

VARIETIES OF CONTROL AND RELEASE IN TOKUGAWA RELIGION

by

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## THESIS ABSTRACT

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The Tokugawa period (1600-1868) brought significant social, legislative, and institutional change to Japan, including peace and stability that pervaded much of early modern society. Life in these new social conditions was experienced under the authoritative and ideological influence of the shogunal regime, which sought to order society in a way reflective of administrative ideals. However, while control over Tokugawa inhabitants existed to a certain degree, there were also instances of geographical and social release from such control through engagement in religious pilgrimage and ritual. Practices such as these allowed some citizens to move around, through, and perhaps beyond the modes of confinement established by authorities. This release, which is illuminated by considerations of social and ritual theory, leaves us with a nuanced picture of Tokugawa life and indicates that relatively fluid portions of society may have maneuvered within the boundaries of the hegemonic structure.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Many historians consider the battle at Sekigahara in the year 1600 to be a turning point in Japan's history, one that marked a movement away from warfare and instability toward relative peace and security. The social climate in which the Japanese found themselves demanded a new outlook on daily life as citizens in established cities and burgeoning towns, but also brought with it a new leader. The battle's victor, Tokugawa Ieyasu, would help to establish this new era of social stability that stood in stark contrast to the patrilineal power struggles and provincial warfare that had pervaded Japan in prior centuries. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the previously militant samurai class had suffered a major collapse and was newly repurposed as relatively sedentary peacekeepers. Sprawling castle towns had begun to develop in cities like Edo to accommodate not only the shogunate elite but also the growing citizenry. Commerce had begun to gain momentum as a means to a sustainable economy, giving rise to lucrative businesses in performing arts, literature, and cuisine. Even prostitution received a certain legitimization via government regulation. By the seventeenth century, cities like Edo appeared as hubs of progress and accomplishment, benchmarks for cultural and social change nationwide.

Taking into account the degree to which the Tokugawa shogunate so deeply affected life and society for nearly two hundred fifty years, it is necessary to consider the ideological goals of the shogunate in conducting a study of social change during this time. The legislative decisions carried out by the shogunal government, their effects on its citizens, and the varied reactions to those changes are all necessary components when examining the reach of Ieyasu and his subsequent legacy as a military ruler. By tracing these legislative efforts and their effects, we are offered direct access to the foundational ideology through which they were administered, as well as conceptual understandings of what comprised an ordered society. Indeed, ideological considerations are key to understanding the motivations of any governmental institution, and this

is especially true when examining Tokugawa hegemony. How exactly was Ieyasu able to conduct such a drastic reordering of society as a ruler, and what was the ideological platform through which this was carried out? At a fundamental level beyond legislation, we find that political legitimacy became the means by which change was enacted during this period, giving rise to an ideological and institutional framework that supported an ordered society.

Political legitimacy contained within it the basis for power that began and maintained social change in Japan during the onset of the seventeenth century. This ideological power held a different sway over its citizens than the legislative power of edicts passed during the period, and a power different still from the physical might exhibited by the patrolling samurai class. While the presence of these latter forms of power upheld decisions made by the shogunate, lending some degree of tangible sustainability to Tokugawa social order, it was the delicately crafted ideology out of which grew the great potential to legitimize the drastic political measures for a streamlined society. This ideology, described by Herman Ooms as one that is realized by some “other means [than warfare] and, indeed, only achieves its aims if relegated to the background of public consciousness,” became the most direct and effective route for conditioned social reordering.<sup>1</sup>

Measuring social change by looking at the ideological framework behind the legislative efforts of the Tokugawa shogunate is certainly telling, but a study of its historical origins may only be partially revealing in this way. For the sake of a more robust representation of Tokugawa social order, it is also important to examine the society upon which these drastic changes were made, and the way in which social customs and traditions may have also been affected. After all, society itself bears both the burden and the relief rendered by legislative decisions and institutional shifts. It is difficult for the governing body to predict or control social reactions to drastic legislative efforts, and these reactions can therefore reveal much about the ethos of the time. Furthermore, ritual customs and practices that may have been cultural fixtures for

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<sup>1</sup> Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology, Early Constructs 1570-1680*, Princeton University Press, 1985, p 288.

centuries leading up to the Tokugawa era provide a backdrop against which to measure change and its effects. What are the inherent costs incurred by a citizen in a secure and stable society, and how are they measured? What must citizens leave behind as a nation abandons its past for a seemingly more harmonious and secure future, and what is gained? What happens when some of the citizenry do not share the same ideology? We gain glimpses into answers to questions such as these as we look at social history during the Tokugawa period in the context of religion.

By examining religious practices in Tokugawa Japan, we are provided an entry point to understanding a society regulated by legislative measures and their subsequent social, cultural and religious ramifications. In particular, issues involving religious engagement, cultural ideals, and economic aims help to constellate a view of a society under the influence of a political ideology enacted legislatively, an ideology that directly affected the nature of religious practice in society. Buddhism in Japanese society had had varied roles since its arrival to the country in the sixth century, and the Tokugawa era inaugurated a different relationship between religious praxis and political ideology compared to earlier periods.

Nevertheless, certain features remained constant. Since its beginnings in Japan, Buddhist lineal authority and immigrant kinship conferred by court literati helped influential figures such as Prince Shōtoku emerge as figureheads of Buddhism, able to establish and contribute early on to its place within Japanese culture and identity.<sup>2</sup> Ancestry and lineage thereafter not only became a permanent feature within the religious imagination in Japan, but also became the source of authoritative political power for those practitioners stationed in government. In this way, as a religious tradition recognized early on as having a necessary role in cultural, social, and political change, Tokugawa era Buddhism had already held within it the considerable power of ties to political legitimacy.

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<sup>2</sup> Michael Como, *Shōtoku: Ethnicity, Ritual, and Violence in the Japanese Buddhist Tradition*, Oxford University Press, 2008.

In that sense, the changes wrought by Tokugawa religion were more evolutionary than revolutionary, but they were significant nonetheless. Perhaps the most notable legislative change made during the Tokugawa period was the implementation of the *danka seido*, or temple-household affiliation system. Taking its most definitive form after an edict in 1638, this obligatory registration system became one of the main modes of the social construction of reality during the Tokugawa period and, at the most basic level, gave rise to a society made to exhibit a shared religious ideal. Under this system, families and householders were obligated to register with a nearby Buddhist temple, exchanging monetary and material fees for funerary, memorial, and prayer services. These exchanges and affiliations helped to sustain a vast network of temples and householders with a robust economy all its own, but more broadly served to endorse a nationwide decree on religious homogeneity, the authentication of shogunate power, and a priesthood newly endowed with the administrative responsibility of monitoring the population while attending to its spiritual needs.

This stands in marked contrast to previous centuries in which individual family members often had diverse sectarian affiliations. Here, a legislative edict is emblematic of the changes effected in the religious realm. Religious pilgrimages, not infrequently on a large scale involving thousands, coursed their way through the landscape, both figurative and literal, which had their own rituals, hierarchies, and economies. At the same time that the Tokugawa regime and such edicts wrought social control and stability, there were also another set of issues concerning the interplay between religious freedom, ritual, and the movement of social capital. While Ieyasu and the Tokugawa shogunate were able to implement a system of social control through the *danka* system, they did not suppress social mobility entirely.

Thus, it becomes necessary to understand the complex interaction and balance between elements of religious praxis reinforcing social control and stability on the one hand, and those involving social mobility and volatility on the other. In either case, there are parameters of social and ritual logic and praxis, with their attendant dynamics of hierarchy and equality, individuality

and collectivity, and the loss and accrual of capital in all realms of human activity: emotional, social, economic, material, and so forth.

In particular, concepts such as power, control, and capital appear commonly as operative forces in the monetized, hegemonic social subsystems of Tokugawa society, for they represent the tangible relationships between social groups and their ruling body. However, for this study, they also represent the foundational pillars upon which the *danka* system was founded and serve to provide a means of gauging the effects of a shifting social order in Tokugawa Japan. These factors, while working together to reinforce some of the core ideological and political aims of the Tokugawa shogunate, also helped to form and perpetuate specific temple-householder relationships in which individual religious needs played off the larger administrative system. Furthermore, since the relationship of exchange built into the *danka* system dealt directly with funerary rites and other memorial services, we can see the effects of legislative social control in much more detail when the role of ritual is taken as central to the study of Tokugawa society. These practices, as well as others such as the *nukemairi* and *okagemairi* pilgrimages, are central to discussing the relationship between the Tokugawa *bakufu* and the religious foundations of society.

The work of scholars such as Catherine Bell, Pierre Bourdieu, and Victor and Edith Turner in the fields of religious studies, sociology, and anthropology can lend additional insight to the examination of religious practices and their treatment in Tokugawa religious society. They can enhance our historical understanding with methodological insights on the core issues at hand: the lived experience of an institutionalized ritual system, the monetization of that system as a means to accrue capital, and society's outlook on its effects. Specific concepts they provide help to illuminate this period in Japan's social history. For instance, ritual theorist Catherine Bell's notion of "redemptive hegemony" allows us to gauge the significance of religious ritual in ways

that enrich historical analysis.<sup>3</sup> In her model, individuals in a society may ascend the hierarchy if they are able to demonstrate an ability to strategically transmit both the meaning and purpose of ritual, embody a “cultural sense of ritual,” and uphold the disposition necessary for ritual socialization. At the same time, this “redemptive” quality of an imposed social structure, which allows for some degree of movement by the individual, also grants its hegemon the ability to define, constrain, or empower those within the ritual system in their movement.<sup>4</sup> We are presented with a model that outlines the delicate exchange of power shared between members of society and its ruling body, one that is based on ritual embodiment and propriety. As is similarly suggested by Kenneth Marcure in his work on the historical development of the of the temple-householder relationship, “In light of the political control and economic burdens involved, the *danka* structure may have been a restrictive and at times repressive system, but that does not mean that there was no room to maneuver within it.”<sup>5</sup> Bell’s theory is the product of the postmodern West, which draws on the work of earlier social theorists Émile Durkheim and Clifford Geertz, but she is also a scholar of Chinese religious ritual, and her insights can be extended to the case of Tokugawa religion. On the one hand, the application of her ritual paradigm reveals the subtle coercion at work within the ritual system of a hegemonic social order. On the other hand, it may also reveal the possible ways in which the Tokugawa citizen, through exercising his or her own ritual power, may have been able to resist hegemonic forces and allow for certain degrees of social mobility beyond mere ascendance within a ritual hierarchy.

Similarly, the work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu also provides an opportunity to better understand the role of the *danka* system in constructing social order, and is particularly helpful in illustrating the nuances of this system of exchange. For Bourdieu, capital, broadly defined in social terms that include affective, economic, and material dimensions, may also be symbolic in

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<sup>3</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Oxford University Press, 2009.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p 221

<sup>5</sup> Kenneth A. Marcure, “The *Danka* System,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Spring, 1985), p 47.

that it can be measured through the accrual of power or prestige. His notion of *symbolic power* shows that the various measures of capital come to contribute to a network of exchange relationships wherein this power is exercised in acts of *symbolic violence*; one party is ultimately subtly subordinated, succumbing to ingrained social dispositions such as duty and docility. These systems of disposition, which he refers to as the *habitus*, help to illustrate the socializing aspects of ritual, in which social conditioning is adapted to objective goals without overtly appealing to ideologies of obedience, orchestrated action, or blind adherence.<sup>6</sup> This is worth considering in the context of the institutionalization of a set of rituals that had already been a cultural fixture in Japanese Buddhist society by the Tokugawa period, and it directly addresses the issue of subtle ideological force as a means of forming and establishing social order and capital accrual. The work of Bell and Bourdieu, which are closely complementary, can be applied to the study of Tokugawa religious ritual, and their approaches will help to unpack a key dynamic in any study of social order: the way in which change affected people, and the way in which people affected change.

Additionally, the work of scholars Laura Nenzi, Carmen Blacker, Constantine Vaporis and Nam-lin Hur will help to provide the historical foundation through which we can explore some of the social changes that occurred within Tokugawa religious life. They each illustrate the ways in which citizens adjusted to the new social conditions of the Tokugawa era, and do so by tracing the historical developments of travel, pilgrimage, geographical expansion, and the *danka* system, among other early modern changes. In reading accounts of these social, legislative, and geographical changes in Tokugawa society, one might easily conclude that such developments enacted by Iyemasu and subsequent shoguns created a system of absolute control from above. This may seem especially obvious in the establishment of the *danka* system, wherein religious ritual became administered in the name of legislative authority. Yet, when one examines the actual lives of Tokugawa citizens, a much more complex picture emerges, one in which the very

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<sup>6</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 72.



systems of ritual practice that were used to control the citizens were actually used by the citizens themselves to various degrees in resisting, subverting, and transgressing the boundaries imposed on them by the *bakufu*.

As helpful as Bell and Bourdieu can be, however, there are additional dimensions of ritual religious life that their theories may not fully account for. Specifically, are there dimensions that cannot be quantified in terms of position within the ritual hierarchy or the accrual of social capital? As Edith and Victor Turner suggest in their study of pilgrimage, where they define pilgrimage as external mysticism, and mysticism as internal pilgrimage, one might meaningfully speak of an experience of relief or release from the constant vying for privilege and power as a component of religious experience. Of course, one has no way to determine if individuals within Tokugawa religion actually experienced such a sacred release, but one can ascertain if such discourses were inscribed in their ritual bodies, explicitly or implicitly.

Thus, it is hoped that the style of approach taken in this historical study of social order will not simply give the reader a sense that the legislative moves made by the Tokugawa shogunate were made solely in the name of repression and control. Nor is this approach meant to bring to the attention of the reader some political or social injustice that occurred within Japan's history. While the implementation of the *danka* system and the relationship shared between the shogunate, the vast network of Buddhist temples, and the practitioners themselves may be read this way, it seems unfair to ignore other complexities within that relationship as equally illuminating, or even contrary to assumption. Indeed, social control, obligatory religious affiliation, and coercion as a means for members of society to accrue capital all appear as influential factors within this system, but to reduce membership in Tokugawa society to these terms alone is to overlook the diversity to be found in the particulars of this era. Instead, this social order also seemed to hold within it the possibility of individual empowerment for the Japanese, both internal and external, though it may be measured in ways other than by monetary or political clout.

As we will see, while the hegemonic structure provided a rigidity and inflexibility that reflected the ideals of the Tokugawa government, it also allowed for geographical and social mobility and reclamation of religious identity by the individual within, and perhaps beyond the system itself. The social relationships that developed out of collective practice, as well as the movement of symbolic capital within and to certain social groups reveals that, while modes of social control existed at the legislative level, they were also maintained to some degree by the Tokugawa inhabitants themselves. These varied representations of social, religious, and political life during the Tokugawa period illustrates some of the challenges of attempting to achieve a nuanced understanding of Tokugawa religion. Overall, it is hoped that this study will reveal that, while the application of social and ritual theory may be able to illuminate instances of release from control in Tokugawa religious life that exist beyond the scope of historiography alone, there may also be instances of release that are beyond the reach of theory, an indication of the social and religious complexities of the Tokugawa era. Thus, a complete picture of control and release in Tokugawa Japan may require a variety of interdisciplinary approaches, and while this study is only meant as an entry point for continued research, it may begin to point to new ways of assessing change in religious society.

In Chapter 2, some of the main historical developments of the *danka* system are traced to show how Tokugawa ideology rose to the forefront as a means to legislative and institutional change. Bourdieu's notion of *symbolic capital* is used to broadly examine the economic relationship between members of *danna* households and networked Buddhist temples.

In Chapter 3, the *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* pilgrimages provide two examples of how Tokugawa inhabitants were able to move beyond some of the confines of the *danka* system. A variety of destinations and the arrays of meaning attributed to the journey during travel are also examined to show how Tokugawa pilgrimage was multifaceted. Bell's notion of "redemptive hegemony" is used to show how the movements undertaken by particular social groups represented strains of resistance against the hegemonic order.

Chapter 4 utilizes Bourdieu's concepts of the *habitus*, *doxa*, and *symbolic capital* in order to examine ancestral veneration and mortuary ritual as a social process, and the delivery of the *segaki* ritual as a medium of exchange between particular social groups. Combined, the studies contained in these chapters are designed to present a multilayered representation of religious life in Tokugawa Japan and show some of the complexities of social change during the early modern period.

## CHAPTER II

### A NEW SOCIAL ORDER

#### **Buddhism in a New Tokugawa Society**

The growing Tokugawa population had to make adjustments to the new lifestyle in the castle towns and, as money found its way to certain social groups and business endeavors, the identity of the townsperson became more clearly defined by economic measures. Life in metropolitan epicenters like Edo, with its one million citizens, required each person to make a constant effort to secure and maintain their livelihood, and tap into the possibilities of commerce; thus, various trades, crafts, and small businesses sprang up. While urban culture meant many things during the Tokugawa era, it first and foremost meant economic prospects. Furthermore, as suggested by Nishiyama Matsunosuke, “The presence of a large stratum of newly enfranchised warrior nobles required the procurement of a tremendous quantity of consumer goods. Supplying such goods was the responsibility of official merchants and artisans who streamed to the capital from all parts of the country. Edo thus became a consumer capital.”<sup>7</sup> In this way, the establishment of Tokugawa rule also intensified the consumer culture of Japanese society.

Welcomed by some, the providing of goods in exchange for payment was a relationship that eventually came to define Tokugawa society both economically and culturally, and gave rise to a new social class not seen in Japan’s history: the *chōnin*, or townsperson. These craftspeople, merchants, and performers brought liveliness to cities like Edo, and they sought to keep up with the new demands of an economy that was beginning to stabilize. It was the *chōnin* who played a key role in advancing the economic market with trade and the production of goods necessary for life during the era. More importantly, the *chōnin* as a class represented a more sedentary lifestyle than that of the peasants and farmers living in the thrall of military conflict, and reflected the new

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<sup>7</sup> Nishiyama Matsunosuke, *Edo Culture: Daily Life and Diversions in Urban Japan, 1600-1868*, University of Hawai’i Press, 1997, p 29.

Tokugawa ideology of social order and stability. Sprawling castle towns such as Edo, Kyoto, and Ōsaka represented a permanent lifestyle not often experienced in a country under the constant threat of clan warfare. During the centuries that led up to the Tokugawa era, rural inhabitants suffered displacement at the hands of warfare, disease, and other catastrophes. One had to be ready and willing to move under the changing social and political conditions inherent to the time. However, in Tokugawa society, for those living within the boundaries of growing cities and under the rule of a demilitarized shogunate, geographical, social, and economic continuity became the new conditions under which one could live. As a class, the *chōnin* was one of the most representative social developments in Tokugawa Japan, which made a historical turn toward an early modern society.

