

Talks about Teachings of the Past
Translation of the First Part of Kaiho Seiryô's *Keiko dan*
with a Short Introduction

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Among the intellectual figures of the late Edo period Kaiho Seiryô 海保青陵 (1755–1817) is one of those depicted as “pioneers” 先駆者 (*senku sha*) of the development leading to Japan’s often debated “modernization” 近代化 (*kindai ka*).¹ This epithet is borne out in a number of articles that turn on Seiryô as an outstanding thinker of “political economy” 経世学 (*keisei gaku*).² Minamoto Ryôen 源了圓 as well as Tsukatani Akihiro 塚谷晃弘 and Kuranami Seiji 蔵並省自 present him as a ‘rationalist’ who reflected empirical experiences, and they identify those elements of thought in his works that in their interpretation make him into a forerunner of Japanese “modernity” 近代 (*kindai*).³ Expressions like “pioneer”, “modernization”, or “rationalist” have become controversial and cannot be used in the same insouciant way as twenty years ago. However, that in their portrayal of Seiryô Japanese scholars of that time made use of such denominations bespeaks his importance for them as someone who supposedly discarded leading positions of his day sanctified by tradition⁴ and therefore, could well be incorporated into the search for indigenous roots of Japan’s development since the Meiji period popular until not so long ago. This is not the place for discussing the benefits or drawbacks of delineating

1 MINAMOTO: 1971.

2 Whereas in traditional Confucianism good government was an immediate result of personal ethical cultivation, *keisei gaku*, rendered as “political economy” here, makes the methods of government its theme and sets off the norms that pertain to the individual’s ethical disposition and behaviour from its subject clearly. Literally *keisei* or *keisei saimin* 経世済民 means “to rule the world and help the people”. Cf. Dazai Shundai’s 太宰春台 (1680–1747) definition in his *Records of Political Economy* 経済録 (*Keizai roku*). *NKT*, vol. 9: 394.

3 MINAMOTO: 1971: 5–84; TSUKATANI: 1970: 421–42; KURANAMI: 1970: 481–500; 1990.

4 KOJIMA: 1987: 84.

history according to a theory of modernity. But even if such an approach is left aside that does not diminish Seiryô's appeal as an intellectual who laboured to find an autonomous point of view from where he could analyze the problems of the society he lived in. Nevertheless, Seiryô attracted less attention than other intellectuals of the Edo period. This holds true in Japan as well as outside. There have only been a few articles in English touching on Seiryô, and no extensive translation of his writings has been published.⁵

Life

Seiryô was born⁶ in Edo, the eldest son of Tsunoda Shizaemon 角田市左衛門, known also by his pseudonym Seikei 青溪. Seiryô's family counted among the leading retainers of the Aoyama⁷ house, his father's status being that of "house elder".⁸ However, his father became involved in a power struggle over the reform of the domain's finances and eventually had to retire from family headship and from active life. Although Seiryô was merely two years old at the time, he was made head of the Tsunoda family. Two years later, the father requested that his family be relieved from service to the Aoyama house, and he chose the life of a *rônin* 浪人.⁹ His lord complied with the request and granted the family a pension for as long as the father lived.

5 NAJITA: 1978: 23–38. A translation of a brief passage from *Talks about Teachings of the Past* 稽古談 (*Keiko dan*) with a short introduction in TSUNODA, DE BARY: 1964: 488–93. See also KRACHT: 1980. There the author mentions further material on Seiryô in English, including an unpublished MA paper by Royall TYLER (*Lessons of the Past: The Social and Economic Thought of Kaiho Seiryô*, New York: Columbia University 1966). Ibid.: 1980: 334.

6 Dates could not be verified.

7 青山. At the time of Seiryô's birth the Aoyama had been lords of the Miyazu 宮津 domain in Tango 丹後 province (in present-day Kyôto 京都 prefecture) with an income of 48,000 *koku* (cf. n. 196) since 1717. In 1758 they were transferred to the Gujô 郡上 domain in Mino 美濃 province (present-day Gifu 岐阜 prefecture) in order to replace a house that had met with difficulties in ruling over the territory.

