion in Japan: Arrows to Heaven and Earth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 39–77.

99. Elman and Woodside, eds., *Education and Society in Late Imperial China,* p. 112.

however, were not autocratic or totalitarian. The introduction of a standardized practical approach to Confucian knowledge (the Shōheizaka "orthodoxy") was conducted by Confucians who came from independent schools in Osaka and the regional *han,* and who had themselves little hereditary standing. It was their way to use their often peripheral Confucian political ideas to influence the hereditary feudal government. In other words, the creation of "orthodoxy" was for them a step in creating an institutional structure whereby thinking people of little hereditary status, and often from the periphery of Japan, could affect the central government: bottom up rather than top down.

Leiden University