With birth spikes in the native population of Edo and the steady influx of non-native citizens seeking a new life of stability, the city's surrounding Buddhist temples fell under considerable pressure to meet the demands of a growing population and, like the citizens themselves, adjusted accordingly. Added pressures on the development and maintenance of inner-city temples were apparent, as construction and placement was determined by strict guidelines outlined in the shogunate's aggressive city planning measures. In fact, the installation of outer moats encircling Edo castle itself, as well as the acquisition of new land tracts for secondary and tertiary homes for *daimyo* families pushed most of the inner-city temples outward by 1639.<sup>8</sup> Thus, while there was real progress towards stability, Buddhist temples were nonetheless under specific pressures within a changing world.

In addition to the forced relocation of temples, there was also the ever-present danger of catastrophic fires in areas of increasing population density. After the great Meireki Fire of 1657, which destroyed large portions of Edo, the temples were moved further outward to the scarcely populated suburban areas. By the middle of the seventeenth century, so many Buddhist temples

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<sup>8</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 6.

had been moved outward and clustered together in the area encircling Edo castle that Buddhist “districts” developed, some of which included networks of over 150 temples.<sup>9</sup> While these temples were grouped together in a single belt surrounding the castle and its densest metropolitan areas, ostensibly allowing for easy access by patrons to a single place, they actually suffered economically after the initial move outward. Many of the inner-city temples that had once existed in the midst of highly populated areas of downtown Edo were later relocated to sparsely populated communities in the hills and valleys, and so became far removed from the constant presence of supportive patrons.

There were a few ways that Tokugawa Buddhist temples such as these were able to remain financially viable. Many relied on income garnered from properties, renting out their land parcels and front districts to townspeople for residences or businesses. If such properties were within the boundaries of the “vermillion-seal,” a borderline demarcating land that was deemed exempt from taxation by the shogun, the net profit could be even higher. For instance, rice yield from this particular area of land measured in range from five *koku* to 700 *koku* depending on the exact location, and the total yield for the region was 5,480 *koku*. If the average taxable quantity of *koku* per temple within the “vermillion-seal” land was about 112, this could generate an income of 34 *koku* of rice at a 30 percent rate of tax.<sup>10</sup> While this may have been a considerable income for particular Buddhist temples at the time, it was not shared by them all. The high honor of existing as a temple on “vermillion-seal” land was only granted to 49 temples, a mere five percent of the hundreds that clustered around the castle town in suburban areas. Clearly, since the placement of temples in this special category of land was enjoyed by a very few, others had to find different ways of dealing with the harsh realities of adjusting to new life in growing Edo society. Luckily, these newly erected temples found a stable income in ways other than land

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<sup>9</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p 8.

taxation and leasing. Many were able to gather financial support through prayer and votive rites, donations, alms giving, and the sale of amulets and talismans. Coupled with the attraction of pilgrims and visitors with hopes of seeing the Buddhist halls of worship, these small services were able to partially fill the financial gaps that grew too rapidly for some temples to keep up with, though there still remained a need for a more steady income. Ironically, while the bustling castle town of Edo grew more and more financially sound as a center for merchant activity, its religious centers, relegated to the periphery of economic progress, experienced growing instability. During the onset of the Tokugawa period, unless a Buddhist temple was considered one of the highly regarded temples situated on the “vermillion-seal” lands, other means of income had to suffice.

### **Trade Relations and Growing Concerns**

The frequency of visitations by pilgrims waxed and waned, and the close proximity of Buddhist temples to one another invited competition over smaller services and patronage, the income of which was often meager. Since prayer and votive services and the sales of amulets and talismans were only able to partially cover the expenses necessary in maintaining these Buddhist temples, other methods of income had to be relied upon. According to Nam-lin Hur, the *danka* system, or the “enduring relationship between a Buddhist temple and a funerary patron household, cemented from generation to generation through recurring rites and services related to death and ancestral veneration,” became the answer to many of these economic concerns for Buddhist temples.<sup>11</sup> After all, death is a pervasive force in any society, and its effects, especially for those who upheld Buddhism as the primary form of religious engagement, had to be dealt with regularly, effectively, and according to custom. In this way, the delivery of death-related rituals and ancestral veneration, services that came to be rendered equally in the name of administrative

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<sup>11</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 9.

duty, financial need, and religious convention, were able to sustain Buddhist temples throughout Tokugawa Japan. Economic stability was by no means the motive behind the implementation of this system. It was, however, an important byproduct that allowed Buddhist temples to meet the early modern economic pressures head on. While it is beyond the scope of this study to fully chronicle the historical development of the *danka* system, it is necessary to discuss a few of the social and cultural conditions under which the system became a fixture in Tokugawa society. By understanding some of the underlying factors that led to the implementation of this system, its relationship to broader social themes such as religious tolerance, obligatory religious adherence, and authority will reveal a legislation that reflected the concerns of those in power.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, Portuguese and Spanish trade ships had developed permanent maritime routes to and from Japan, providing valued access to rare goods produced in Europe and Southeast Asia. Perhaps more importantly, Tokugawa Ieyasu's position as shogun of a newly united Japan meant recognition among other countries located along the trade routes, as well as access to information which flowed freely throughout this maritime network. The trade of goods and information was necessary in establishing such power in the early modern period. Therefore, the Christian missionaries that arrived on Japan's shores with the trade groups were treated relatively well, and the shogunal government took advantage of the opportunity for long-lasting commerce relationships. Japanese citizens even adopted the Christian faith in some instances, referred to by the loanword "Kirishitan," which was taken from the Portuguese, and made up a unique group of Japanese followers practicing under the guidance of Jesuit missionaries. However, the first significant degree of alarm shared by Ieyasu toward Christianity in Japan came after the Okamoto Daihachi incident in 1612, which would begin a gradual process toward countrywide religious surveillance.

In 1608, the Christian daimyo Arima Harunobu met forces with a group of Portuguese sailors off the coast of Macao, which resulted in a number of Japanese deaths. One year later, André Pessoa, a commander involved in the incident, passed through the area and asked to port at



Nagasaki, Japan's primary entrance and exit for trade ships at the time. Harunobu, hearing of the commander's involvement at the clash back in Macao, and with the new knowledge of his presence off the coast of Nagasaki, petitioned the shogun for permission to engage in the name of revenge. With approval, there ensued a four-day battle and Pessoa was killed at sea. Thereafter, Okamoto Daihachi, a faithful practitioner of Christianity who had once fought under the Nagasaki magistrate, had heard of Harunobu's hopes of reward for his valor in dispatching Pessoa. He claimed willingness to lobby his influential master, State Councilor Honda Masazumi, for a grant of three counties in Bizen as a reward on behalf of the shogun. Enticing Harunobu further, Daihachi offered a forged letter from the shogun that outlined approval of the land grant, a grave offense in Tokugawa society. However, Harunobu, too, was guilty of transgressing shogunal authority, for it was revealed that he had plotted the assassination of a shogunal deputy over an insult during the incident in Macao years earlier. Ieyasu's discovery of this plot to kill a proxy shogun, along with that of the forgery of Daihachi, led him to become deeply suspicious of collusion. A further discovery that the Christian faith had been adopted by these men, and also groups of top lieutenants and close guards, brought serious concern over the perceived motives of Christian practitioners: For the shogun, Christianity had become aligned with a challenge to sovereignty. This incident set off a series of shogunal restrictions during the years to follow and, in the year 1612, concerns over Christianity became clearly outlined. In an edict issued that year, the second of five articles clearly prohibited following the faith of the Portuguese fathers and brothers, and demanded punishment for those who refused. Similarly, in the following year, the second son and successor to Ieyasu, Tokugawa Hidetada, issued a "Statement on Expelling Padres" which brought Christian persecution from an effort of prohibition to an effort of expulsion, aiming to eradicate Christianity from Japan all together.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, pp 39-43.

Consequently, the first few years of the seventeenth century saw relations between Japan and Jesuit missionaries go from relatively amicable to rife with suspicion and fear. Along with the spoiled relationship naturally came damaged trade and diplomatic relations. The shogunate halted deliveries of Chinese raw silk from Portuguese trade ships, a shipment which previously met the demands for the valued material for those who could afford it, and garnered considerable income for the country. However, in a display of his resolve, the shogun was unwilling to compromise the internal stability of the military government or its people for the sake of lucrative imports. While the Okamoto Daihachi incident was not likely the first moment during which Ieyasu or subsequent Tokugawa shoguns became critical of Christianity or its perceived challenge to sovereignty, these circumstances allowed for the ideological justification of the legislative edicts that followed. In the name of preserving the primacy of the shogunal position as military ruler of Japan, as well as the safety of a newly ordered country, Christianity became an ideological and political enemy of the nation.

### **Religious Surveillance, *Terauke*, and a System of Control**

It was the third shogun of the era, Tokugawa Iemitsu, who not only carried on the efforts of expelling Christianity from Japan through the deportation of its Portuguese fathers and brothers, but also developed a system of surveillance meant to track down those practitioners remaining among the population. Beginning in 1634 in Nagasaki, the shogunal government started a movement of comprehensive censuses that were meant for collecting data on household religious adherence. The goal of this action was simple: to ensure that Japanese citizens were continuing to adhere to previous mandates of Christian prohibition, and to confirm that there were no secret or subversive householders remaining as undetected Christians in the country. Interestingly, while the village elders were responsible for compiling and reporting the data regarding religious affiliation, priests of Buddhist temples were actually responsible for making

the final judgment as to whether or not a particular household was cleared.<sup>13</sup> The deployment of this census meant two important things for Tokugawa lay and religious society. First, while smaller investigations were carried out earlier on single individuals as a means to confirm their allegiance to the shogunate and to Japan, the wholesale sweeps of Nagasaki's population indicated an enactment on a much larger scale, and Nagasaki became the epicenter from which the countrywide implementation of religious surveillance would spread outwardly. Secondly, the censuses performed in Nagasaki by Buddhist temples meant a fundamental change in the duties of their priests and abbots. Their traditional roles as spiritual providers were compounded by this new function of social monitoring. In a sense, they became not only the administrators of shogunal censuses, but also monastic enforcers of shogunal authority.

By 1638, the continued changes made by Iemitsu in monitoring the population gave rise to the mandated religious certification system, or *terauke*, which would signify the final move outward toward Japan's other main urban centers. During yearly examinations, these populations submitted to testimonials that confirmed each household had no affiliation with the Christian religion, whereupon an official certificate would be granted and an official record kept by the government. While this certainly assuaged the fears of Iemitsu in his mission to fully eradicate Christianity from the Japanese populous, it also meant radical changes to the structure of Buddhism in Japan. First, and perhaps most drastically, the entirety of Japanese population was administratively incorporated into the network of Buddhist temples, wherein even Shintō priests were made to certify their membership and relinquish their shrines to the control of Tokugawa government officials.<sup>14</sup> The next effect was economic, as the temples within this vast network saw an immediate spike in monetary contributions, a majority of which came from citizens lying previously outside the Buddhist structure, unaffiliated with any temple. Unlike the previous

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<sup>13</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 61.

<sup>14</sup> Kenneth A. Marcure, "The *Danka* System," *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Spring, 1985), p 42.

economic struggles suffered by some temples during the early construction of Edo as a castle town, wherein meager earnings came rarely, the introduction of *terauke* meant that even those temples on the geographical fringes saw a rise in contributions. Lastly, the temples also saw an increase in labor at the temples, as each household contributed to the upkeep of the buildings and property.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, after 1638, the landscape of the temple networks changed in many ways. It underwent geographical changes in that the rapid development of the city of Edo moved the temples outward in large, surrounding clusters. The ideological status of Buddhist temples also changed. They became aligned with shogunal authority, and temple structures stood not only as centers of religious practice, but also as a standard of measurement for religious authenticity and, at least in the eyes of Iemitsu, for shogunal allegiance. With the influx of contributions given on behalf of new householders under the *terauke* certification system, they also began to gain economic clout. In the way that many other burgeoning business networks grew during the Tokugawa era, the network of Buddhist temples developed its own particular economy, albeit one based largely on an exchange of services rather than goods. Similarly, the role of the priests stationed at each of these temples also changed drastically. While before they had performed rites and rituals for affiliated patrons and members on the basis of necessity, it was now a matter of administrative obligation. On top of this, they were also charged with the duty of managing the censuses given on behalf of the government, and made to confirm the affiliation itself. Thus, even as the *danka* system was in its infant stages, Buddhist temples had accrued considerable power under the many edicts passed by Ieyasu and subsequent shoguns.

While these changes in economic, ideological, and religious power were indeed byproducts of Tokugawa legislative measures, they nonetheless primed the temple network for permanent integration into a system of social order and capital gain. The ease by which Buddhism became the administrative vehicle for transmitting much of Tokugawa ideology as

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<sup>15</sup> Kenneth A. Marcure, "The *Danka* System," *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (Spring, 1985), p 42.

fears and suspicions surrounding Christianity began to arise is striking to consider. After all, in the hegemonic power structure that made up the Tokugawa shogunate and its subjects, absolute authority was certainly something respected and feared and, at first glance, there might have been no reason to assume that Buddhism was a necessary, or even fitting, foundation upon which to build out the ideology of political legitimacy. However, if we consider Ieyasu's original aims of order and stability in society, and his desire to craft an authority based on something other than overt force, we find that Buddhism as an institutional entity was in fact perfectly tailored to aid in his plans.

The inherent potentiality for power in Buddhism as a supplemental authoritative force had been recognized and exercised by figures like Prince Shōtoku and court literati centuries earlier and was realized in a similar way by Ieyasu; creating direct ties between Buddhism and shogunal authority bound its subjects between the often conceptually disparate worlds of spiritualism and political rule. As Ooms proposes, "Religion and ritual were of paramount importance to the shoguns for signifying their hegemony in a nonpolitical medium. Through them, the Tokugawa transformed their coercive power into sacred authority, established themselves at the center, and thus gave order and hierarchy to the realm and legitimacy to themselves."<sup>16</sup> This concept was not something that existed subliminally beneath the actions undertaken by the Tokugawa shogunate in legislation, but was instead a force found plainly in some of the ideological writings of the period, and is best represented by the term *shinkoku*, or "divine country." *Shinkoku* ideologues such as the Zen monk Zuikei Shūhō wrote extensively on Japan and its relationship with Buddhism. While the idea of Japan as a "divine country" was originally founded on the understanding that Japan's high ranking rulers and sovereigns were descendent of deities that received the mandate of Amaterasu, the sun goddess, and were charged with protecting the nation on behalf of both earthly and divine realms, individuals like Zuikei took things a step further. Rather than continuing with this line of thought, which sprang from

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<sup>16</sup> Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology, Early Constructs 1570-1680*, Princeton University Press, 1985, p 193.

Japan's ties with native kami worship and the cultural mytho-history chronicling the birth of the nation, he suggested that the Law of the Buddha instead represented Japan.<sup>17</sup>

His suggestion came as the preface to a compilation of diplomatic documents, the *Zenrin kokuhōki*, or “Chronicle of national treasures for good relations with neighbors,” which was circulated widely among those involved in Japan's diplomatic efforts and was referenced by the authors of the “Statement Expelling Padres” in 1613. This different understanding of *shinkoku* was borne out of another established centuries earlier, but similarly addressed Japan's identity as something bound to divinity, and its rulers as authorized by the gods and now, due largely in part to the writings of Zuikei, the Buddhas; the country was considered to be secularly unified by government and military, but under the sacred guidance and protection of Buddhist deities. Buddhism as an institution became not only a force that would help in the administrative efforts of the shogunate as it developed a system of social order in the name of protecting its sovereignty, but the Buddhist religion as a set of ideals, tied to the authority and primacy of the country and its rulers, would aid in the justification and authentication of these efforts. Thus, this new concept of *shinkoku* transcended its fundamental role as a basis for diplomatic efforts and “was more than a mere slogan: it was the *raison d'être* of the Tokugawa political order, which was to be protected at all costs.”<sup>18</sup>

### **Ritual Practice and Social Participation**

Social control was highly maintained by the Tokugawa regime, and it became easier to do so through the authority of the foundational ideology of *shinkoku*. Edicts were passed, new laws were enforced, and those who did not succumb to these methods of control were punished accordingly. However, as we look more closely at the relationship of exchange shared between

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<sup>17</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 46.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p 47.

temple priests and householders, the *danka* system reveals itself as an arrangement that remained sustainable through the active participation of society as well. By framing the set of ritual practices central to the *danka* system as social processes rather than simply a product of obligatory legislative authority, it appears as something more than an edict that was to be lawfully obeyed. Instead, capital gain, ritual significance, and ideological control appear as central forces behind this social process, the function of which was upheld by the citizens participating in the ritual exchanges as much as those in positions of power. Pierre Bourdieu's work in social theory is especially illuminating in this regard because it addresses precisely these issues at hand. According to him, practice exists as a collective coordination of acts by society that at once create and perpetuate social relationships, lend directly to social structure and stability, and substantiate the power of the governing authority.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, his notion of the accrual *symbolic capital* can be seen to operate in the new exchange relationships that developed between members of *danna* households and Buddhist temple administrators through the delivery of death-related rituals and ancestral veneration services. Those who delivered such services were able to build degrees of social prestige through the accrual of economic and authoritative clout, two significant changes to Buddhist temples that grew out of the implementation of this system, which were anchored by a universally recognized ideology. According to Bourdieu, this immaterial capital is highly valuable to those in positions of power in class-based societies because it continually reinforces class divisions, and has the potential for expenditure in other social or economic exchanges.<sup>20</sup> His models provide a very different way in which to assess power and the sense of obligation that is often attributed to hegemonic societies in upholding systems of order and control, and shed a new light on Tokugawa citizens as active agents in such a system.

On the one hand, one cannot help but see a method of social control at work in the adherence to practices of a religious tradition with a history of political and ideological ties, and

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<sup>19</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp 159-171.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 183-197.

through allegiance to a shogun at the forefront of progress and stability. However, Bourdieu's models of practice as a collective act also give some indication that the power of participation by society was equally as important in maintaining such a system of control. Moreover, his understanding of the conversion of material capital into immaterial social power, which was enabled by a prestige recognized only by society itself, also indicates that Tokugawa citizens reinforced and upheld their own confines of class distinctions. Thus, like the growing Buddhist temple network, its priesthood, and the ideological understanding of Japan as divinely supported, the set of rituals that made up the system of exchange in the temple-householder relationships also took on a different function as the *danka* system gained momentum after 1638. While still retaining their importance in the hearts and minds of practitioners in effectively addressing religious protocol and custom, funerary rites and ancestral veneration came to represent an exchange of power, both economic and symbolic. After 1638, Buddhism as an obligatory practice began to pervade the nation and society, and while Buddhist ritual practices were delivered in the name of legislative obligation and shogunal allegiance, their power in sustaining social order was perpetuated through their engagement by Tokugawa citizens. Indeed, for a system founded on the ideals of a country's hegemonic leader, it is society that not only bears its effects but perpetuates them and can be most revealing in terms of social and religious change in Tokugawa Japan. We will see that as this system solidified as an administrative and economic force in society, the power of social participation in reaffirming shogunal control was realized in the ritual exchanges of particular social groups; the very ritual activity of these groups lent just as much to class divisions and social control as the power and authority of the Tokugawa administrators. In a similar fashion, though there existed the lawful pressures of obligation, the collective engagement in ritual practice by society at large only served to reaffirm the role of ritual as culturally and ideologically necessary in the early modern period.