8 *Karô* 家老. "House elders" were chosen from among families related to the ruling house and trusted retainers of high standing. During the Edo Period they numbered from two or three up to several in most *daimyô* houses. They exercised control over the lord's retinue and took charge of administrative and judicial affairs.

9 Samurai without service obligation to any lord.

At the age of ten Seiryô entered the school of Usami Shinsui 宇佐美瀧水 (1710–1776) and studied there until his teacher's death. Shinsui had been one of the prominent students of Ogyû Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728), and like Dazai Shundai took particular interest in Sorai's political thought and his interpretation of Confucianism as the "way 道 (*michi*) for keeping the realm 天下 (*tenka*) in peace"¹⁰. It is quite conceivable that through his studies in Shinsui's school Seiryô came into contact with works of Sorai and Shundai on political problems.¹¹ Another source of influence was his father who had studied under Ôshio Yoemon 大塩与右衛門 (d. 1785), a disciple of Shundai.

In 1771 Seiryô's father was invited into service by the Owari 尾張 domain¹² ruled by a branch family of the Tokugawa 徳川 house. At this time Seiryô was offered the position of secretary, but he preferred to continue his studies. Some years later, in 1776, the Aoyama requested Seiryô's father to send one of his two sons to be prepared for service as "house elder". This brought Seiryô into the position of Confucian scholar in the Aoyama household.¹³ He was entrusted with lecturing his lord's two sons, but at one time he was requested to draw up an evaluation of the Aoyama domain's economical situation. This may have established his predilection for political and economical analysis. Seiryô relates that his first two drafts met with his father's disapproval on grounds of impracticability. At that time he decided to get rid of Confucianism which still was the methodological frame for his writings, and to turn to matters of immediate and practical use.¹⁴

After having served for seven years with the Aoyama family, Seiryô quit and set out travelling. As he recounts, he had come to realize that without

10 *Distinguishing the Way* 弁道 (*Bendô*), *NST*, vol. 36: 12.

11 Ogyû Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728) analyzed his times and made suggestions of reform in *Talks about Government* 政談 (*Seidan*) and *Strategies for the Highest Peace* 太平策 (*Taihei saku*). In the same vein, Shundai wrote his *Records of Political Economy*.

12 Present-day Aichi 愛知 prefecture.

13 Seiryô persuaded his father to send him rather than his younger brother. He argued that his liberal upbringing had not made him fit for service to such an important lordship as Owari. If he wished to resume his studies and the life of a private scholar he could resign more easily as retainer to the Aoyama family than to the Tokugawa house of Owari. *Keiko dan*, *NST*, vol. 44: 344 (in the following reference will be made to *KD* and page only). Turning over the family-headship to his younger brother he followed the Aoyama family's request. Seiryô felt free now to adopt the name of his ancestors, Kaiho. This, he writes, was an "elegant name" 雅ナル姓 (*ga naru sei*), fitting for someone wishing to be a writer. *Ibid.*: 345. For Seiryô's ambition as a writer cf. HIRAISHI: 1980.

14 *KD*: 345.

looking at things on his own he could not satisfy his ambition to become a writer.¹⁵ His ways took him to many parts of central Japan. Sometimes he stayed for a while in one place, e.g. two years in Ôsaka 大阪 or six years in Kyôto. He earned his living by giving lectures.¹⁶ His writings convey the kind of experiences and his point of view on the setting of the places he visited, their natural resources, patterns of economic set-up, and the character of the people he encountered. On the other hand, they show him both as a travelling scholar giving lectures on Chinese classics and counsellor to prosperous merchants and farmers who consulted him on business affairs. The years of travelling greatly expanded the scope of Seiryô's thought, providing his views on political economy with an empirical underpinning and sharpening his analytical methods.

Yet, despite his wish to be relieved from all fetters, Seiryô entered into the service of a regional house again in 1801. When Hosoi Heishû 細井平洲 (1728–1801), the house scholar of the Owari domain, was taken ill, Seiryô went to Edo to serve as his substitute. But life there did not seem to be good for him. He often fell sick and after three years he decided to ask for his dismissal. Gratiified, he spent one year in the province of Echigo 越後¹⁷ and one and a half year in the province of Kaga 加賀¹⁸, before returning to Kyôto in 1806.