However, the stability and success of Tokugawa control was not absolutely effective. Its reception by Japanese citizens was quite varied, and in some instances gave indications that,



while the Tokugawa shogunate pushed for a society that reflected order, stability, and permanence on all fronts, there may have been more geographical and social fluidity than was originally intended. As the Japanese terrain developed to accommodate travel between the main urban centers of the country, there also grew the desire to venture out on these roads. These geographical developments provided some ways for Tokugawa religious society to move beyond the boundaries of the castle towns, while those that remained within found other avenues for mobility.

## CHAPTER III

### RELEASE THROUGH GEOGRAPHICAL AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

#### **Economic Concerns and Social Pressures**

The accrual of institutional power by the network of Buddhist temples that spread outward from dense urban centers such as Edo and Ōsaka reveals the importance of religion in maintaining social order, and also represents the importance of spatial control for the Tokugawa administration. This new social order meant many things for the Japanese citizens living in these dense urban areas. Most notably, social change meant a new relationship shared between the governing body and its people, which can be understood broadly as a system of exchange. There existed the prospect of national progress and normalcy delivered by the shogunate, and in return there was the recognition of absolute shogunal sovereignty by society. Consequently, Japanese society and its shogunal leaders became bound together by promise and power, and the terms of this exchange manifested as ideological, material, and geo-political shifts meant to unify the country.

Ideological shifts took place insofar as citizens, under the rule of the new shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, were made to adjust to new economic pressures that were exerted at the threshold of early modernity. As discussed, Japan was no longer a country ruled by forces pulling in opposing directions based on clan disputes or contending claims to lineal authority. Instead, it was to be unified by the political legitimacy of a single military government that sought to homogenize its people and establish a definitive identity as a leading country and economic force. As surrounding countries began to rise to the forefront and establish a presence in trade and exportation, Japan, too, felt the obligation to lead the way toward economic ideals newly redefined by the early modern era. In order to maneuver through these economic pressures as a single entity, the country first had to be brought together by an ideology founded

on the political legitimacy of its ruling shogun. It was necessary that this authority be conferred as something wholly righteous and fundamentally different from previous regimes, for the Tokugawa represented a force that differed greatly from the military might exhibited by past bastions of power, and indeed held far more potential for conditioned social change. With regard to this transfiguration of power, Ooms posits that “a discourse was spun, a conceptual cocoon in whose dark center power could hide from view. Thus power came to be accepted almost unknowingly, because it had found a way to maintain itself behind a new symbolic language that gave it legitimacy.”<sup>21</sup> This symbolic language, which manifested as an underlying ideology of social formation, group identity, and religious homogeneity that pervaded social consciousness, will be shown to have held the most potent influence for the Tokugawa shogunate. Furthermore, the unknowing acceptance of an ideological expression of power, Ooms suggests, is precisely what legitimized such stifling assertions of authority on behalf of the *bakufu*.

The material and geo-political unification of the country became a reflection of the new Tokugawa ideology that pervaded society. After all, the physical stratification of society and the restrictions placed on its movement were made possible only after ideological power had gained a foothold in the mind of the public. These changes tangibly reinforced such concepts as stability, security, and order to such a degree that the difficulty of physical movement within society became a notable characteristic of Tokugawa social order. Shogunal favor toward a new economic productivity, as well as the establishment of guilds, religious confraternities, and other social groups, placed greater importance on the four-tier class system that further stratified society. This was realized most vividly in Edo, where merchant, entertainment, and warrior “districts” became clearly delineated. Additionally, the *danka* system gave rise to obligatory religious affiliation with a Buddhist temple, and allowed for a degree of religious surveillance by temple monks newly endowed with the administrative responsibility of conducting censuses and

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<sup>21</sup> Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs, 1570-1680*, Princeton University Press, 1985, p 21.

certifying temple-householder relationships.<sup>22</sup> While these social and religious delineations may appear to have separated rather than unified the Japanese people, it was actually the greater emphasis on contributive social roles, group identity, and the importance of proximity in obligatory temple registration that spatially tied together the religious patron, temple, and the economic urban center. Thus, the Tokugawa period is often assumed to be a time of suppressive stability, and the *bakufu* was able to wield stifling institutional power in maintaining it. It is also often assumed that, while the Japanese population enjoyed this new atmosphere of security and relative peace, it did so with neither the ease of physical mobility across Japan's terrain or the possibility of social mobility within a hierarchical, hegemonic social structure.

However, while the period is often described as a time of rigid social confinement, which indeed may have existed under the veil of order and stability, the situation was much more complex and begs further considerations of the varying types and degrees of movement that occurred in Tokugawa society. Citizens may have endured degrees of physical and social confinement, but there also appears to be some degree of fluidity. What we will see is that the form and function of movement during this era were more varied than is often assumed. These trends in movement allowed individuals to transform themselves to a certain extent by traversing their geographical and social surroundings. In comparing the somatic movement through a confining geographical space on the one hand with movement through a social space on the other, we begin to see significant ramifications of the new social order concerning identity, coercion, confrontation, and the power of economic and ideological concerns. These two movements, through space and ideas, when properly considered, reveal a more complex layer of Tokugawa social and religious history.

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<sup>22</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, Part 1, Section 3.

## The Tokugawa Travel Experience

The trends of geographical mobility that occurred during the Tokugawa period illustrate a distinctive mode of movement outside the restrictive measures put into place by the *bakufu*. Physical movements toward religious goals are in some ways more dramatic than purely conceptual ones, as the efforts called for bodily exertion and physical risk. Travel involved real physical demands, a willingness to temporarily abandon the safety of regulated communal life, and the visceral realities of time spent on early modern roads. Nevertheless, this geographical movement did allow for a temporary redefinition of spatial realities and a reconstruction of identity for a usually sedentary citizen on the move; this bodily self-assertion through highly regulated space was as much a physical endeavor as it was a transformative experience for the traveler. Nowhere was this transformation more evident than in religious pilgrimage.

The development of the five-highway system (*gokaidō*) during the seventeenth century effectively created a network of main urban hubs in early modern Japan including “arms and legs” for the realm in that it expanded power over certain domains, extended the tentacles of foreign policy, allowed the *bakufu* to more easily oversee *daimyo* disputes, and enabled alternate attendance.<sup>23</sup> Institutionalized in 1635, alternate attendance required that *daimyo* make annual trips from their respective domains to Edo in order to help with shogunal administrative matters. The movement inward from their less regulated domains to an atmosphere of detail and decorum also became a symbolic gesture of loyalty and trust, since the *daimyo* were required to spend a period of the year exposed to the scrutiny of their leader.

After construction of the road system began in 1601, movement for the Tokugawa administration became much easier. Whether it involved movements of martial forces or officials, or the conveyance of communications, the five-highway system enabled the *bakufu* to control the realm with greater efficiency and scope. Yet the development of such extensive road systems did not necessarily carry the same opportunity for ease of movement for the average Tokugawa

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<sup>23</sup> Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, Harvard University Press, 1994, pp 12, 17.

citizen. For example, all potential travelers in the Tokugawa era were required to apply for a travel permit, something that necessitated both time and money. In rural areas, an intendant issued the travel permit, in *bakufu* cities the City Magistrate, and in Edo the Keeper of Edo Castle, all of which became the only means of gaining proper permits for movement away from a major city. The process was quite involved, especially for women and peasants. Peasants were required to find a guarantor to sign a permit request form, which was then taken to the village head or elder who would act as a second guarantor. The form was then presented to the Senior Village Headman who needed to endorse the form before forwarding it to the proper magistrate, depending on the village location. In a similarly cumbersome procedure, women were required to report to certain issuers for more scrutinizing approval processes, which involved the collection of highly detailed information for the permit itself. Unlike permits issued to males, those issued to females had to provide such details as rank, marital status, hair length, age, mental health, and visible wounds or other markings.<sup>24</sup>

Once a citizen was able to acquire the necessary permits for travel along this new road system, other issues continued to make movement difficult and unpredictable. The experiences that awaited the traveler at post stations (*sekisho*) along the roads were particularly distressing. All travelers with the intent of passage through these stations onto the next were required to submit to an inspection of their belongings and a confirmation of identity. Constantine Vaporis illustrates the intimidation and fear that surrounded these post stations, a symbolic reminder of the shogunate's reach outside of Edo. Travelers "ordinarily would be flanked by two foot soldiers carrying staves. Walking past them, he would see an edict board to his right listing the regulations for passing through the *sekisho*...[then] the traveler would see a number of weapons displayed to impress with the authority of the institution those who were about to face the

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<sup>24</sup> Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, Harvard University Press, 1994, pp 137-159.

officials at the *sekisho*.<sup>25</sup> An interview to confirm the traveler's identity and the authenticity of their permits awaited in the Inspector's Office, as well as a physical examination for women. With everything in order, and with the compliance of the traveler, passage was allowed, and the process repeated at each of the seventeen main post stations along the busiest routes of the five-highway system. Additionally, these posts were only open during certain hours, with exceptions made only for official shogunate travelers, providing the *bakufu* with the illusion of controlling not only space but also time outside of Edo.<sup>26</sup> Like bureaucratic processes that often pervade highly regulated societies, the steps involved in acquiring a travel permit and setting out on the roads became time-consuming, expensive, stressful, and sometimes frightening for the Tokugawa citizen. Furthermore, aside from some of the overt appeals to fear by the *bakufu* in keeping travel well-ordered and regulated, movement was at times outright discouraged. As already mentioned, the early modern period brought new pressures of economic production from which arose an expectation for social contribution especially from farmers and skilled laborers. If an individual or groups of individuals were to leave for an extended period of time, production would see a decline in that village or region, and mean less taxable product for the *bakufu*. Thus, even authorized movement by Tokugawa citizens became a serious concern for the shogunal administration.

The discouragement of pilgrimage, which is outlined by Carmen Blacker in her work on travel in the Tokugawa period, illustrates the conflict of interests between society and its ruling body.<sup>27</sup> On the one hand, many citizens thought it necessary to commit to pilgrimage as a religious practitioner despite the regulatory atmosphere surrounding movement away from large urban areas. On the other hand, while these citizens may have been compelled to fill their spiritual desires as practitioners bound institutionally to a Buddhist temple by this time, the

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<sup>25</sup> Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, Harvard University Press, 1994, p 160.

<sup>26</sup> Laura Nenzi, *Excursions in Identity: Travel and the Intersection of Place, Gender, and Status in Edo Japan*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2008, p 19.

<sup>27</sup> Carmen Blacker, "The Religious Traveler in the Edo Period," *Modern Asian Studies*, 1984.

Tokugawa regime's economic and productive concerns trumped those of the religious individual. Accordingly, from the perspective of the Tokugawa authorities, "those desirous of becoming pilgrims were threatening the stable order of human society. By abandoning their proper tasks they were failing in their duty as human beings, flouting the moral way which it was part of their humanity to follow."<sup>28</sup> However, despite the administrative discouragement of travel over economic concerns, the pace at which the bureaucratic process operated in issuing expensive travel permits, and the atmosphere of intimidation at post stations during travel itself, we will see that pilgrimage nonetheless allowed for individuals and groups to move beyond these modes of control.

### **Instances of Geographical Mobility**

According to Laura Nenzi, *nukemairi* is the phenomenon of "stealing away on pilgrimage," when a pilgrim practically drops their farming tools or walks out of their shop in order to embark on a spur of the moment religious journey.<sup>29</sup> Her simple explanation of this activity is particularly interesting in light of the new Tokugawa social order for two reasons. First, the spontaneity that characterized the *nukemairi* indicates a seemingly urgent need to embark on a religious journey, as if the individual was somehow led outward on this sacred pilgrimage. In contrast to the burden of the bureaucratic process required before travel, as well as the difficulties inherent to travel itself, this spontaneity reveals a bodily effort unbound by propriety and protocol. Secondly, the fact that these individuals may have simply stopped what they were doing in order to embark on *nukemairi*, often taking to the road in their work attire, may also illustrate a willful distancing from their normal social duties and obligations. As was in the case of spontaneity, this distancing between the individual and their contributive social role represents a temporary

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<sup>28</sup> Carmen Blacker, "The Religious Traveler in the Edo Period," *Modern Asian Studies*, 1984, p 605.

<sup>29</sup> Laura Nenzi, "To Ise at All Costs: Religious Implications of the Early Modern *Nukemairi*," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 2006, p 76.



abandonment of the confinements of obligation, and is exemplary of those very concerns over economic production shared by the *bakufu*. In fact, the qualities of *nukemairi* reveal an opportunity for a citizen's identity to be redefined in ways other than occupational or economic contribution. By committing to an act of spontaneity and occupational distancing in the name of religious pilgrimage, the individual was able to reassert certain dimensions of their identity that may have been dissolved in the name of social homogeneity. Through this bodily movement, individuals were able to redefine themselves as religious observers and travelers, not merely as workers contributing to the larger economic or productive cause. For this reason, the temporary abandonment of a collective cause also reveals a reappraisal of interests, in that spiritual pursuits held more importance for the individual than the economic concerns of society at large.

Moreover, they were able to resituate themselves in parts of Japan's landscape that existed outside of sprawling castle towns, undoubtedly a reminder of rural lifestyles experienced by many before this period. Spontaneous journeys were as much reclamation of the autonomous power of the body as they were a reimagining of what constitutes an individual in a hegemonic society. In instances of *nukemairi*, the contention between economic concerns and spiritual aspirations was decided by an individual act of spontaneity in a religious pursuit.

While the majority of *nukemairi* were endeavored by individuals or very small groups, there were instances of mass pilgrimages undertaken by large groups, most of which ventured to Ise shrine. These larger pilgrimages, or *okagemairi*, often involved many individuals from the same village who traveled together toward their destination, receiving alms at stops along the way. Interestingly, *okagemairi*'s cyclical nature, its relationship to certain village customs, and the highly numbered groups that embarked on these pilgrimages contributed to its success in helping Tokugawa citizens to move beyond some of the physical barriers put in place by the *bakufu*. For instance, in certain local areas, such as Aizu in Fukushima province, village custom decreed that boys and girls make a "Thirteenth-year Pilgrimage" with a parental escort as a rite of passage into

adulthood, signifying the start of the child's ability to contribute to their village.<sup>30</sup> Strikingly, it was during these rites of passage, which often accompanied larger groups on an *okagemairi* pilgrimage, that *bakufu* administrators turned a blind eye to those without permits as they passed the *sekisho* along the roads.

Two details of this occurrence stand out as being directly linked to the particularities of *okagemairi*. First, there was the practical difficulty of checking the sheer amount of permits that may or may not have been carried by those embarked on a pilgrimage. Vaporis cites one instance in 1705 at a *sekisho* in Hakone through which 33,000 people passed on the last day of the first month alone, noting that some had permits while others did not.<sup>31</sup> The importance of large numbers during *okagemairi*, whether a conscious effort on behalf of the travelers or a natural occurrence of the cyclical pattern of the pilgrimage, most certainly allowed for movement beyond the physical constraints and symbolic representations of control and authority that dotted the main routes of the five-highway system. The second reason that travelers were largely permitted passage during *okagemairi* may have been due to the pilgrimage's link to regional custom. It appears that some domains were more reluctant to prohibit their citizens from embarking on *okagemairi* for fear of rising discontent among the populace, or "losing the hearts of the people," a likely occurrence should a customary rite of entrance into adulthood be challenged.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, though perhaps less of an influence was the fact that the "Thirteenth-year Pilgrimage" also meant the start of the child's ability to properly contribute to society as a young adult; any impediment to the movement of children into adulthood also meant an impediment to the propriety of filling future social roles, and therefore its preservation aligned with the economic interests of the Tokugawa administration. In this way, whether undertaken as an adult paying thanks to popular deities at sites such as Ise, or as a child experiencing a local rite of passage into adulthood,

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<sup>30</sup> Shinno Toshikazu and Laura Nenzi, "Journeys, Pilgrimages, and Excursions: Religious Travels in the Early Modern Period," *Monumenta Nipponica*, 2002, pp 456-458.

<sup>31</sup> Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, Harvard University Press, 1994, p 205.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p 207.

*okagemairi* enabled citizens to bypass the cumbersome and distressing experiences at the *sekisho* as they left their urban center.

*Okagemairi* serves to show not only a geographical movement beyond the barriers that characterized Tokugawa travel, but it also illustrates the practical challenges in regulating mobility. In the case of *okagemairi*, its feature of involving mass amounts of people headed to the same location with a similar purpose shows the inherent tension between a citizen's spiritual pursuits and the impracticality of regulating movement by the Tokugawa regime; the passage of tens of thousands of people on that single day in Hakone shows that no matter how streamlined a regulatory system may have appeared, the sheer number of individuals on a pilgrimage caused the system to break down. While the allowance of passage without a travel permit may appear as a trivial triumph for the Tokugawa citizen, it is more broadly representative of a practical gap in a system that had been inadvertently exposed by the efforts of amassed religious travelers. Moreover, *okagemairi*'s ties to regional custom also allowed individuals to circumvent these barriers, as the importance of rites of passage into adulthood was also recognized by administrators attempting to preserve protocol. Those who freely undertook *okagemairi* in the name of the "Thirteenth-year Pilgrimage" were able to do so because keeping the "hearts" of religious individuals, especially those who would commit to contributive social roles after returning from the pilgrimage, became a primary concern for many domain administrators.

Indeed, the preservation of the "hearts of people," a factor that aided in the passage of groups during these mass pilgrimages, was a concern aimed directly at the core of religious society. The non-pilgrims in Tokugawa society, who were full of conflicting desires which likely included things such as economic success, sustaining familial and spousal relationships, or cultivating trade relationships, may not have been as concerned with the fulfillment of religious desires and did not necessarily reside in areas that observed the "Thirteenth-Year Pilgrimage." The fact that the shogunate recognized the spiritual aspirations and regional customs of these religious individuals as equally important to the stable atmosphere of early modern society

reveals the inherent power of individual and communal desire in an otherwise suppressive homogenized social structure. This desire of the religious individual to commit to an act of customary devotion was the internal force that propelled them outward along Japan's five-highway system, but also the factor that made the journey worthy in the eyes of some administrative authorities. Moreover, desire was also important for the pilgrims in effecting an inner movement of their heart and, ultimately, individual transformation. This inward and outward movement lends new dimensions to the phenomena of physical mobility in the Tokugawa era, for pilgrimage was not only a religious movement across Japan's terrain, but also the fulfillment of an inner spiritual yearning.

As bodily testimonials of an inner religious desire, the phenomena of *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* offer two ways to more fully explore the religiously and socially transformative effects experienced by the pilgrim. Victor and Edith Turner's discussion of pilgrimage as a social process deals particularly with this geographical movement as a "liminoid phenomenon," a transformative process shared between people but also an experiential process within the heart and mind of the individual. We may understand the liminal nature of religious pilgrimage as transitional, in that there are inherent stages of the process that effect changes within the individual along the way to the sacred destination, both internal and external, though these scholars add a further dimension to this aspect of liminality. They understand the liminal nature of pilgrimage as defined by transition, but also by potential, wherein "unprecedented modes of ordering relations between ideas and people become possible and desirable."<sup>33</sup> This understanding of sacred potentiality as an aspect of pilgrimage is especially illuminating when we look more deeply at the ways in which mobility allowed for external, binding relationships shared between pilgrims through somatic movement, and internal shifts experienced by each individual; the prospect of a physical destination was as much a driving force for pilgrims as the potential for

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<sup>33</sup> Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, Columbia University Press, 1978, p 2.

fulfilling their spiritual desires. For this reason, individual desire and religious yearning appear as important components in assessing the motivation of pilgrims in Tokugawa society, and is applicable to both *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* as having transformative effects.

In his work *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, Victor Turner describes three types of pilgrimage groups, or *communitas*, which have distinctive qualities. However, just two of these are pertinent in discussing pilgrimage during the Tokugawa era: existential or spontaneous *communitas*, and normative *communitas*. He classifies the existential or spontaneous *communitas* as a group “which tends to make those experiencing [pilgrimage] think of mankind as a homogenous, unstructured, free community,” inducing a feeling of belonging brought on only by the “direct, immediate, and total confrontation of human identities.”<sup>34</sup> This type of *communitas*, Turner claims, is one that is absent of ordered hierarchy within the group, often carries a spontaneous quality, and precedes the social development of the second type of pilgrimage group. Accordingly, in the normative *communitas*, there is a “need to mobilize and organize resources to keep members of the group alive and thriving,” and a “necessity for social control among those members in pursuance of these and other collective goals.”<sup>35</sup> Under the effects of pilgrimage duration, geography, and demography, there arise certain necessities for organization and discipline within the normative *communitas*. In Turner’s model, pilgrimage groups originally emerge as a spontaneous or existential *communitas*, but as the conditions and demands of the journeys change, they inevitably evolve to characterize the qualities of the normative *communitas*. Much like Tokugawa Japan, the types of societies that are best fit to enact this normative pilgrimage group are those that are agriculturally productive,

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<sup>34</sup> Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, Cornell University Press, 1974, p 169.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

have an advanced degree of skilled labor, patrimonial political regimes, well-marked divisions between rural and urban areas, and a limited development of modern industry.<sup>36</sup>

With these models in mind, we can understand the individual and social transformations that occurred within the normative *communitas* as reflective of the same dynamics found in the mass pilgrimages of *okagemairi*. It is the normative *communitas* that promotes a social bond among pilgrims, and even binds pilgrims and those who offer them alms along the way.

Pilgrimage is the shared experience of travel, but also the shared experience of religious yearning, a commonality that binds the group and promotes a cooperative organization and ordering from within the group itself, rather than from an outside authoritative force. *Okagemairi* offers the pilgrimage group the emotional experience of transition and promise, the social experience of a common religious yearning, “and provides a highly valued route to the liminal world where the ideal is felt to be real, [and] where the tainted social persona may be cleansed and renewed.”<sup>37</sup> Consequently, *okagemairi* pilgrimage offers two types of transformation that is realized in the bodily act of religious travel: an inward transformation experienced as the fulfillment of spiritual desire, and an outward transformation as the individual identifies spiritually with the surrounding *communitas*.

As the group transitions from the profane world of urbanity, production, and social roles, the journey provides an opportunity to develop a *communitas* on terms different from those they left behind. Indeed, until they reach their destination, the pilgrims are compelled to collectively engage in certain degrees of organization and discipline, striking a common balance between characteristics of sedentary life and nomadism, though this formation occurs in the name of a sacred goal, not a secular goal. Furthermore, the transformative effects of bodily movement, which prompt the group to adapt as a single unit during the journey in order to reach the

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<sup>36</sup> Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, Cornell University Press, 1974, p 171.

<sup>37</sup> Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, Columbia University Press, 1978, p 30.

destination, mirror the transformative effects of collective inner religious yearning. In satisfying a spiritual impulse, the religious individual endeavors to answer a call from within; the pilgrim effects a transformation of their personality in this new social space, and they are newly redefined by the spiritual aspirations of those that surround them. As an endeavor shared similarly between individuals within a large group, the act is “infused with voluntariness though by no means independent of structural obligatoriness,” a natural characteristic of the normative *communitas*. This structure is one that grows dynamically, is contingent upon the collective spiritual goals of those embarked on *okagemairi*, and cultivates both an external and internal transformation of both the group and individual.

Since *nukemairi* appears as a more transgressive form of pilgrimage, in that it meant an unplanned departure from home and station without the permission of political authorities, this phenomenon captures more clearly a concerted effort to circumvent the geo-political confines of Tokugawa social order. As mentioned earlier, the spontaneous nature of the pilgrimage and the distancing between the individual and their social role appear as two of the most telling characteristics of this form pilgrimage as a mode of movement. For this reason, while individuals willing to embark on these spontaneous pilgrimages effected a more drastic redefinition of their own identity in comparison to those of the *okagemairi*, they were also redefined by certain social groups and often marginalized for their seemingly selfish behavior. Nenzi points out that unauthorized pilgrimages were sometimes seen as “a way for the underlings of society to enjoy a temporary respite from their toil,” and those who committed to *nukemairi* were labeled as “escapists” or “non-conformists.”<sup>38</sup>

Of course, these pilgrims were also redefining themselves autonomously. They committed to a temporary abandonment of their social role and unfastened the conceptual bonds that stratified and ordered the society in which they existed. Economic implications aside, an

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<sup>38</sup> Laura Nenzi, “To Ise at All Costs: Religious Implications of the Early Modern *Nukemairi*,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 2006, p 78.

individual who abandoned their productive duties may have been seen as a challenge to authority and a danger to the stability of early modern society in the eyes of the administration.

Considering these characteristics of freedom and unstructured movement, the individuals who committed to *nukemairi* were more representative of the existential or spontaneous *communitas*. They undertook their journey without a hierarchical group, often in groups of five or less without a leader, did so with spontaneity, and were bound together by little more than a collective identity as human beings in search. Unlike the *okagemairi*, which is representative of a normative *communitas* that allowed for individual and group transformation, the *nukemairi* allowed for the individual to solitarily experience a transformation in this liminal space. True, the figurative transformation of the individual from productive citizen to religious traveler hinged on the same spiritual yearning that bound the pilgrimage groups of *okagemairi*, and involved the same potentiality inherent to pilgrimage undertaken as a liminal act. For the more transgressive pilgrim undertaking *nukemairi*, however, “this freedom of choice in itself negates the obligatoriness of a life embedded in social structure,” and frees an inward movement of the heart. After all, while large or small groups may undertake pilgrimages, the final destination offers answers to spiritual questions of the individual alone. If *nukemairi* may be represented as the existential or spontaneous *communitas*, a small group identified only by its heterogeneous spiritual goals, it may indeed be considered to have been an individual endeavor. Inherent in the commitment to *nukemairi* was only the possibility of individual transformation through the choice to pursue a desire; there was little potential for any social transformation on the basis of temporal, geographic, or demographic conditions that may have necessitated group collectivity. For the spontaneous pilgrim, the drastic transformation occurred primarily through individual desire, where the movement of the heart was direct and uncompromising.

Whether *nukemairi* meant following a spontaneous urge, simply finding “respite from their toil,” or was a conscious dismissal of authority, it became a definitive reclamation of selfhood for an individual. However, while one could attempt to reduce the *nukemairi* to a kind



of trope within the larger discourse of travel and pilgrimage, it is difficult to reduce an individual life taking such a risk to the terms of literary discourse. With regard to *okagemairi*, whether it meant the fulfillment of a regional custom or individual spiritual desire, its particular characteristics allowed pilgrims a degree of fluidity in an otherwise confining geographical space. Certainly, in both of these types of pilgrimage, though temporary, there occurred a redefinition of social identity, a reconstruction of spatial realities, and some degree of personal transformation as the individual became newly shaped in the liminal space of pilgrimage.

### **Varieties of Meaning in Geographical Mobility**

Laura Nenzi regards religious travel and leisure travel as inextricably linked. In her introduction to *Excursions in Identity*, she describes the way in which travel offers a pilgrim the prospect of a sacred destination along with the leisure and enjoyment of the journey itself. Of course, in Tokugawa Japan, religious travel shared some of the more mundane experiences of travel such as diary keeping, poetry writing, sightseeing, and even business exchanges. For Nenzi, this secular participation in travel should not be considered separate from the sacred, for it is all experienced together on the same road on the way toward a sacred destination.<sup>39</sup> Victor and Edith Turner also hint at the complementarity of religion and leisure, stating “a tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist.”<sup>40</sup> Considering the pervasiveness of religion in early modern Japan, as well as the growing eagerness for travel, it seems impossible to draw a clear-cut line through a pilgrimage experience in order to distinguish faith and fun. In terms of geographical mobility, within the phenomenon of pilgrimage we find two conceptual understandings of travel and its purpose: an understanding of travel as an intellectual movement, and another of travel as a purely religious movement.

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<sup>39</sup> Laura Nenzi, *Excursions in Identity: Travel and the Intersection of Place, Gender, and Status in Edo Japan*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2008, pp 5-8.

<sup>40</sup> Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, Columbia University Press, 1978, p 20.

Authorized travel during the Tokugawa period could only occur under the pretext of pilgrimage, and many journeys were indeed meant to be purely religious in their purpose. However, as travel began to offer other enjoyable experiences, many of which were just as alluring for Tokugawa inhabitants on the road, pilgrimage often became a means to simply escape life in the urban center. By looking more closely at the intent of those pilgrims who traveled for reasons other than reaching a sacred destination, we find in physical mobility an intellectual pursuit. In his explanation of five different modes of touristic experiences, Erik Cohen describes the pilgrim who emphasizes the recreational tourist experience as one “who does not have a deep commitment to travel as a means of self-realization or self-expansion” and who desires “the pleasure of entertainment, for which authenticity is largely irrelevant.”<sup>41</sup> Unlike Nenzi’s understanding of the sacred aspects of a pilgrimage experience as tied together with the secular, Cohen draws a distinction between his modes of travel. However, by making this distinction he is not attempting to paint recreational travel as a simple, shallow engagement with the external world wherein the pilgrim is somehow a passive agent in the travel experience. In fact, Cohen goes on to enumerate the physical and mental benefits of recreational travel, many of which share similar aspects of rejuvenation and reinvigoration that are often attributed to religious travel. For Cohen, the difference is in the meaning of the journey. While the religious journey may function in addressing, among other things, the spiritual concerns of the individual insofar as contact with the sacred destination allows for a deeper understanding of those primary concerns, the recreational journey serves a similarly valid function. Though it is undertaken with an intent that is secular in nature, recreational travel nonetheless “performs a serious ‘function’—it restitutes the individual to his society and its values, which, despite the pressures they generate, constitute the centre of his world.”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Erik Cohen, “Phenomenology of Tourist Experiences,” *Defining Travel: Diverse Visions*, University Press of Mississippi, 2001, p 35.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p 36.

Thus, this equally valuable function of recreational travel, which can also be understood as an intellectual movement by the individual in that it addresses concerns beyond the spiritual, may help to reveal one possible reason for instances of geographical mobility that took place during the Tokugawa period. For many, pilgrimage may have been carried out in the name of spiritual desires, a journey that happened to offer recreational experiences along the way. However, there were likely also many who undertook pilgrimages only in name, and instead sought primarily the possibility of leisure on the road. The ratio of travellers with religious and non-religious intents is said to have shifted steadily so that by the end of the Tokugawa period, a majority of pilgrimages were undertaken for recreational purposes.<sup>43</sup> In 1745, one Tokugawa authority remarked illustratively, “No matter how much we issue edicts to the contrary, great numbers set out from our domain every spring under the pretext of making a pilgrimage to Ise, but instead use the trip as an occasion for sightseeing.”<sup>44</sup>

For the Tokugawa pilgrim seeking a non-religious experience on the roads, they were confronted with a variety of outlets for intellectual satisfaction. Some chose to experience travel through chronicling it, writing extensively about the landscape, interactions, and hardships that confronted them. According to Nenzi, “travel writing provided the white canvas on which stories and lives could be rearranged, re-created, and commemorated. The narratives that travelers produced while on the road followed the trajectory of their aspirations.”<sup>45</sup> Travel writing, be it diary keeping or poetry, provided a way for the educated traveler to perceive and interpret the physical world beyond that of the large city, and do so in a way that was expressive and personal. For many others, the physical and mental relief offered by a long soak in a hot spring became the reason for setting out on the road. The popularity of hot spring visitations as a reason for travel is

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<sup>43</sup> Jilly Traganou, *The Tōkaidō Road: Traveling and Representation in Edo and Meiji Japan*, Routledge Curzon, 2004, pp 71-72.

<sup>44</sup> Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, Harvard University Press, 1994, p 239.

<sup>45</sup> Laura Nenzi, *Excursions in Identity: Travel and the Intersection of Place, Gender, and Status in Edo Japan*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2008, p 187.

attested by its mentions in the growing number of travel guidebooks that began to circulate toward the latter half of the Tokugawa period. For instance, *Ryokō Yōjinshū*, a work written in 1810 by Yasumi Roan and perhaps the most extensive work offering advice to potential travelers during the period, offers tips of all sorts for those unaccustomed to the travel experience. What is most telling about this work with regard to the intents of pilgrims during this time is the fact that one quarter the guidebook, which enjoyed wide circulation, deals with customary behavior at hot springs.<sup>46</sup> As Vaporis confirms in a preface to his translation of the guidebook, travel from the mid-eighteenth century onward took on a defining recreational character for the first time in Japan. In addition to these non-religious experiences on the road, travelers also enjoyed sightseeing, eating local delicacies, and patronizing teahouses, playhouses, and even brothels.

For the non-religious pilgrim making this intellectual movement during their journey, what was the function of their destination? Indeed, their travel destination did not carry the same qualitative function as that of the sacred sites of religious pilgrims, as recreational travel offered only this-worldly benefits. They did, however, serve to renew some mental or emotional aspects of the pilgrim. Whether it was the ameliorating, sometimes medicinal, benefits perceived to be granted by hot springs, or the traveler's writings that followed the "trajectory of their aspirations," recreational travel may have offered a different type of meaning for the pilgrim than that of religious travel. Rather than communing with the divine, pilgrims were offered a diversion from their lives in regulated society, able to find meaning in the more mundane experiences of life on the road. These movements undertaken by the individual in the context of recreational travel addressed the concerns inherent to the emotional, physical, and mental experience of life in regulated Tokugawa society.

There were, of course, instances of pilgrimage undertaken for purely religious purposes. In contrast to the intellectual, affective and somatic movements found in recreational travel, those

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<sup>46</sup> Constantine Vaporis, "Caveat Viator: Advice to Travelers in the Edo Period," *Monumentica Nipponica*, Vol. 44 (Winter, 1989), p 463.

who set out on an explicitly religious journey committed to a religious movement; their concerns existed beyond the material world, as they yearned to experience an intimacy with their sacred destination. The experiences that awaited the pilgrim at their destination were different for each individual, but generally similar in that they afforded the individual an opportunity for devotional, purificatory, or salvific moments shared between them, the physical site, and the divine. Thus, for those undertaking a primarily religious movement, particular pilgrimage sites became a sacred place toward which to travel. In his work on the Kumano pilgrimages of Japan's medieval era, Max Moerman suggests just such an understanding of pilgrimage sites as having a dual representation in the hearts and minds of the pilgrim, as they were the "crucial site of interaction between the social and soteriological, between the real and the ideal."<sup>47</sup> This was no less true for pilgrims during the Tokugawa period. Many who embarked on *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* likely shared this sentiment as they moved outward from their sprawling castle towns. Onto the pilgrimage sites were projected an array of religious meanings which served as an answer to the diverse spiritual pursuits of the individuals involved. John Eade and Michael Sallnow address this universal power of place through their anthropological approach to pilgrimage. A range of meanings is bestowed upon major pilgrimage sites such as Ise, which is what comprises "its essential, universalistic character: its capacity to absorb and reflect a multiplicity of religious discourses, to be able to offer a variety of clients what each of them desires."<sup>48</sup> These diverse meanings, perceived to be both real and ideal, are precisely the object of religious travel for those undertaking this type of geographical movement.

The contrast between recreational and religious travel is not quantitative but qualitative. Those who embarked on *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* only in name and took the opportunity for recreational endeavors did so with no less meaning or intent than those who participated in the

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<sup>47</sup> D. Max Moerman, *Localizing Paradise: Kumano Pilgrimage and the Religious Landscape of Premodern Japan*, Harvard University Press, 2005, p 4.

<sup>48</sup> John Eade and Michael Sallnow, *Contesting the Sacred*, University of Illinois Press, 2000, p 15.

pilgrimages for purely religious reasons. For the recreational traveler, the renewing effects of their experiences should not be overlooked; trips to hot springs, inspired writing, and the experiences of sightseeing were all acts that offered the pilgrim physical, emotional, and mental renewal in a space apart from the bustling city. Nevertheless, those who undertook a religious movement potentially experienced a different type of renewal. At the site of their destination, they may have been able to experience not only the physical relief of having arrived but also a degree of spiritual intimacy. Meaning, for the Tokugawa religious traveler, was found beyond the physical terrain as they approached the site, and was confirmed by the individual through whichever religious act was carried out there.

### **Instances of Social Mobility**

With instances of geographical mobility and their varied meanings established against the backdrop of regulated travel in Tokugawa Japan, it is also interesting to consider the degree to which social movement occurred within the confines of an ordered, hegemonic society. In Gerald Groemer's historical accounts of *gannin*, or religious street performers, we find a group of people who were able to reside within the delineated social structure of Tokugawa Japan as religious devotees, entertainers, and ritualists, but who were also arguably able to attain a degree of freedom of movement within that framework. Though this movement is not as obvious as the physical effort to circumvent Tokugawa confinement as illustrated by the geographical mobility of *nukemairi* or *okagemairi*, it nonetheless provides another perspective from which to view social fluidity, and may reveal even further insights into conceptions of group identity and social roles.