Until his death in 1817 (Bunka 文化 14) Seiryô did not leave Kyôto again. The last years of his life he devoted to writing and lecturing. Of his numerous works not all have been found yet. Those that are known today mostly bear a title ending in *dan* 談, meaning “talks” or “conversations”. This bespeaks their character. In contrast to Confucian scholars contemporary with him or preceding him, Seiryô's style retained the directness of spoken language that leads one to surmise that many of his works are directly based on his lectures. This indicates that Seiryô addressed not a particular audience but a broad public of merchants and warriors interested in his views and susceptible to put them into practice. *Talks about Teachings of the Past* 稽古談 (*Keiko dan*) was written in 1813 (Bunka 10). It may be his most ambitious work, presenting a full account of his views and displaying his colourful and argumentative style. It is the quintessence of his life when he confesses: “Up to this day I

15 Ibid.: 344.

16 Ibid.: 345.

17 Present-day Niigata 新潟 prefecture.

18 Present-day Ishikawa 石川 prefecture.

enjoyed myself writing to my heart's desire without suffering from hunger or cold. Therefore, there is nothing to make me feel depressed. [Also], I have no need to make provision for children or grandchildren.¹⁹ I think that my circumstances are very pleasant."²⁰

Thought

Background. Japan at the time when Seiryô wrote *Talks about Teachings of the Past* had experienced an astounding economic development. Since the beginning of the 17th century the area under cultivation had increased considerably while the population had more than doubled to over thirty million inhabitants. In the 18th century a period of agricultural intensification followed. The rise in productivity fed an extensive trade and supported a growing manufacturing sector. In the course of time, market-oriented production of agricultural and manufactured goods and a network of intensive trade relations attained a high level of development, starting in the most advanced provinces around Ôsaka and Kyôto and spreading gradually over the whole country. A general rise in the living standards reached large parts of the population, and a spread of wealth especially among the lower levels of society (peasants, artisans and merchants) followed. However, not all groups of society profited equally from this advance in production and trade. A neater stratification and a disproportionate distribution of wealth between rich and poor on the same social level can be observed in many parts of the country. The critical case, however, were the ruling warriors. Neither the shogunal government nor the regional lordships made adjustments in economic structures. Whereas the costs of living for the warriors increased continuously, their incomes declined or fell sharply, due to a rise in prices for other commodities of life. Nevertheless, authorities kept to the traditional system of fixed taxation in kind. Despite several attempts at reform during the 18th century the tax rate on rice 年貢 (*nengu*) went down from fifty or more percent at the beginning of the Edo period to about thirty percent during the first half of the 19th century.²¹ This resulted in growing financial problems for the government in Edo as well as

19 Seiryô did not marry formally.

20 Ibid.: 345.

21 NISHIKAWA: 1979: 29; HAYAMI and MIYAMOTO: 1989: 39.

for local administrations, indebtedness of many lordships to wealthy merchants and impoverishment among warriors of lower status.

The principle of Heaven. Seiryô's answer to the problems of his times relies for its theoretical foundation on his understanding of the "principle of Heaven" 天理 (*tenri*)²². It is an all-pervading concept²³ that causes everything to come into being and at the same time determines the nature of all existing things as they should be.²⁴ Thus "principle" gives shape to the affairs of men and structures their relations. It is in this respect that Seiryô says that "man is not at his own liberty 自由 (*jiyû*). He is at the liberty of principle [...]. Man does not control man, principle controls man."²⁵ Seiryô's conception of "principle" in certain traits is similar to that advocated in the school of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200). However, unlike the Song time interpreter of Confucianism, Seiryô neither shows interest in the metaphysical aspects of "principle" nor does he define it as a principle that also determines the ethically correct behaviour of man. He conceives of it as a cause of never-ending change and flow and determines its character as a coordinating principle of action in so far as it accounts for the exact standing of the members involved in human interaction.