The ritual theory of Catherine Bell is particularly helpful in revealing some of the complexities of social movement that we find in the case of the *gannin*, and shows how religious ritual may have helped this social group to resist the delineations of hegemonic society. In her work *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, she outlines her concept of “redemptive hegemony,” a ritual

model that helps to illustrate the relationship shared between the *gannin* and the Tokugawa *bakufu*. In her model, individuals in a hegemonic society may ascend the hierarchy if able to strategically transmit the meaning and purpose of ritual, embody a “cultural sense of ritual,” and uphold the disposition necessary for ritual socialization. At the same time, this “redemptive” quality of an imposed social structure, which allows for some degree of movement by the individual or group, also grants its hegemonic source the ability to define, constrain, or empower the movement of those within the ritual system.<sup>49</sup> In Bell’s work, we are presented with a model that outlines the passage of power between social groups and their ruling body, one that is based on ritual embodiment and propriety but also on the interests of those at the top of the hegemonic structure. Thus, while the *gannin* will be shown to have moved beyond the social confines of Tokugawa hegemony, the inherent misrecognition of the passage of power which Bell addresses in her theory, and toward which Ooms hints as a “conceptual cocoon in whose dark center power” lay hidden, existed as yet another vehicle for order in Tokugawa society.

As we turn toward the *gannin*, it is first worth noting that they were perceived as marginal members of society. Like other mendicant or ascetic groups, they made a livelihood by begging for alms, but also offered religious services, entertainment, and sometimes sold amulets or talismans. What was most distinct about the *gannin* in Tokugawa society was their appearance and behavior. Many wore the most minimal of attire, sometimes nothing but a headband and straw rope around their waist, while others donned illegal facial coverings, outlandishly tall, stilt-like clogs, or even wooden buckets balanced as hats on their heads. While some regularly wore this eccentric clothing, still others wore Buddhist garments, Shintō costumes, and other religious garb, oftentimes interchanging them all. Behaviorally, the *gannin* stood out in a crowd. They chanted loudly and obnoxiously, paraded through town with portable shrines, and danced provocatively. With such conspicuous appearance and behavior, the *gannin* were sometimes considered a nuisance, especially by those hoping to preserve the welcoming atmosphere of

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<sup>49</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p 221.

storefronts or the tranquility of homes, though they were often enjoyed by children regardless.<sup>50</sup> In order to understand the degree of social movement possible for the *gannin*, it is necessary to examine their perceived place in society: they were eccentric, religious entertainers that stood out against the backdrop of the burgeoning mercantilism and productivity that pervaded Tokugawa society, able only to avoid arrest or the status of *hinin* (literally “non-human”) by their loose affiliation with religious temples or shrines.

However, the *gannin* did make social contributions by providing a variety of religious services for Tokugawa inhabitants. They offered Shintō services such as hearth exorcisms, the sale of talismans, and proxy water ablutions, but also offered Buddhist services such as the recitation of Japanese Buddhist hymns, the street-side chanting of litanies, prayers or invocations, and the burning of incense.<sup>51</sup> Through the variety of services offered, others of which were secular in nature and aimed at entertainment, the *gannin* indeed held a place in society as figures that could potentially address the spectrum of religious needs expressed by most people. However, perhaps the most beneficial service rendered by the *gannin* was the proxy pilgrimage; sponsors were able to avoid the hardships associated with travel but reap the spiritual rewards of paying thanks at sacred temples and shrines that populated areas outside of Edo and Ōsaka. This service began like any other, as the *gannin* walked the streets shaking a bell to attract the attention of potential clients, and they sometimes brandished a sacred object with the intent of bringing it with them in the name of sponsors. Those who were interested handed over a fee, and in return the *gannin* traveled in their stead to popular sacred sites such as the temple-shrine compound of Ōyama or Bishamonten, gave thanks and prayed for the coming year.<sup>52</sup>

This service, which became especially popular among citizens in Edo, is interesting to consider in light of the general concern over pilgrimages expressed by Tokugawa administrators.

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<sup>50</sup> Gerald Groemer, “The Arts of the Gannin,” *Asian Folklore Studies*, Nanzan University, 1999, p 279-283.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, p 278.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p 284.



As discussed, the discouragement of pilgrimages arose out of a greater concern for economic and productive decline suffered after the departure of contributing members of society from domains. To a degree, the proxy pilgrimages offered by the *gannin* remedied this concern insofar as the productive social roles of Tokugawa citizens were kept intact at those locations. Additionally, the religious needs of productive citizens, still an important cultural fixture in preserving the “hearts” of the members of religious society, remained addressed. In this way, the *gannin* appear to have benefitted three groups of people with their offerings of proxy pilgrimages. The first two groups were those directly involved in the exchange of service, as the *gannin* themselves were able to carry out a livelihood as purveyors of a religious service while the Tokugawa citizens received the spiritual benefits of the act. However, the third beneficiary in this exchange of service was the Tokugawa regime itself.

With the religious needs of its subjects addressed by a group of people offering a wide spectrum of services, one of which also kept productive, contributing citizens in place rather than on the roads, the Tokugawa shogunate may have begun to look upon the *gannin* with different eyes. While this particular inadvertent contribution to social order may have gone unnoticed as such by the *bakufu* itself, the *gannin* did gain notoriety that held a similarly contributive function in regulating society. According to Gerald Groemer, the *gannin* and the *bakufu* “frequently stood at cross-purposes, [but] by the later decades of the seventeenth century the cornerstones of a hierarchical system designed to allow the Kuruma temple to oversee the *gannin* throughout the land had been set in place.”<sup>53</sup> Accordingly, in a final recognition of affiliation with this temple, “chief” *gannin* were organized into two groups (*Taizō-in* and *Enkō-in*), made up much of the Kuruma administration, and were granted rights and powers by the shogunate in return for keeping order among the *gannin* underlings. Not only did this new organization endow the *gannin* with the power and safety of Kuruma temple, but it also spelled considerable advantage

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<sup>53</sup> Gerald Groemer, “A Short History of the *Gannin*: Popular Religious Performers in Tokugawa Japan,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Nanzan University, 2000, p 47.

for a group previously at odds with the new social climate of early modern productivity. Furthermore, in an even more explicit example of notoriety gained by the *gannin*, some were hired as shogunate spies, charged with keeping track of suspicious or mischievous individuals entering or leaving the city of Edo, and were compensated as such.<sup>54</sup> Through these examples, we see a social group marginalized for their unorthodox appearance and behavior, and yet prized by society for their wide array of religious services and the benefits that came along with them. Similarly, we find in the same social group, and perhaps for the very same reasons, religious practitioners upheld by the *bakufu* as a contributive social force, worthy of its own organizational temple and even occupations within the shogunal administrative system itself.

Returning to Bell's model of "redemptive hegemony," it becomes clear how the *gannin* were able to move beyond the delineations of Tokugawa social order. This social group exhibited a "cultural sense of ritual," as they understood the importance of pilgrimage as a religious act while also taking into consideration the new practicalities of travel, offering proxy pilgrimages for those who were willing to pay. They offered a wide array of religious services including Shintō and Buddhist, thereby strategically transmitting the meaning and purpose of ritual as the recipient required. In demonstrating this ritual mastery as an exclusive service that spoke to the inherent needs of a religious society, the *gannin* also showed that they could exhibit the "disposition necessary for ritual socialization." According to Bell, ritual may be seen as "dramatizing collective representations and endowing them with a mystical ethos that in the course of the communal experience did not merely promote acceptance of those representations but also inculcated deep-seated affective responses to them."<sup>55</sup> This is most clearly illustrated by the social role of the *gannin* as marginalized figures in society; despite their social marginality, the ability of this group to uphold a unique ritual propriety closed the conceptual gap between

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<sup>54</sup> Gerald Groemer, "A Short History of the *Gannin*: Popular Religious Performers in Tokugawa Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, Nanzan University, 2000, p 56.

<sup>55</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Oxford University Press, 2009, p 171.

society and the *gannin*, the citizen and the other. Their unorthodox behavior and appearance and their existence on the figurative fringes of society lent a degree of mystery and exoticism to their religious services, further dramatizing a ritual act found elsewhere in society to be fully orthodox. In the end, this socialization into unorthodoxy, their ability to meet the variety of needs for religious service, and their understanding of the early modern practicalities of pilgrimage allowed the *gannin* ascension through the hegemonic social order in which they existed. The allowance of Kuruma temple as administrative headquarters and status as an officially sanctioned religious confraternity, as well as the instances of hire as shogunal spies represent the tangible “redemption” for the *gannin* in this hierarchical structure. Indeed, in practical, social, and cultural displays of ritual mastery, the *gannin* were able to fluidly maneuver more than most throughout Tokugawa society.

Nevertheless, Bell’s model of “redemptive hegemony” must be qualified as an inextricable system of coercion, where even the most fluid of social movement nonetheless serves its hegemonic elite. While the *gannin* were afforded a degree of power on behalf of the *bakufu*, they failed to recognize its effects elsewhere in society. While Kuruma temple became a place of safety and power for the *gannin*, it was only granted under the condition that the administrative *Taizō-in* and *Enkō-in* kept order within the lower ranks of its population. Similarly, the hiring of some *gannin* as spies only advanced the aims of the shogunate for a safe, secure, and stable early modern capital city. Both of these acts of misrecognition, which Bell refers to as a reality “experienced as a natural weave of constraint and possibility,” were the operative forces in the relationship between the *gannin* and the Tokugawa shogunate. While there occurred a movement by this group of people beyond social delineations and administrative hierarchies, such mobility lent to the very social order it cut across. Although, this is not to say that individual transformation was absent in the case of the *gannin*. While the result of their movement from marginalized ritualists to bearers of administrative power may have led to a greater degree of social order and control for the Tokugawa authorities, the movement itself represents a certain

redefinition of identity for the *gannin*. Through their varied application of ritual as a marginalized social group, and the eventual exchange of power that occurred in the latter half of the seventeenth century, the *gannin* became able to ascend to a new social station as unorthodox ritualists in a society that upheld the permanence of class distinction.

### **A Comparative Understanding of Geographical and Social Mobility**

While the Tokugawa era was a time of rigid geographical and social confinement, these instances of mobility that occurred ought to be considered as part of the historical experience of this period. It seems too convenient to cast the early modern era, especially its initial years, as a time of regulation on all fronts. The phenomenon of *okagemairi* reveals a regulatory system with gaps to be practically exploited, but also illustrates that, while Tokugawa hegemony may have sought to control many aspects of life for the citizen, the power of custom remained an important consideration for many domain administrators. In a more transgressive example, those who chose to embark on *nukemairi* were able to exhibit a reassertion of their identity as a citizen unbound by obligatory social roles. Finally, in a rather different illustration of mobility during this same period, we find in the *gannin* an example of a fluidity that served both the individual and the ordering of the hegemonic structure within which they existed. While the redeeming factors of ritual mastery in a religious society may have propelled the *gannin* beyond the social barriers that were so characteristic of the Tokugawa period, this mobility was in fact unable to exist apart from social constraint. Nonetheless, an examination of the strategies by which these services were offered discloses an orchestrated movement within the hegemonic social structure.

For the inhabitants of Tokugawa religious society, pilgrimage became a way to release and express, among other impulses, their inner religious yearnings, while those who remained within the confines of the regimented social order turned inwards for their religious journeys in search of transcendence. The somatic movements that we find in *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* pilgrimages demonstrate two ways in which individuals were able to move beyond varied types

of confinement. First, there was the bodily movement of the individual beyond the *sekisho* of the five-highway system, enabled by the defining characteristics of the pilgrimages. In the case of the *okagemairi*, the sheer number of pilgrims, its ties to local custom, and its importance in preserving the “hearts” of the religious members of society all helped to render a relatively unobstructed passage through the *sekisho*. Though the *nukemairi* existed as a more transgressive form of mobility, it also allowed for a similar movement away from the economic and productive center.

Secondly, in these acts of bodily movement we find religious desire to be at their core, an impulse that reveals another type of movement: an inward movement by the individual.

*Okagemairi* and *nukemairi* existed as movements “from a mundane center to a sacred periphery which suddenly, transiently, [became] central for the individual, an *axis mundi* of his faith.”<sup>56</sup> It was this spiritual impulse within the individual that allows us to understand their respective types of pilgrimage as formative of *communitas*. With *okagemairi*, while it was the temporal, geographic, and demographic characteristics of travel in amassed religious groups that necessitated a degree of self-organization and discipline, it was also the shared religious desire within each individual that became a central force in mobilizing these groups. These factors gave rise to a bond, a feeling of belonging and, ultimately, a transformative effect experienced by the individual in the course of travel; mental, emotional, and spiritual shifts could all have been felt individually within the normative *communitas*, while there equally occurred a larger social shift which bound each individual to one another. This inner movement of the human heart in pursuit of religious desire may be more obviously associated with spontaneous pilgrimages of the *nukemairi*. These instances offer a degree of candidness absent from *okagemairi*, and were realized less so on the basis of forethought, planning, and organization. As an example of the spontaneous or existential *communitas*, the *nukemairi* effected an individual movement inward

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<sup>56</sup> Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, Columbia University Press, 1978, p 34.

that was driven solely by spiritual desire; in this type geographical movement, there was no need for a group leader or hierarchy, and no need for organization or discipline. Thus, while both the *okagemairi* and the *nukemairi* existed as a means of somatic movement across terrain, the individuals within these communitas also traversed an inner terrain in pursuit of a spiritual desire.

The *gannin* may also have been able to turn inward in pursuing their own spiritual desires, though their more obvious movement resulted in outward mobility within the regimented social order. Through exhibitions of ritual mastery, the *gannin* were able to make both lateral and vertical social movements that cut across Tokugawa society. By meeting the wide array of religious needs in a way that exoticised and dramatized the ritual acts, the *gannin* were able to move inward from the fringes of society, both socially and mentally, and to deliver services to those considered to reside at the center. Additionally, their ability to demonstrate an understanding of the cultural nuances of religious ritual through their offerings of proxy pilgrimages, which served both the spiritual needs of society and the economic needs of the shogunate, allowed them a vertical movement that reached the heights of the Tokugawa administration. While the movement of the *gannin* was indeed social, in that the delineations that they were able to move beyond were defined in abstract terms determined by hegemonic organization, the value and importance of such movement was no less significant than that of the geographical movement of *okagemairi* and *nukemairi*. Furthermore, like pilgrims, the *gannin* could also be said to have been pursuing a spiritual desire, since the unorthodox manifestation of that inner yearning was precisely what enabled such social mobility by the *gannin* toward a new place in early modern society. However, unlike the movements made by those who undertook *okagemairi* and *nukemairi*, the social movements of the *gannin* were not wholly freeing. The pilgrims who endeavored to make the inward and outward journey were able to move beyond the symbolic and geographical obstructions that characterized Tokugawa social order; they slipped past the *sekisho* while moving to fulfill their own spiritual aspirations. While the *gannin* were able to move inward and upward within the confines of Tokugawa social order, their eventual

destination often became yet another peg within the hierarchy of control that may have gone unrecognized by the *gannin* themselves.

While Bell's model of "redemptive hegemony" reveals how the *gannin* were allowed lateral and vertical social movements within Tokugawa control, and while the *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* pilgrimages illustrate the varied purposes and meanings behind religious travel beyond it, these representations are only able to describe individual and collective transformations in terms of geographical or social positioning. In the case of religious pilgrimage, we find that it was the characteristics of pilgrimage custom as well as the practical challenges that confronted Tokugawa administrators that enabled such a geographical release from control. A similar release from the narrowly defined social order was initially experienced by the *gannin*, but they were co-opted by the larger establishment, as Bell's discursive model of redemptive ritual mastery helped to illustrate.

While these examples reveal temporary release from the varieties of Tokugawa control, they do not fully address the possibility of religious release from discursivity as such. While it is impossible to determine whether or not such geographical or social release was understood as part of a larger religious experience for the individuals that engaged in various movements internally and externally, one may wonder if the movement beyond the socially defined modes of confinement came to hold a spiritual significance beyond measure. Turner's references to the "sacred periphery," Moerman's view of the soteriological function of pilgrimage sites, and the importance of unorthodoxy for the *gannin* all seem to indicate that perhaps there may be other, unquantifiable aspects of religious awareness that cannot be determined through discursive theories of ritual study or sociology. Regardless, these examples do provide a glimpse into trends of movement overlooked in considerations of Tokugawa communal life, but all of which allowed some individuals to redefine themselves with respect to society.

## CHAPTER IV

### RITUAL, CAPITAL, AND THE *HABITUS*

#### **Practice as a Social Process: the *habitus* and *doxa***

In attempting to reveal some of the more complex ways in which social order was maintained, it is also worth considering the role of the citizen. To what degree does society perpetuate its own systems of control? As active agents in a relationship built upon ideological and administrative power, what can be said for society as a force that equally recognized the agents' power through its participation within the system as well as the corporate power of society as a whole? We have already seen how the passage of power from the Tokugawa regime to the *gannin* during the latter half of the seventeenth century inevitably contributed to the overall order in Edo society in a way that may have gone largely unrecognized by the *gannin* as a contributive factor. In contrast to the instances of geographical and social mobility, which reveal a society that allowed for certain movements beyond the confines of Tokugawa control, we find another representation of society's own role in maintaining such a strict system. In particular, the relationship between society and ritual practice offers a rather different example of how ideological power was maintained in Tokugawa Japan, and may shed new light on the way in which the citizens themselves perpetuated practice as a means toward order, control, and class distinction.

Social anthropology takes central to its discipline the role of the individual within the group. Bourdieu's analysis of practice as a social process falls directly in line with this discipline, as he relies heavily on his understanding of the individual's defining role as an actor within the larger group dynamic. The way in which people in a society relate to one another through practice, both collectively and individually, also figures implicitly in social studies concerning ritual processes. This relationship between practice and society is the primary theme addressed



by Bourdieu in *The Logic of Practice* and *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, who presents various theoretical models for understanding engagement in practice by social groups, and the way in which various forms of capital and power are integrated into practice as a social development. In the case of the development of the *danka* system, his models provide an opportunity to better understand how ritual practice in an ordered society shaped, and was shaped by, its engagement by Tokugawa citizens. Moreover, his concepts bring into relief some ways in which adherence to practice may have become an appropriate vehicle for social control, an obligation delivered legislatively by the *bakufu* but maintained sociologically by the Tokugawa inhabitants themselves.

For Bourdieu, the study of practice and society is an exploration of the relationship between structure and agency. However, this binary opposition, which traditionally represents social practices as shaped either by rules on the one hand, or by the deliberate intentions of the individual on the other, is too ill equipped to describe social practice thoroughly. Categorically representing human behavior as driven either by structure or agency, Bourdieu says, is a “false dilemma”; theorists need not feel obligated to describe social practice in this way and, in fact, theories that ascribe to this categorization should be abandoned all together.<sup>57</sup> For him, their abandonment is necessary to avoid a naïve appeal to reductionism, which inevitably leads to a misappraisal of social behaviors; reductionism illustrates the cause for practical behavior as either the “transcendent, permanent existence” of objective social constraints or regulations, or the “transcendence of the ego” equipped to make its own constraints and regulations.<sup>58</sup> These two categories are too broad and vague to truly capture the varieties of human behavior in social environments, and do not fully address the other driving forces that Bourdieu sees as inherent to practice.