So far, two aspects of "principle" have become clear. For one, it is ineluctable in so far as it lays down the nature of things. On the other hand, it makes for constant change. To be able to recognize the two aspects of "principle" as well as their interconnectedness and to act in accordance with "principle", a

22 I have translated *tenri* as meaning "principle of Heaven". Although "Heaven" and "principle" appear separately in his writings, Seiryô does not consider them as two entirely different concepts. "Heaven, principle, the gods and Buddha, all are the same." *Talks about Harmonization* 理談 (*Shôri dan*), *NKT*, vol. 27: 581. "Heaven is principle, the gods are principle." *Talks about Cultivating the Heart* 養心談 (*Yôshin dan*), *NKT*, vol. 27: 107. Consequently, "Heaven" or the "Lord of Heaven" 天帝 is no anthropomorphic figure of belief. "The Lord of Heaven is [identical with] the principle of Heaven. Heaven is an empty place. There is no reason to suppose that something like a Lord of Heaven exists." *Talks about the Great Plan* 洪範談 (*Kôhan dan*), *NKT*, vol. 27: 402.

23 "Everything between Heaven and Earth is [based on] principle. Everything is inside principle. There is nothing outside of it." *Talks about the King of Heaven* 天王談 (*Tennô dan*), *NKT*, vol. 27: 41.

24 "The Ten Thousand Things 万物 (*banbutsu*) below Heaven all come forth from this principle [that says] how everything has to be." *Explanation of Master Lao in Japanese* 老子国字解 (*Rôshi kokuji kai*), TANIMURA: 1935: 112.

25 *Tennô dan*, *NKT*, vol. 27: 44.

quality is required that Seiryô calls “active wisdom” 活智 (*katsuchi*). It is through this wisdom that a prosperous state can be achieved, the end that all of Seiryô’s deliberations eventually aim at.

Cognition. How does one acquire “active wisdom”? The answer is expounded in Seiryô’s detailed analyzing of the process of cognition. It has been mentioned that Seiryô put great weight on discerning for oneself things as they really are for oneself. Therefore, “learning does not consist only in being well versed in the things of the past. Learning that is well versed in things present is good learning.”²⁶ The necessity of first-hand knowledge of reality also can be derived from his narration of travelling the East Sea Highway 東海道 (Tôkai dô) between Kyôto and Edo up and down ten times, of his sojourns in thirty or forty localities, and of climbing several hundred smaller and higher mountains for getting a better view of the surroundings.²⁷

To grasp an object as it is, the observer has to dissociate himself from his object. For this purpose he has to become free of all one-sided views and considerations of value. Seiryô calls this point of observation the “position of emptiness” 空位 (*kûi*).²⁸ However, reaching this stage does not yet suffice. To ensure total detachment a position is called for where conventional stand-points as well as the unfettered “position of emptiness” can be observed. This is the “real position of emptiness” 真の空位 (*makoto no kûi*).²⁹ At this stage the observer has acquired the ability to look at himself not only from the inside but also to cast himself into other persons or things in order to regard himself from this perspective. All shackles of self-centeredness have been shed and a degree of objectivity has been reached where the aspirations of the observer are in accord with the “principle of Heaven”.³⁰

26 *KD*: 247.

27 *Ibid.*: 345.

28 *Talks about Foreknowledge* 前識談 (*Zenshiki dan*), *NKT*, vol. 27: 126. Seiryô gives Confucius as an example for the first step. In the case of a father who had stolen a sheep and consequently had been denounced by his own son, Confucius chose a position free from conventional considerations of good and bad and criticized the son’s reaction. *Ibid.*: 126–7. Cf. *Discussions and Instructions* 論語 (*Lunyu*) 13.18, *SBBY* 7: 5a, *LEGGÉ*, vol. 1: 270.

29 *Zenshiki dan*, *NKT*, vol. 27: 129.

30 Seiryô’s distinguishing the consecutive stages of “I see myself” 我觀我 (*ware ware wo miru*), “I become [another] thing” 我為物 (*ware mono to nasu*), and “Everything [and everyone] brings benefit to oneself” 皆利我 (*mina ware wo ri su*) is based on his readings and interpretation of the *Master Zhuang* 莊子 (Chin. *Zhuangzi*, Jap. *Sôji*). *Ibid.*: *NKT*, vol.

Seiryô does not refer to his method of cognition in *Talks about Teachings of the Past*. However, from his analysis of political and economic affairs it is evident that he tried to achieve an impartiality free from all preconceptions. This is shown by his criticism of Confucianism as the established authority on political thought and his poignant attacks on the warriors' lack of awareness regarding economic and social phenomena. Another indication of Seiryô's detachment from conventional attitudes is the free and often idiosyncratic use he makes of classical writings from Chinese antiquity to corroborate his ideas. Not only does he use traditions of thought that were considered inimical by the proponents of Confucianism.³¹ He also was liberal in the way of interpreting and alluding to them, often paraphrasing their dictum in order to make them fit in with his own findings.

Politics. Like Sorai and Shundai before him, Seiryô makes out the origins for the difficulties of his age to be the development of a free market economy and the structures dependent on it. For solving these problems he takes a stance affirmative of this development. However, as a political economist Seiryô is committed to the preservation and bolstering of existing social structures. Therefore, his interest is not so much devoted to the economic development of Japan as a whole. Reflecting to the division of the country into a considerable number of regional lordships that were autonomous, at least economically, his concern turned on these domains and the coordination of the social-economic processes on a regional level. There Seiryô finds two poles of society, namely the ruling warriors and the merchants, with opposite value orientations. These he tries bringing into harmony by giving them their respective places in a way beneficial to the whole of society. He achieves this by formalizing human relations under universal guidelines. For their formulation Seiryô draws on the experiences of the merchant stratum. But these guidelines are brought into play inside the established framework of society with the warriors at its top.

At the time Seiryô set down his view of government, Confucianism contributed the theoretical background of the political thought of Tokugawa Japan. However pragmatical some measures may have been that they recommended, most of Seiryô's predecessors in the field of political economy bear this out,

27: 121. Where in the following both Chinese and Japanese readings are given they will be separated by a slash with Chinese on the left, Japanese on the right.

31 In his writings Seiryô often refers to Laozi 老子 and Zhuangzi as representatives of Daoism, and to Han Feizi 韓非子 as a representative of Legalism. In the *KD* especially the latter plays a prominent role and is often alluded to.

Sorai and Shundai among them. Seiryô, however, broke from this tradition.³² At the beginning of *Talks about Teachings of the Past* he explains that different times require different forms of government and contrasts his own age of good order and peaceful government with the times of Master Kong and Master Meng. He blames Confucian scholars for not recognizing that Confucian tenets on benevolent government do not fit their own times. Confucian ideas like Master Kong's disdain for the pursuit of "profit" 利 (*ri*) or Master Meng's advocating "love for the people" 愛民 (*aimin*) as the ruler's paramount duty were developed in an age of moral disruption and social unrest in order to turn the tides and gain the support of the people (14)³³. Therefore, in times of good order, e.g. the Han dynasty, even Confucian scholars entrusted with government disregarded Confucian principles and devised pragmatical measures fit for their times (29).

Similarly, Seiryô commends the adoption of a policy congruent with the political and social conditions of his age.³⁴ A model for this he finds in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* 周禮 (*Zhouli* / *Shurai*)³⁵. This work of antiquity he considers as the standard for government in times of peace and order (59, 65, 83).³⁶ It was written under conditions comparable to those of Seiryô's age (68).³⁷ Therefore, one should heed the methods of government it professes, i.e. trade exchange (739) and taxation through "lending rice or money to the people and drawing interest 利息 (*risoku*) from them in return" (70).³⁸

32 As for affiliation to a certain school of thought Seiryô shows strong aversion to this kind of compartmentalization and states that he was a "house unto himself". *KD*: 346.

33 Bracketed numbers refer to sentences in the following translation.

34 It is a condition for Seiryô's analysis that Japan is governed in peace. The shôgun rules over a society made up of a great number of nominally equal lordships that compete each with the other. However, this competition stops short of the use of arms. It unfolds through the pursuit of economic "profit".