Instead of appealing to reductionism in classifying social practice, Bourdieu’s understanding falls somewhere between structure and agency, or between “mechanism and

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<sup>57</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 73.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 27, 73.

finalism.” In his theory of practice he turns to habit, a set of dispositions which he posits are inherent to practice itself as a means to explain its role as a social process. At the center of social practice exists what Bourdieu terms the *habitus*, “the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations,” which tends to guide behaviors of practice and “reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle.”<sup>59</sup> These dispositions for practice as social behaviors are “structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures,” for practice is at once an act representative of collectively regulated behavior while itself regulating collective behavior, a social process that moves along “like a train laying its own rails.”<sup>60</sup> Unlike theories that describe practice as a mechanical reaction to rules and regulations, the regulatory nature of the habitus is found within practice itself and enables its own reproduction in social environments. The habitus as a theory also avoids a finalist reductionism in that the actor undertaking the practice is objectively adapted to their goals “without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them.”<sup>61</sup> For Bourdieu, the basic function of the habitus is the maintenance of behavioral systems of practice in society, wherein the actor is neither adhering to objective rules that govern the practice nor employing any agency or will in overtly guiding it. From an individual’s earliest upbringing, he says, there exists the “precondition not only for the coordination of practices but also for the practices of coordination.”<sup>62</sup>

There are a variety of conditions that exist as the cause for such dispositions for practice, which Bourdieu asserts are ignored by theorists who adhere to reductionism. They are important to consider in the discussion of social practice, for they are what allow collective practices to appear to the actor as sensible, reasonable, and necessary facets of organized society. These

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<sup>59</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 78.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp 53, 57.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p 72.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p 81.

structures exist as the first step toward reproduced social practice, and begin as experiences in the course of history that are inculcated and appropriated as behavioral regularities or, more broadly, a social trajectory. One such structure is the objective structure, which Bourdieu describes as the “direct or indirect but always convergent experiences that give a social environment its *physiognomy*,” or the consequences of past practices that become internalized within the individual to inform present and future practices.<sup>63</sup> Objective structures can be thought of as general social trends that appear to occur naturally as part of communal life. Bourdieu gives some examples of these types of structures, and, if thought of as statistical regularities, includes things like employment rates, income curves, or the frequency of holidays, among others. These structural social trends, which are the result of a series of past practices by the individual and group, may appear in social environments to the individual as “‘closed doors,’ ‘dead ends,’ and limited ‘prospects’” that converge in the assessment of likelihood.<sup>64</sup> In sum, these structures objectify the future for the individual and social group, do so naturally as a cumulative result of past social behaviors and, most importantly, go unrecognized as such; objective structures are obscured in the eyes of the actor, and simply appear to them as “the way things are.”

Another condition that is necessary to the formation of the habitus as a disposition for practice is the cognitive structure. This type of structure is a result of the objective structure, and plays an equally important role in reinforcing practice as a sensible and necessary social act. The main difference between these structures in their function is that, while the objective structure guides and is guided by behaviors of practice in society that create a collective social trajectory, the cognitive structure is what lends this trajectory its meaning, significance, and the *feeling* of intention behind the behaviors of practice within it. Cognitive structures are “schemes of perception, appreciation, and action, which are acquired through practice and applied in their practical state without acceding to explicit representation,” operate through “the objective

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<sup>63</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 86.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p 87.

structures of which they are a product [and] tend to reproduce themselves in practices.”<sup>65</sup> The cognitive responses to behaviors of practice, Bourdieu describes, are the preconditions for the establishment of a social consensus on the meaning behind coordinated social practices. After all, always inherent to practice is a cognitive function, an operation that constructs for the individual the proper set of symbolic relations or oppositions and organizes meaning in a way that is appropriately and necessarily reproduced again and again in practice.

The objective structures and the cognitive structures that come together to create the series of behavioral dispositions for practice are inseparable. In Bourdieu’s model of the habitus, each structure provides its own a sort of practical logic for the individual, which is then regenerated and reaffirmed through continued practices by society. The cognitive structure “organizes the vision of the world in accordance with the objective structures of a determinate state of the social world,” effectively creating what Bourdieu terms the “socially informed body,” a collective “sense of direction and the sense of reality, the sense of balance and the sense of beauty, common sense and the sense of the sacred, tactical sense and the sense of responsibility,” and so forth.<sup>66</sup> These tastes and distastes, both internal and external, are at once individual and communal, and create the appropriate social atmosphere necessary for practice as an inborn disposition.

The structures that comprise the habitus, or the innate disposition for practice, are articulated by logic to reproduce such practice. This logic appears to the individual as a self-evident, undisputed belief in practice as a necessarily reproducible social act, but does so with the same quality of misrecognition inherent to the habitus; the individual is again unaware of any logical process at work, and instead adheres immediately to practice, or “the world of tradition experienced as a ‘natural world’ and taken for granted.”<sup>67</sup> He calls this understanding of the

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<sup>65</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 97.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p 124.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p 165.

world of reproduced practice *doxa*, a term which distinguishes itself from orthodoxy and heterodoxy. These latter terms imply an acknowledgment to either a singular or multitudinous approach to practice, while *doxa* exists as a neutral middle, appealing to neither structure nor anti-structure.

Bourdieu describes two formations that come together to create *doxa*. The first is the external social structure, which is organized in societies by such factors as age, gender, class, and so forth. This formation provides for the individual an appraisal of social potential insofar one's social position directly determines one's prospects, material or immaterial. Social structures provide clear representations of what resources are available for the individual, and thereby also reveal what is unavailable; the individual may act upon this this availability, though may do so only within the bounds of the social delineations in which they exist. The other formation, which acts in accordance with the social structure, is the mental structure. This structure comprises the individual's cognitive sense of possibility, a sense of desire and pursuit that play a role in assessing the social world and what it may have to offer. The mental structure comprises the social aims of the individual and, left unchecked, would necessarily lead to social groups driven only by their inclination for advancement and success. According to Bourdieu, this never occurs precisely because of the presence of the social structure, which acts as a mechanism of constraint for the meandering desires inherent to individuals in social environments. However, this relationship is experienced by the individual not as a push and pull between availability and desire, but rather as a natural harmony between the two. Bourdieu asserts that of all the mechanisms that harmonize to produce this logic of practical reproduction, "the most important and the best concealed is undoubtedly the dialectic of the objective chances and the agents' aspirations, out of which arises a *sense of limits*, commonly called the *sense of reality*."<sup>68</sup> In a way, individuals in a society come to understand, unknowingly, that social conditions not only

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<sup>68</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 164.

make what is available to them, but that this availability is a natural, even commonsensical, characteristic of social formation. Due to this misrecognition of practice as rooted in social conditions, they are readily reproduced and serve to further solidify the social conditions from which they arise.

The habitus and doxa combine to create the social reproduction of practice apparently innate to both individual and social conditions. The habitus provides the disposition for practice as a social process, wherein the individual is driven neither by rules governing behavior nor by free will. Instead, practice itself contains the ingredients necessary for this disposition, aspects such as propriety, tempo, or custom, which are revealed to the individual as innate tendencies in the act of practice itself. The social trends that result from collective acts throughout the course of history are taken by the individual to be normative, and serve to further structure practice as a social behavior. This behavior is given meaning by the cognitive structure, which manifests as a collective consensus on the symbolic power and significance of practice as a social act; the cognitive structure lends a *sense* of design and purpose to the act of practice for the individual. According to Bourdieu, the resultant “socially informed body” engages in practices that are at once reflections of past practices and examples for future practices. This trajectory of reproduction is made possible by doxic modes of existence in society, in which the “agents’ aspirations have the same limits as the objective conditions of which they are a product.”<sup>69</sup> In a circular manner, individuals in a society, by the influence of the habitus and doxa, commit to practice according to the habits written into history and by the means afforded them on the basis of social position. In Bourdieu’s model, we can see that, while it may appear to individuals in a society that they are the guiding forces in social practice, they are in fact also passive agents through which practice is manifested, reproduced, and cognitively confirmed to be a natural social occurrence.

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<sup>69</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 166.

In the case of Tokugawa Japan, this model will help us to understand some of the ways in which trends of practice culminated as tendencies expressed by society, behavioral products of an array of conditions that are also addressed by Ooms in his work *Tokugawa Village Practice*. He discusses the conception of pollution that surrounded *kawata*, individuals who engaged in jobs perceived to be unclean, such as those that involved the skinning and slaughtering of cattle, which affected their status in society. Hunters, however, who engaged in the skinning and slaughtering of wild boar, were able to keep from being included in this group, a division that was made official after a court case in 1694.<sup>70</sup> Though this division may have been made official in court, Ooms suggests that such a resolution arose out of something beyond linear argumentation. Instead, the nuanced perceptions that surrounded the trades of hunters and *kawata*, and perhaps the very animals involved in their respective trades, all culminated in a consensus on the exclusion of the hunters as unclean and, ultimately, on their higher status in society.<sup>71</sup> Since “practice has a logic which is not that of the logician,” the variety of conditions that comprise the “socially informed body” and its consensuses, such as the understanding of the relationship between status and pollution in the case of village practice, does so naturally.<sup>72</sup> While Ooms reveals the possibility of discussing the habitus in the context of social status and its formation, we will see that this same model may be applied to Tokugawa religion and may be equally effective in illuminating some of the dispositional qualities of religious practice central to the *danka* system.

### **Material and Symbolic Capital**

Doxic modes of existence will always serve to acknowledge the dominant power within a social group. As discussed, doxa, as a formative structure in the cognitive recognition of social

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<sup>70</sup> Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Village Practice*, University of California Press, 1996, p 275.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, Stanford University Press, 1980, p 86.

practice as a natural occurrence, depends on the harmony between objective availability and individual aspiration, two structures that come together to create a natural sense of social reality. However, we must also take into consideration that individual prospects are determined by social position, a classification that is directly upheld in societies by the dominant social group. This is especially clear in hegemonic societies in which class distinction is foundational to demarcating degrees of power. Different social groups may hold power to different degrees, but it will always be most concentrated at the hegemonic source and recognized as such by other social groups under its control. Thus, in a doxic mode of existence, by taking one's social position as a self-evident boundary that contains all necessary material or immaterial prospects, one is also taking the dominant positions of power to be self-evident and universally favorable. The very fact that social positions appear to the individual as a natural *sense of limits* preserves the divisions between them, another "reproduction of the social order whose very functioning serves the interests of those occupying a dominant position in the social structure."<sup>73</sup>

However, Bourdieu goes on to address other ways in which power is recognized and maintained in social environments that are divided by class. Particularly, his discussion of different forms of capital brings to light ways in which some groups are able to establish themselves as more powerful than others, a relationship of dominance still integrated into the world of social practice. He describes economic capital as essential to the start of a process that he calls the *interconvertibility*, in which economic capital is transformed from a material form to a symbolic form. In a circular manner, this conversion substantiates the social power of the group by which the process takes place, and leads the group back to the potential for further economic capital. Social practice is involved in this process insofar as degrees of practical propriety and technique become important considerations as soon as material capital comes into play. For Bourdieu, the introduction of material capital as an exchange for a particular practice inevitably calls for ways to measure the worth of practice as something beyond a symbolic act. He states,

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<sup>73</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 165.



“only the application of categories alien to the peasant experience (those imposed by economic domination and the generalization of monetary exchanges) brings up the distinction between the technical aspect and the ritual or symbolic aspect of [practice]”; in order for practice to be worthy of this monetary exchange, there must be some way to regard it as valuable and profitable for those involved in the exchange relationship.<sup>74</sup> Though the value of practice as a commodity may be difficult to quantify, Bourdieu proposes that practice does conform to economic calculations. In fact, economies may be extended to “*all* goods, material and symbolic, without distinction, that present themselves as *rare* and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation.”<sup>75</sup> If a social group is able to present practice as a valued commodity, either appealing to its rarity or the technique through which it is transmitted, among other qualities, practice may take on a commoditized characteristic in social environments, and become sought after like any other commodity.

Bourdieu’s process of interconvertibility does not end there. In presenting practice as a valued commodity, a particular social group may gain renown or prestige as purveyors of practice, a type of social merit that he calls *symbolic capital*. As social practices begin to take on convertible economic qualities, they become valued in terms of their rarity or technique, characteristics which, if able to be demonstrated, imbue their purveyors with recognition among the larger social body. This recognition is represented in Bourdieu’s model as symbolic capital in that it allows the social group the potential for its expenditure elsewhere in society, in either material or immaterial ways. For instance, symbolic capital may be used to leverage other groups within society for further renown and recognition or even for further material capital. Thus, the accrual of symbolic capital by a social group may reinforce class distinction in the sense that its accrual and assertion is an expression of power over another group. In his discussion of Bourdieu’s work on the varying forms of capital, Craig Calhoun believes “he treats all interests,

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<sup>74</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 175.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p 178.

historically particular though their contents may be, as formally similar in their implication of strategies designed to advance some manner of acquisition of power or wealth. Bourdieu is saying something more trans-historical and anthropologically invariant about human actors than he lets on, especially in his accounts of capital.”<sup>76</sup>

This concept of a universal strategy in the accrual of power is interesting to consider in the context of class-based societies, and seems to gesture back toward the function of the cognitive structures that guide the aims and pursuits of individuals within a society. For those that are afforded the potential for power and wealth within their social boundaries, they may seek to actively attain it by economizing a practice. However, like Bourdieu’s other models of social relationships, this power dynamic is still dependent upon those participating as purchasers of such practice; in ways similar to the misrecognition of the habitus as an inherent disposition that arises out of past experiences, symbolic capital, too, goes unrecognized as an accrual of power that stems from material gain. This original accrual of material capital by a social group must appear as yet another objective structure, or a normal condition of existence, so as to allow symbolic capital to reveal itself as rightfully accrued thereafter. As Bourdieu states, “symbolic capital, a transformed and thereby *disguised* form of physical ‘economic’ capital, produces its proper effect inasmuch, and only inasmuch, as it conceals the fact that it originates in ‘material’ forms of capital which are also, in the last analysis, the source of its effects.”<sup>77</sup> Therefore, the only way for the process of interconvertibility to be effective in endowing a particular social group with symbolic capital and, ultimately, social power, is the misrecognition of material accrual in the first place. That is, the material capital originally accrued by the social group must be understood as yet another objective condition of the social environment, or simply the “way things are.”

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<sup>76</sup> Craig Calhoun, “*Habitus*, Field, and Capital: The Question of Historical Specificity,” *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*, University of Chicago Press: 1993, p 71.

<sup>77</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 183.

Bourdieu's analysis of social processes reveals the nuances of collective practice that are deeply dependent on the individual within the group. The role of the individual in practice informs, and is at the same time informed by, those of the collective whole. His model of the habitus presents practice as a disposition inherent to social behavior. Practice is illustrated as a human tendency that is not acted out in the name of obligatory rules, or by the agency of the practitioner. Instead, it is produced and reproduced as a set of natural, sensible, and reasonable behaviors that follow along a social trajectory. Practices that are performed in the present are at once a reflection of a society's past social processes, as well as a representation of those for the future. This tendency for reproduction, he states, is realized through doxa, or the natural harmony between constraints on the one hand, which are determined by social class, and aspirations on the other, which are governed by a one's sense of pursuit. The resultant understanding of social reality produces not only an acceptance of the way things naturally appear to be, but also a degree of docility in that individuals tend not to aspire to social possibilities that lie outside of their class.

This class distinction is further reinforced as economies are introduced to social practices. The introduction of material capital into a system of practice demands methods of valuing it as a commodity, which inevitably alters the relationship between those involved in the transaction. Those that are able to purvey a rare, technically sound, or socially sought after practice are endowed a prestige in society; the very sets of practices that are determined by society to be worthy of economic transactions also become a source of power for those disseminating them. Symbolic capital allows for social power, which may be exercised in a variety of ways, though it always remains disguised of having grown out of the initial accrual of economic capital. It must remain symbolic, "although it is such as to inspire actions which are very directly material; just as there are professions, like law and medicine, in which those who practice them are 'above

suspicion', so a [group] has a vital interest in keeping its capital of honour' or prestige in this exchange relationship.<sup>78</sup>

Along with his discussion of the status formations within village communities, Ooms also refers to Bourdieu's model of symbolic capital in illuminating the ways in which the hierarchical formations of hereditary households, especially those of dominant classes, became a way to create distance between the upper echelons of society and the peasant class. Status legislation, which included decrees that members of the peasant class appear in public documents without a surname, dismount when approaching samurai, wear only cotton, use respectful forms of speech, and so forth, operated at the macroscopic level in ordering Japanese society.<sup>79</sup> However, Ooms also discusses the importance of another type of social ordering, which occurred at the microscopic level within villages far from the centers of power. In these villages, a further stratification played out naturally in the accrual and expenditure of symbolic capital by economically dominant groups over others. Not only did this serve to solidify the power holdings of those in dominant positions in these villages, Ooms states, but it also narrowed the economic and social aspirations of those in intermediary positions.<sup>80</sup> In his discussion of class formation and symbolic power, Ooms considers such factors as material economy, labor contributions, and social status, thus demonstrating that Bourdieu's models can help enrich our historical understanding of some of the secular aspects of Tokugawa village life. These same models of power exchanges, the accrual of symbolic capital, and the acts of symbolic violence in its expenditure can also help us to better understand Tokugawa life in the religious realm. Like the ordering of classes that appeared as microscopic divisions in rural villages within the context of status and material economy, we will see that there were similar divisions made on the basis of an exchange of ritual services.

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<sup>78</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 181.

<sup>79</sup> Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Village Practice*, University of California Press, 1996, p 132.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 131-132.

The theoretical models presented by Bourdieu serve to cast a very different light on the development and maintenance of the *danka* system in Tokugawa Japan. While the system was put into place legislatively by the shogunate, Bourdieu's models help to reveal some of the ways in which it may have been perpetuated by society as a set of social practices bound together by economic exchange, and carried out as a social disposition. The social dynamics behind the ritual practices that were central to the *danka* system directly reflect the social tendencies and dispositions that he refers to in his discussion of the habitus. Furthermore, as we begin to look at one particular instance of ritual practice involving the *gannin*, we see at work the same notions of symbolic capital and doxa which Bourdieu takes as central to his discussion of class-based societies. Overall, his theoretical models bring into relief the importance of social participation, the acknowledgment of class, and the power of economy in discussing the *danka* system as another vehicle for social control.