35 Cf. n. 124.

36 The "laws" expounded in this work conform to "principle", and complaining about them is the same as complaining about the "principle of Heaven" itself (492).

37 Government in the days of Emperor Wu is an example for rule based on the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. Many of the leading officials in those days were competent in arithmetics and they devised pragmatical "laws" for reforming the finances by taking the *Zhouli* as an example (143).

38 However, not everything laid down in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* should be implemented in every state or regional lordship. According to the size of the country one has to choose from among its tenets what is viable and what is not (360–1). Word for word implementation is unwarranted. The spirit of this work has to be captured (361) and regional lords have to

Exactng “interest” is a kind of “profit”-making and therefore, meets with the disapproval of Confucian scholars. However, for Seiryô “profit” is nothing to be deprecated (78). On the contrary, railing at “profit”-making is equal to disregarding the “principle of Heaven” (80).

Among court nobles and warriors in Japan Seiryô finds a strong aversion to money and “profit”-making (151). Consequently, those involved in making money are reviled as “profitmongers” 山師 (*yamashi*) (153–6).³⁹ But to renounce “profit” only brings about poverty (149), which is why Confucian scholars (and those who follow their views) all stay poor (150). The same holds true for governments in the regional lordships. These are concerned about expenditure only (705), but have no eye on the means to increase their revenue necessary for the upkeep of government (706). Buying goods for their daily needs but not caring for earnings indicates the warriors’ lack of insight into the “principle” of the world and is the reason why they are wont to fall into poverty (709–13).

In order to make the country prosperous one has to do away with this attitude (726). In fact, pursuing “profit” is in accordance with the “principle of Heaven” (176). Trading of “commodities” シロモノ (*shiromono*) is the “principle of the world” 世界ノ理 (*sekai no kotowari*) (744). And the principles of trade, the “arithmetic of selling and buying” ウリカイ算用 (*urikai san’yô*), as well as the taking of a ten percent “interest” are unvariably valid for all times (395). Looking at the things nature brings forth, one recognizes that all of them are “commodities” for trade (163). And if it is natural that mountains yield timber and that rice is grown in rice-paddies, it only stands to reason that one draws “profit” from gold and rice by lending them out. And there is no difference between renting fields with an “interest” on the produce in kind (as regional lords do) and drawing “interest” of “one tenth” 十分一 (*jûbun ichi*) on a loan of money (as merchants do) (169). In the same way annual taxes on the produce of mountains, the sea, or on merchandise are a kind of “interest” (172) and in conformity with the “principle” governing social relations (394).⁴⁰

know which kind of measures are only useful on the scale of the whole country and which can be put into effect on the scale of a regional lordship (641, 646).

39 If this attitude were correct, Seiryô concludes, the Duke of Zhou, one of the “sages” 聖人 (*seijin*) of antiquity, to whom the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* are attributed, would have to be called a “profitmonger”, too, as this book proposes drawing “interest” as a means of taxation (157–8).

40 All relations in society should conform to this principle. To denigrate it or to violate it by

If, as Seiryô argues, the pursuit of “profit” is in keeping with “principle”, then it only stands to reason that one should make use of the resources at one’s disposal. To make the country prosperous there is no better way than heeding “principle”, i.e. engaging in the pursuit of “profit” through trading activities and the levying of taxes or “interest” (212–4). Thus, the emperor as well as the various regional lords should consider the territories under their control as resources from which “profit” must be drawn (216–7). The way to do so is to allow the people the use of fields etc. for the payment of an “interest” charge (218).