### **Ancestral Veneration, Mortuary Ritual, and Social Participation**

As Bourdieu describes, the objective structure and the cognitive structure comprise the two necessary conditions through which practice appears as a sensible social act, and these concepts are no less applicable to religious life in Tokugawa Japan. As already discussed, the objective structure provides for a group the representation of social trajectory based on cumulative past experiences, natural trends in society that at once guide, and are guided by, collective behavior. In Tokugawa society, for instance, we can take trends of ancestral veneration and mortuary rituals to be two such objective structures, for their formations were inscribed into history through their engagement as past practices, and continually legitimated by their presence as a natural facet of communal life. These trajectories of social practice are compounded by the cognitive structure which lends them meaning and significance; with the cognitive structure working in conjunction with the objective structure, social practice takes on a dispositional quality, as if it were an inborn attribute. We can understand this inherent preference for social

practice by looking more closely at the social and cultural particularities of ancestral veneration and mortuary ritual, which gives some indication that practices legislatively upheld within the *danka* system were in fact equally sustained by society at large.

Like many practices, the understanding of ancestral veneration changed organically throughout Japan's religious history, but nonetheless remained as a reproduced practice in some form. Nam-lin Hur points out that it was during the late medieval period that people of all classes began to pay closer attention to the way in which these practices were carried out, a change that occurred due to social shifts that began within the household. Just prior to the Tokugawa period, formations of the family in Japan began to move away from the medieval extended family system, which recognized branch familial units along with a main family, to a more monogamous nuclear family system, which tightened the family unit and deemphasized peripheral units. This was carried over into ancestral practices as well. Whereas in the preceding system of extended families the practices of ancestral veneration would largely recognize members of the main family, thus reminding the peripheral family units of their lineal inferiority, things became quite different as the Tokugawa period approached. In the newly formed monogamous nuclear system, which heightened senses of group belonging and identity, a stem family, often made up of no more than one couple per generation would receive spiritual support that would foster its solidarity as a single lineal unit. This support took the form of Buddhist death-related rituals and ancestral veneration performed in the household, and focused directly on the stem-lineage of the main family.<sup>81</sup>

The particular understanding of ancestral veneration that had formed by the Tokugawa period is a good representation of an objective structure because it was directly influenced by the changing trends in social formations, and continued to be perpetuated as a "naturalized" practice in Japanese society. In a practical sense, its custom and propriety were continually upheld during

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<sup>81</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 23.

the centuries leading up to the Tokugawa period as a necessary recognition of one's familial lineage, an observance of ties that were still perceived to exist between the living and the dead. The propriety necessary in effectively carrying out such services appeared to those involved as the way things had always been done, but also the appropriate way for the given time; the "closed doors" and "dead ends" which Bourdieu indicates as modes of guidance toward practical potential function insofar as propriety is subtly guided and upheld as the most effective means of achieving a practical goal. Propriety upheld in ancestral veneration existed in the Tokugawa period precisely because of its perceived effectiveness in the past, and would go on to be guided further by the natural trajectory of collective practice. Broadly, ancestral veneration as a structure that objectified its own present and future in practice was always, as Bourdieu states, obscured in the eyes of the actors as any having structure at all. While services carried out in the name of ancestral veneration served a function widely perceived as religiously necessary in Tokugawa society, its existence as a collective practice, both social and familial, had become internalized as socially and culturally normative ritual behaviors.

However, ancestral veneration could not exist in a social environment as an isolated practice for its own sake, and cognitive structures were also necessary to ensure such practice was imbued with meaning and significance. As the understanding of ancestral veneration began to change along with family dynamics during the Tokugawa period, there were cognitive structures that helped to substantiate its engagement as a coordinated social practice. For example, the broad representation of the appearance of ancestral deities allowed for a regularity and frequency of ritual services determined by the practicing individual. Hur describes a few of the traditional ways in which deceased ancestors were thought to have manifested in the world of the living. Some manifested as deities of paddy fields, mountains, estates, houses, particular times of the year, or more generally as ancestral spirits.<sup>82</sup> He goes on to indicate that such broadness in the

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<sup>82</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 184.

representations of ancestral deities allowed for a regularity in when, where, or how a deity may have appeared to the individual, as the geographical environments were universal to Japan and the times of the year remained fairly predictable. Conversely, these representations could also allow for a relative control over when, where, or how the individual initiated a meeting with an ancestral deity, something that occurred quite often. Thus, the collective representation of ancestral deities by society at large allowed for degrees of temporal and geographical regularities in practice, for the manifestations of deities directly informed, and were in some cases informed by, society's cognitive understanding of when, where, and how services were to be carried out.

Another objective structure that helped to shape the practices inherent to the *danka* system as a collective act was the mortuary ritual. As in many societies, death-related rituals were central to Tokugawa religion and society. Tokugawa mortuary rituals may be regarded as comprising an objective structure because they, like the practices of ancestral veneration, remained a constant while undergoing adjustments to various factors. While the interpretation of death as a pervasive presence may have remained the same, the manner in which society reacted to it, be it culturally, ritually, symbolically, and so forth, changed naturally throughout history. In his work, Hur describes the presence of death in Tokugawa society, which highlights the way it informed mortuary ritual as an objective structure and helped to shape it as social practice. He states, "The Tokugawa Japanese inherited the age-old idea that the corpse emitted a destructive energy and was, therefore, a defilement, a source of pollution, disorder, and immorality. These beliefs continued to be evident in the ritualized handling of corpses in early modern times. The task of how to dispose of the corpse was an essential component of any mortuary ritual in Tokugawa Japan."<sup>83</sup> Death, undoubtedly, existed as a constant presence to be dealt with properly, effectively, and according to custom. Its presence necessitated a collective agreement on the most efficacious ways of doing so, and, as another objective structure that shaped, and was

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<sup>83</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 141.



shaped by, social engagement, the ritual practices then presented themselves as natural, sensible, and reasonable answers to this pervasive social concern. As Hur describes, while the soteriological value of death-related rituals may not have changed much throughout the course of Japanese history, the form of the rituals themselves changed with the times.<sup>84</sup>

As in the case of ancestral veneration, there also existed the proper cognitive structures by which mortuary rituals as a social practice were represented and reproduced. Hur's analysis of death in Tokugawa society indicates a few of the cognitive structures at work here, including pollution, disorder, and immorality that were perceived to be inherent to death as a phenomenon. However, there are further cognitive structures that surrounded the mortuary ritual practices themselves that lent meaning and significance to the services as efficacious and necessary. Most notably, the understanding of the relationship between the soul and the body directly informed how these rituals were carried out. As Hur points out, "the idea that the soul was an entity separable from the body was the starting point of all death rituals, whose goal was to smooth the soul's transition into the other world."<sup>85</sup> Generally, the movement of the soul or spirit after death became central in considering the efficacy of mortuary ritual, and four smaller rites were developed as a means to practically demonstrate this cognitive understanding.

These rites were delivered in succession, starting immediately after the death of an individual with the rite known as "calling back the soul." Family members would call out the name of the deceased with the hope of the soul returning to the body and thus returning life to the individual. Following this rite was the rite of "appeasing the soul" or "cutting off the connection," which was meant to sever the ties between the soul and the world of the living. While this second rite was thought to help usher the soul to the next world, it was also delivered for the safety of those still living; should the connection be left intact, death could still pose a danger to those in

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<sup>84</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 141.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

the living world. The third stage constituted the rite of “transforming [the deceased] into a Buddha,” wherein an official ceremony was held to aid the deceased down the path toward Buddhist salvation. Ritual elements were often incorporated that would help to purge any sins of the deceased, often transferring onto them good merit from the living. After the body was entombed or cremated and the ashes buried, the fourth rite could ensue, which took place over an extended period of time. The rite of “making merit on behalf of the deceased” was designed to help the transformation of the deceased into an ancestral deity. During this rite, it was thought that the merit accrued by the living in the delivery of ritual services would offset the bad karma held by the deceased. While these rites varied subtly in form from region to region, on the whole the Tokugawa Japanese thought these four rites functioned in allowing for the safe delivery of the soul to its form as an ancestral deity.<sup>86</sup> In this way, mortuary rituals functioned in Tokugawa society as an objective structure in that their practice was considered historically normative. Their powerful significance and meaning as a ritual force grew out of the cognitive structures surrounding conceptions of the dualism of the soul and the body. In combination, these structures allowed mortuary ritual to appear as a sensible social act, a necessary collective effort on behalf of society and family that dealt with the negative perceptions that surrounded death.

Hur asserts that “Buddhist death rituals and ancestral rites were promoted as the social ‘norm’ to which *danna* households were expected to subscribe: people were to die Buddhist and to venerate deities within the framework of the *danka* system.”<sup>87</sup> This seems to render the members of the *danka* system powerless, as if their involvement was somehow purely obligatory, while Bourdieu’s model of the habitus implies a level of social involvement beyond that of obligation. In the case of ancestral veneration and mortuary rituals, two practices central to any affiliation to a temple within the *danka* system, there were a variety of conditions that came

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<sup>86</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, pp 142-170.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p 24.

together to create the proper practical logic. As the formation of family systems began to change during the Tokugawa period, so too did the process of ancestral veneration. The trajectory of practice was directly tied to social formations, and the ritual focus of veneration shifted from the main family to the stem family units as this formation became traditional in the Tokugawa household. One cognitive formation that helped to lend ancestral veneration geographical and temporal significance was the social consensus on when, where, and how ancestral deities appeared in the world of the living. This cognitive understanding worked in conjunction with ancestral veneration as a social practice, for the ritual conditions were determined by society as normative, reproducible, and reliable. As a ritual behavior to be carried out in the name of familial identity, it was further reinforced as a necessary collective practice. In similar fashion, the engagement of mortuary ritual within Tokugawa society also carried qualities of the habitus. The presence of death necessitated means of practically handling the bodies of the deceased from the earliest periods in social history; separating the deceased from the living, even from a sanitary standpoint, had been a necessity throughout the course of society. By the Tokugawa period, the treatment of the deceased had undoubtedly taken on a form beyond immediate practical concerns, which is clear in the understanding of the movement of the soul after death. From the four successive mortuary rites we can understand that the Tokugawa had a clear conceptual understanding of the significance behind the mortuary ritual as a whole; the “age-old” beliefs behind death pollution, the movement of the soul, and karmic merit were all at play in the development of mortuary rituals as a necessary collective act.

In contrast to Hur’s statement, while mortuary rituals and ancestral veneration may have been presented as the social “norm,” there appear to have been many other objective and cognitive formations within Tokugawa society that not only compelled ritual engagement, but allowed it to appear as a natural and essential facet of social living. Bourdieu’s model of the habitus is applicable in this way precisely because these types of rituals existed as social processes long before the Tokugawa period. Their historical trends as a social practice, as well as

the cognitive understandings of ancestral deities and the souls of the deceased had been socially inculcated to such a degree by the onset of the Tokugawa period that they went unrecognized as being any cumulative result of past practices. When explored using Bourdieu's theoretical models, ancestral veneration and mortuary rituals appear as complex but structurally consistent. These rituals were practiced with neither a purely blind adherence to some rule or obligation as Hur seems to suggest, nor were they acted out as wholly willful behaviors. Instead, these rituals were adhered to out of historical dispositions which naturally developed their own trajectories, social trends of behavior which were continually corrected and articulated according to the collective objective and cognitive consensuses.

### **The *Gannin* and *Segaki* Ritual**

As Buddhism began to gain momentum as an institutional force in Tokugawa society, it also became the site of regulation and control by the shogunate. By the Kanbun era (1661-1667), priests were able to monopolize much of Buddhist ritual practices, especially those that surrounded death and ancestral veneration. They were able to achieve this through the institutional leverage of the temple-householder relationship, which held that only priests associated with the temple to which a house was registered perform such rituals. This monopoly was further reinforced by the regulatory efforts of the shogunate, which sought to cleanse institutional Buddhism and its variety of services of "unruly elements," thereby integrating the Tokugawa inhabitants into a regulated system of ritual exchange wherein services were to be delivered only by authorized temple priests.<sup>88</sup> The elements that were considered to have been disruptive to the established order of ritual services within the *danka* system were renegade

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<sup>88</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 247.

offerings of rituals made by “itinerants, street preachers, quasi-*yamabushi*, and peddler-exorcists,” marginalized individuals much like the *gannin*.<sup>89</sup>

Shogunal efforts to stem the flow of these “unruly” elements embedded within institutional Buddhism took many forms, and began very early during the seventeenth century. Beginning in the Kan'ei era (1624-1643), itinerant mendicants were driven out of their traditional professions by being forced to settle in one place as sedentary citizens. Not only did this confine their movement, and thereby geographically define their clientele base, but they were also banned from establishing permanent religious facilities at their new locations. Later, in 1673, the shogunate decreed that landlords and ward officials be equally responsible for religious practitioners accommodated in secular houses, and similarly banned any home outfitted with religious paraphernalia such as altars, signboards, or other iconography.<sup>90</sup> All of these efforts endowed the Tokugawa regime with a new ability for religious control, in that the restrictions placed on religious wanderers, itinerants, and mendicants kept unauthorized Buddhist services at a minimum. Consequently, this series of regulations only reinforced the power held by the extensive temple networks in a monetized exchange of funerary rituals, for its priests were the only social group with the official authorization to carry out such practices.

However, like the ability of the *gannin* to garner customers for their wide array of religious services, they were also able to maintain a foothold in the arena of death-related rituals, and found particular success in the delivery of the *segaki* ritual. This ritual was given in order to pacify the wandering spirits of those who suffered violent or ill-met deaths, grudge-bearing ghosts thought to be the source of calamities for the living. In order to appease these spirits, individuals or groups of people would carry out a series of smaller rituals which, when performed in succession, composed the *segaki*. While the rituals were sometimes conducted in accordance

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<sup>89</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 247.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

with sectarian traditions or local customs, temples institutionally integrated into the *danka* system largely carried them out. The ritual was held in front of a special altar installed in the main hall of the Buddhist temple, and was usually attended by its affiliated householders. The *segaki* typically included a series of readings of Buddhist sutras or mantras, offerings of food for the wandering spirits, and the transference of merit from the living to the wandering spirits.<sup>91</sup>

The *segaki* was another ritual offered under the regulatory atmosphere of Buddhist services wherein in the negative elements that surrounded the wandering spirits of the dead could be purged most effectively if rendered by authorized Buddhist monks belonging to recognized temples. Nevertheless, Tokugawa citizens met the offerings of this service by the *gannin* with relative enthusiasm, and provided the *gannin* with a reliable clientele base. For example, as late as 1691, long after the placement of regulations on religious itinerants offering unauthorized rituals, we find instances of the *gannin* rendering *segaki* services to the public. In a report from the seventh month of that year, *gannin* were depicted as striking cymbals, reciting sutras, and “bearing a litter with decorated paper streamers” upon which was carried food offerings for the wandering spirits.<sup>92</sup> Those who were saddened by the death of a parent, child, or loved one were said to have contributed to this service with money. Thus, though the *gannin* fell under the category of “unruly elements,” there were still instances of ritual exchanges that occurred between them and the Tokugawa citizenry.

In another intriguing strategic display, it was the timing of the offering of these rituals that allowed the *gannin* to develop a clientele base within the regulated ritual system. According to Groemer, the *gannin* took full advantage of the season of Bon observance, a time of the year in which spirits were thought to be most active in the world of the living.<sup>93</sup> This time of the year meant a heavily religious atmosphere, when the dead were on the minds of many in Tokugawa

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<sup>91</sup> Nam-lin Hur, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan: Buddhism, Anti-Christianity, and the Danka System*, Harvard University Press, 2007, p 194.

<sup>92</sup> Gerald Groemer, “The Arts of the Gannin,” *Asian Folklore Studies*, Nanzan University, 1999, p 284.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, p 284.

society and when many citizens practiced ancestral veneration. By making their services available to the public during this time, the *gannin* relied on the emotional and psychological openness of the citizenry in adding to their already varied spectrum of ritual services. Through this calculated timing, the *gannin* retained portions of their clientele base unlike other marginalized religious groups, and were able to ritually operate within a closed religious society. The manner in which the *gannin* situated themselves within the economic arena of death-related rituals and ritual practice generally shows that they were deeply aware of its social and cultural importance, and took full advantage of its role as central to Tokugawa culture.

The way in which Tokugawa society was integrated into this system of exchange involving ritual practice, as well as the broader development of the *danka* system as an extension of a unifying ideology reveals much about the socializing aspects of practice within a hegemonic society. With Bourdieu's theoretical models in mind, we can see some ways in which they reflect the social relationships that developed within the scope of practices central to the *danka* system on the one hand, and the accrual of varied forms of capital by the *gannin* in rendering religious services on the other. In framing the adherence to the *danka* system as a social process rather than simply as a lawful compliance, support for such a system shifts from the authority of the *bakufu* to the participation of society. This becomes even clearer as we consider the social structures and conditions that came together to not only create the disposition for such social practice, but also uphold class structure through a system of ritual exchange.

### **Interconvertibility of Material Capital and the *Gannin***

Bourdieu states that “social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or group by relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition,” takes a variety of initial forms, and is able to be converted into other forms.<sup>94</sup> As discussed, these

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<sup>94</sup> Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc J.D. Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, University of Chicago Press, 1992, p 119.

different forms of capital, which Bourdieu asserts are symbolic since they do not have the tangible characteristics of material capital, may actually begin with the accrual of material wealth. In his representation of interconvertibility, this material capital can be transformed into symbolic capital and used many ways in social relationships. It may be used as leverage against other social groups, as an assertion of power to advance a group within society, or strategically employed to accrue even more material capital. In class-based societies, symbolic capital appears as a very valuable asset that can alter social formations or heighten degrees of power and authority, and Tokugawa Japan was no exception. The exchange relationships of the *danka* system provide many instances of these very concepts at work, as does the role of the *gannin* as purveyors of death-related ritual services. While there may have occurred passages of symbolic power that allowed for degrees of release for the *gannin*, these instances continue to show the ways in which systems of control were sustained by society itself.

We can clearly see the process of interconvertibility at work in the relationship between the Buddhist temple networks and their affiliated households. As the *danka* system began to take shape as an institutional force, Buddhist temples saw a considerable accrual of material capital. Those located within the boundaries of the “vermillion seal” were exempt from shogunal taxes and were able to build immense wealth, and even smaller temples that had been relocated to the peripheral areas surrounding Edo also accrued material capital at a surprising rate. The mandatory registration of households to a temple created a reliable and steady flow of wealth to these religious institutions not only through donations, but also through the delivery of funerary and memorial services. Able only to be lawfully delivered by priests and abbots from the temple to which a household was affiliated, these services became monopolized soon after the *danka* system had stabilized. The growing number of patron households and temples came to create not only a robust material economy, but also came to reflect many of the new expectations of material success attributed to early modern progress in the eyes of the Tokugawa regime.



The considerable amount of material wealth that was accrued by networked temples was converted into symbolic capital, able to be expended in a variety of ways. As Bourdieu points out, the actual conversion of material capital into symbolic capital occurs as a social group garners recognition, prestige, or honor in the eyes of society as a result of this material gain. One necessary distinction to make, however, is that, though this social prestige is garnered as a result of material gain, it is in fact not perceived as such, and generally goes unrecognized by society as anything tied directly to material wealth. Instead, social prestige is understood to be something else, concealed as having material gain as its source, and only discernable as having arisen out of the objective structures of society; in order for the process of conversion to be effective, social prestige must appear as ideologically anchored, and shown to be garnered by the social group in the normative conditions of existence. Thus, the wealth accrued by affiliated temple networks was able to be converted into symbolic capital, or social prestige or power, precisely because of the ideological claims made by the shogunal administration in institutionalizing the *danka* system. By employing a temple registration system in the name of social homogeneity, early modern pressures to organize as a country and, perhaps most effectively, Christianity's threat to shogunal sovereignty, the wealth that flowed from the populace to temple networks appeared as normative in its conversion to symbolic capital during the process of interconvertibility. It was the pervasiveness and effectiveness of the Tokugawa ideology that allowed material wealth to disguise itself and be converted into social power by the temple networks.

After its conversion, how was this power expended? For some temples, symbolic capital made a full rotation and was reconverted back into material capital. In these cases this power was used as leverage by temples in the extortion of further capital gain from householders. These acts, which Bourdieu terms as acts of *symbolic violence*, are simply assertions of one group that holds symbolic capital over another group that holds less of it.<sup>95</sup> In his work on the social aspects of

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<sup>95</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p 41.

the development of Sōtō Zen Buddhism during the Tokugawa period, Duncan Williams outlines an incident that clearly illustrates this act of symbolic violence. According to Williams, the head abbot of Chōkokuji temple exercised his power in ways that outraged many of the householders affiliated with the temple, causing some to submit written reports that described his conduct. In 1819 this report was submitted to Tokugawa authorities, and inside was listed fourteen deeds of misconduct committed by the abbot. It included deeds such as “demanding exorbitant fees” for funeral services, extravagant entrances into poor households to demand higher fees for memorial services, “taking money from parishioners” to use for visiting prostitutes, and demanding any amount “[the abbot] writes on a signboard hung at the temple” for yearly memorial services.<sup>96</sup> While this instance does not necessarily represent all actions by temple abbots belonging to affiliated temples, it does show that acts of symbolic violence indeed occurred. With the incredible amount of wealth garnered by those within the temple networks, and the recognition of social prestige that arose out of a pervasive Tokugawa ideology, it is perhaps no surprise that instances like the one at Chōkokuji took place. In a hegemonic society, distinction between social groups and classes exists as foundational for the power to be distributed and recognized. This was clearly the case for the relationship between temples and households within the *danka* system. In order for it to function properly in the eyes of the regime, which had by this time charged temple priests with the authoritative duty of tallying temple registrations, collecting fees, and reporting those who did not comply, the *danka* system had to rely on a similar foundation of power distinction. The effective power, be it material, symbolic, or social, was held on the side of those within the temple networks, while society at large was left only with the means provided for them by their social position.

As proposed, however, this system of control may not have been sustained merely by obligation to the power structures formed between temples and householders during the

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<sup>96</sup> Duncan Ryūken Williams, *The Other Side of Zen: A Social History of Sōtō Zen in Tokugawa Buddhism*, Princeton University Press, 2005, pp 34-35.

institutionalization of the *danka* system. This becomes apparent in the way in which the *gannin* developed a clientele base for their renegade offerings of the *segaki* ritual, a service delivered along with others related to death or ancestral veneration. Even as “unruly” elements within religious society who existed within the realm of Tokugawa control, they became able to deliver the *segaki* ritual to those willing to pay for it. As Groemer describes, much of this was due to their strategic timing during the season of Bon, for they were well aware of the emotional and psychological openness of Tokugawa citizens and were sure to tap into this potential resource for material capital. In this way, the *gannin* may have been able to accrue some degree of symbolic capital within society, for the cyclical season of Bon and its deeply religious atmosphere, along with social dispositions for death-related ritual services and ancestral veneration, disguised their material capital as something anchored in a natural objective condition. Like the conversion of material capital on behalf of the networked Buddhist temples, there existed objective structures for the *gannin* that may have allowed for an accrual of symbolic capital in the process of interconvertibility. However, unlike the instance at Chōkokuji in which this converted capital was expended in an act of symbolic violence, the *gannin* were never able to exert their social prestige in quite this way. Even as a group that may have held some degree of social power within society through their economic success as “unruly” individuals offering unauthorized services, the class distinctions inherent to Tokugawa hegemony made it difficult to use converted symbolic capital as leverage for social advancements or other forms of expenditure.

The primary reason for this can be seen in Bourdieu’s explanation of the nature of doxic modes of existence. As described, individuals or social groups that commit to practice in this doxic mode will tend to do so in a way that recognizes the dominant bodies of power within that society. As a formative structure, doxa depends on the natural harmony between objective availability and individual aspiration, both of which are determined by social position or class. This harmony creates an existence that appears to the individual or social group to be universally favorable in that all material or immaterial prospects are contained and presented by these

positions and classes; it becomes insensible for those in a doxic mode of existence to aspire to anything outside of the boundaries of their particular class. Therefore, far from strategic purveyors of the *segaki* ritual, the *gannin* were not aspiring toward prospects that existed beyond their class as marginalized, “unruly” religious figures. In Bourdieu’s model, the *gannin* would not have been able to expend symbolic capital in a way that would propel them upward within the hegemonic structure, nor would they have been able to leverage social groups perceived to be higher than them within that structure. By operating within the boundaries of their social class, the *gannin* acknowledged their own inability to accrue symbolic capital in a way that made it expendable elsewhere in society. Furthermore, by recognizing the universal favorability of their social class as a natural sense of limits, they also acknowledged the hegemonic source of power that upheld such classes as self-evident and unquestionable. In a way, the participation of the *gannin* in the purveyance of the *segaki* ritual, though it may have appeared strategic, was an act that served the interests of the dominant hegemonic power in sustaining the social delineations of a class-based society.

Bourdieu’s models of social processes and relationships provide another angle from which to view the authority and control that existed within the *danka* system. We see the way in which some of the ritual services may have been upheld as social dispositions inherent to religious society. The objective and cognitive structures that came together in the development of ancestral veneration and mortuary ritual gives indication that these behaviors of practice were something far more than blindly obligatory. His theoretical model suggests a body of practice that was tied directly to the development of social relationships and conferred upon as a meaningful and necessary social act; it is only with the addition of legislative efforts by the Tokugawa regime that death-related practices appear as acts of lawful obligation.

In his explanation of symbolic capital, we see the ways in which wealth and power intermingled, allowing for a variety of uses within society. While this power may have been used in some instances as leverage against certain social groups in accruing even more material capital,

his concept is more indicative of the ways in which social prestige is measure in class-based societies; in some ways, symbolic capital is more valuable because, in its conversion, it is legitimized by ideological or cognitive forces that may transcend the power of crude, material wealth. Though the *gannin* may have been able to accrue some material capital in this way, their doxic mode of existence as a class of marginalized figures would not allow for its proper conversion in the process of interconvertibility, and they therefore acknowledged the self-evident power of the hegemonic authority.

Bourdieu's theory helps us to understand a system of control with individuals at the center, able to shape, and be shaped by, their surrounding social practices. Like Bell's model of "redemptive hegemony" which reveals the importance of ritual mastery that became, in some way, a kind of social power which propelled the *gannin* upward and inward from the depths and fringes of society, Bourdieu's model also relies on a quantitative model of accrual in measuring the potential for social and individual transformative relationships. However, the theories of both of these scholars, though effective in describing social processes as relationships of power, do not account for other possible dimensions of the power of ritual practice for the religious individual. Beyond quantifying the functions of practice solely in terms of the accrual of capital, material or symbolic, are there other interpretations that exist beyond a theoretical model? What other aspects of ritual religious life cannot be accounted for in the models of Bell and Bourdieu? As a discourse left unaddressed by theory or descriptions of the accrual of power or capital, we can further explore the possibility that perhaps the instances of release from social control in Tokugawa society experienced by its inhabitants served a function beyond that of geographical or social fluidity on the one hand, or the accrual of material or symbolic capital on the other. Instead, the release from the confines of early modern social order, a system to which was foundationally attributed privilege, power, competition, and class, may have been experienced as part of religious understanding that transcended such secular measures of communal life. While it is impossible to surmise whether or not these other understandings of the release from Tokugawa

control actually existed in the views of religious practitioners, the consideration of some testimonial accounts from the period allows us to infer that such release may have held a sacred quality.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION: POSSIBILITIES OF A SACRED RELEASE

We must consider the possibility that the approaches of Bell and Bourdieu do not exhaustively account for the religious lives of the inhabitants of Tokugawa society. The Turners suggest that there may be elements of mysticism, in internal pilgrimage as well as in the interior realization of external pilgrimage, which are not quantifiable in terms of rising within the ritual hierarchy or as the accrual of social power.<sup>97</sup> If this is right, then there may be dimensions of religious awareness that are not quantifiable but call for alternative terms of examination involving the sacred and transcendence. To illustrate, we may turn to some sermons from the Tokugawa period that seem to suggest another understanding of mobility as a sacred release with qualities that may not be captured by explanations of accrual or expenditure. Beyond the models of Bell and Bourdieu, these examples imply that some elements of the social mobility experienced by individuals within Tokugawa religion cannot be conceptualized, and are only able to be observed as individual representations of the religious experience. Nevertheless, as the Turners also indicate, this sacred release may have still allowed the individual to “escape the nets of social structure.”<sup>98</sup>

In his preface to a collection of essays on the relationship between early modern religion and travel, Hatakama Kazuhiro recognizes the difficulty in capturing such a sacred element in the experience of mobility through discursive examination alone, and yet acknowledges a deep connection between travel and religious meaning. Much like the Turners’ discussion of the normative *communitas*, Hatakama addresses the significant relationship between the individual religious identity and the larger group. This identity, he states, does not strive to individuate itself

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<sup>97</sup> Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, Columbia University Press, 1978, pp 33-34.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p 34.

from the group but instead exists as a unique portion of the foundation of the collective whole. As a group undertakes a spiritual journey together, religious belief and individual identity work complementarily as one expression of the pilgrim. They both arise together and are proclaimed in the course of spiritual travel.<sup>99</sup> This proclamation of self-shaped religious identity during travel is something that is distinct from other aspects of geographical or social mobility and, as the Turners state, is a sacred interior process turned outward. Unlike the release from control experienced as a traversal of terrain on the one hand, or ascension within the social hierarchy on the other, this externalization of the sacred is a release through a mobility that transcends the delineations of geography and society altogether. That is, if mobility can be understood as expressive of the immeasurable and inconceivable, then the geographical and social releases from control outlined above leave out other potential spiritual aspects of mobility that may have existed beyond the scope of social power, ritual mastery, or the regional customs of pilgrimage.

Two sermons of Zen masters Bankei and Hakuin help to suggest this different type of mobility at play. The aspects of sacred release through this mobility transcend classifications of accrual and expenditure, for the sermons of Bankei and Hakuin suggest that some were able to move within and beyond the social structures that defined Tokugawa society, and do so without the accrual of social power, redemption, or recognition. While this can only be inferred from their sermons, it may add further dimensions to the varieties of release from control in early modern society.

For instance, in the sermon “Servants, Samurai, Husbands, and Wives,” Bankei used the Tokugawa class structure as a means to explain how a religious individual may have transcended social delineations. He described how early modern society was formed through the collective recognition of valued skills and abilities that appeared worthy of praise and recognition, and went

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<sup>99</sup> Hatakama Kazuhiro 幡鎌一弘, “Ryokō kara miru kinsei shūkyō” 旅行からみる近世宗教, *Kinsei minshū shūkyō to tabi* 近世民衆宗教と旅, Kyōto-shi: Hōzōkan, 2010, pp 4-5.



on to explain aspects of other socially recognized classes, especially that of the samurai, whose “hard” mind and will reflected their role as dedicated peacekeepers but also their brutish behavior when left unrestrained. With this preface, he told the story of one of his students who departed from his temple in Edo on an errand to the outskirts of the city despite warnings of such unrestrained swordsmen lying in wait. Indeed, a swordsman accosted the student, claiming to have been touched by the student’s sleeve as he was passed. As soon as the man drew his sword, the student instinctively prostrated himself three times before him. The swordsman, poised to kill, was struck by the student’s prostrations, withdrew, and let the student pass.<sup>100</sup>

Bankei reflected on the student’s narrow escape by saying, “And having heard how the heart of even the brutal wayside assassin was moved, I’m sure there isn’t anyone who can doubt the power of the Buddhadharma.”<sup>101</sup> He was clearly aware of the marked delineations that made up Tokugawa society and how they empowered the behavior of those in high-standing classes such as the samurai. He seems to have suggested through this sermon that a temporary release from such distinctions, even on the roads outside of Edo where behavior often went unchecked, was possible through the outward display of inner religious understanding; the social delineations between the student and samurai dissolved not by the accrual and expenditure of social prestige, but by something beyond the ordinary measures of society.

Similarly, Hakuin’s sermon “The Awakening from Daydreaming” also reveals that fluidity within the stratified society of Edo was possible, though, unlike in the case of the *gannin*, it did not mean rising to a new social position. Like Bankei, Hakuin lived in Edo for a time and also used descriptions of the bustling city life as a way to illuminate the messages within his sermons. In this sermon he described how even though Edo was full of material prosperity, Buddhist understanding was largely absent. His message regarding religious society in Edo was direct: “It seems to aim at cupidity and fame, because of the depth of [Buddhism’s] secular

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<sup>100</sup> Peter Haskel, trans., *Bankei Zen: Translations from the Record of Bankei*, Grove Press: New York, 1984, pp 39-43.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p 43.

outlook. It takes interest in money matters and property. Some priests of low spiritual power conduct themselves even worse than do many secular persons.”<sup>102</sup> As he suggests, these measures of importance shared by lay and religious alike, which may have been emblematic of the early modern society in which they lived, were nothing more than figments of a daydream and a mess of “tangled confusion.”<sup>103</sup>

We can infer from this sermon that the stratification of society wrought by those able to accrue such material power and fame, though it may have appeared to some as an open door to social success, was, for Hakuin, an obstruction on the path toward religious understanding. Hakuin’s behavior in society attests to his perception of the irrelevance of class distinction, for he spoke candidly to those in the high classes of nobility and samurai about their need for moral and spiritual reform. Similarly, he also spoke with great sympathy to impoverished peasants about suffering in such a materially driven society.<sup>104</sup> Thus, for Hakuin, release from the confining aspects of early modern society meant acknowledging the dream-like quality of class distinction; while the accrual of material and social power may have advanced those to whom it was important, it had no bearing on their spiritual progress which, for him and others, was a sacred movement that transcended the profane world. Release through spiritual advancement grew out of relinquishing ideas of accrual as necessary and important, and was therefore a release available to individuals across all social groups.

The sermons of Bankei and Hakuin hint toward the possibility of a religious awareness that cannot be quantified by the models of redemption and accrual presented by Bell and Bourdieu. They show that release from the various social confines of Tokugawa control can be defined in ways other than movement to the heights of the Tokugawa administration, or one inward from the fringes of society toward its center. The encounter between the student and the

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<sup>102</sup> R.D.M. Shaw, trans., *The Embossed Tea Kettle: Orate Gama and Other Works of Hakuin Zenji*, George Allen & Unwin: London, 1963, pp 149-151.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, p 149.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p 15.

samurai described by Bankei, and the dream-like qualities of materialistic life in Edo represented by Hakuin allows us to see the concept of release in Tokugawa society from another angle. They reflect the internalization of an external movement, which the Turners take as one important aspect of religious experience. Rather than undertake a movement through the accrual of socially determined capital and expend it in ways that propel one to places of power in society, these sermons indicate that there may have been those who sought a different kind of mobility, a freedom of movement through a spiritual realm, and allowed the sacred to lead them within and yet beyond the Tokugawa social structure. As we see described in the sermons, this type of movement might have transcended the delineations of social class altogether, and may have allowed the individual to experience a sacred release apart from the continual vying for privilege and power that pervaded early modern society.

Conversely, the Turners also suggest that, as an outward expression of a sacred interior, this movement is often observable in the practical lives of those guided by such pursuit, which could be equally true for these Zen masters and others.<sup>105</sup> This practical externalization is attested by the very delivery of sermons by figures such as Bankei and Hakuin. As Hakuin remarks after marveling at the sheer number of merchants in Edo, “Fortunately the new jewels which I wish to sell can be stored in a house rented in a back street, and I need only to wait for good prices. Come and buy. Come and buy.”<sup>106</sup> For figures like him, the proclamation of spiritual belief in the movement beyond the social structures of Tokugawa Japan also may have been externalized in an effort to teach others about the dream-like figments that confine society. In a way similar to Hatakama’s notions regarding the individual and collective, Bankei and Hakuin may have been contributing, in their own unique way, to the greater religious whole through these proclamations.

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<sup>105</sup> Victor and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*, Columbia University Press, 1978, p 34.

<sup>106</sup> R.D.M. Shaw, trans., *The Embossed Tea Kettle: Orate Gama and Other Works of Hakuin Zenji*, George Allen & Unwin: London, 1963, p 195.

Overall, both Bankei and Hakuin suggest in their sermons that release may be understood from a perspective beyond social or ritual theory and, in the effort to illustrate the varieties of such release, they may be just as valuable in this examination. Of course, this does not mean that those like Bankei and Hakuin lived outside the social structures and ritual systems as defined by Bourdieu and Bell. In fact, viewed in a different way, their statements might be seen as a means to actually further control over the populace. However, they, and the subjects of their stories, real or imagined, clearly display certain elements of subversion and transcendence that are more dangerously double-edged for any regime attempting to control the citizenry. As such, these Zen masters and their subjects may have been able to move in directions not anticipated by these scholars, toward a realm that appeals to the unmeasured, immeasurable, or even inconceivable.

The varieties of control and release in Tokugawa society presented in this study are meant to be a point of entry for future examination, and do not begin to reflect the many other historical and theoretical particularities that underlie the material under consideration. The challenge in fully capturing social, religious, and institutional change during the Tokugawa period lies in the complex relationship between religious society and the shogunal regime, which appears to have been under constant change. At times, they stood in opposition to one another, and at others times they were relatively cooperative. In this way, the social and institutional development of the *danka* system may have represented, to some degree, both poles of this relationship. It seemed to capture the variety of concerns shared by society and Tokugawa administrators alike, and was a system that involved aspects of economics, religion, national identity, and the new pressures of early modernity. As an object of study, however, it provides an opportunity to examine not only the varieties of hegemonic dominance so often associated with Tokugawa Japan, but also some of the ways in which the inhabitants lived within or beyond such control.

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