By showing the congruence of economic activities with the “principle of Heaven” Seiryô tries to open the eyes of the warriors and especially the lords of regional territories to the pursuit of “profit” as the only way for overcoming financial impasses and increasing the domain’s prosperity. In favour of his argument Seiryô notes that at present, despite their deprecatory attitude towards money, the warriors like all the other groups of society are already engaged in economic relations and money activities. For one, the relationship between lord and retainer follows the “way of the market” 市道 (*shidô*) (185b). The lord “buys” カヒ (*kai*) the allegiance of his retainer by granting him a fief or a rice allowance, for which the retainer “sells” ウリテ (*urite*) his services to his lord (186–7). This is in no way different from other transactions of “selling and buying” ウリカヒ (*urikai*) in the marketplace (187b). Secondly, lords and warriors alike sell the rice they receive from their peasants or as a stipend to buy with the proceeds the goods for their daily upkeep (716–7). That regional lords allow peasants to use beaches and fields for cultivation in return for taxes is a kind of selling, too (725). Only if the warriors realize that no shame is incurred by engaging in exchange activities, will “commodities” increase throughout the country and make individual lordships prosper.

Reforming mental attitudes and social habits requires to bring government into accord with the “principle of Heaven” (364–7, 494). First of all government has to find a sound financial footing. Seiryô urges the governments of regional lordships to adopt a reasonable system of taxation that neither rests too heavily on the people nor is too lenient, thus putting government into distress (265–6). Man inclines toward a life in luxury and leisure. Once his needs are fulfilled he tends to go lazy (338–40). But the government should not put the

unashamedly taking things owned by others without returning anything in exchange (e.g. loaning without paying the proper “interest”) is contrary to “principle” and something loathed by the “Lord of Heaven” (746–9).

people at ease. Causing some distress *クルシメテ* (*kurushimete*) by making them work will end in a prosperous and comfortable life for all (323).⁴¹ For this reason, “commodities” (e.g. fields) should not be lent without asking “interest” (344). Exacting “interest” brings pressure on the people to work harder (345). Likewise, taxes on articles of commerce should be levied as this is one of the principles of “Heaven” (348–50).⁴² Secondly, government has to actively pursue a policy for enriching the country on the whole by encouraging production and trade. For this purpose regional lordships have to protect and succour the wealthy merchants of their castletowns (642). Wealthy merchants are of the greatest benefit conceivable for a regional territory (643), as they pull the money and wealth of adjacent territories to one’s own domain (644). Therefore, the lord should promote the production of “commodities” for trade by devising incentives for local producers and merchants (750–79).

Pursuing an active policy of production and trade and devising a reasonable system of taxation is one expression of government being in accord with the “principle of Heaven” and a necessary means for reforming society. Giving the economic measures a firm foundation and “normalizing” social relations calls for the institution of a law system as a counterpart.

It has been stated above that Seiryô developed his theory of phenomenal cognition by identifying the workings of the “principle of Heaven” through the application of “active wisdom”. In the context of human affairs, especially political and economic dealings, both concepts take on a more concrete character as “law” 法 (*hō*) and “method” 術 (*jutsu*).

“Law” fills a central role in Seiryô’s exposition of politics in his *Talks about Teachings of the Past*. Its model-like formulation can be found in such works of antiquity as the chapter *Great Plan* 洪範 (*Hongfan / Kôhan*) in the *Book of Documents* 書經 (*Shujing / Shokyô*) and the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*.⁴³

41 On the contrary, shying from distressing the people will result in distress for them in the long run. They will become lazy and lose the means for sustenance (324).

42 Seiryô suggests a tax rate of ten percent on the model he had found in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* (251). In the following parts of the *KD* he devises measures for the “hoisting up” マキアゲ (*makiage*) of the wealth that has accumulated among the people below. When peaceful conditions continue over a long time, there is a natural tendency for wealth to descend to lower levels. Seiryô advises the adoption of “laws” that cause this process to turn about, e.g. that cause money to circulate and rise up again to the top levels of society. He envisions wealth flowing in circular fashion. Therefore it is only in accordance with the “principle of Heaven” to levy taxes and exact “interest” after the model of a ten-percent “interest” as formulated in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. *KD*: 318–9.

“Law” as Seiryô envisions it is identical with the “principle of Heaven”. But a code of “law” as such does not suffice, as it is only a “dead thing”. For its efficacy “method” as an expression of the “active wisdom” is called for.⁴⁴

“Laws” and their application, too, follow the “arithmetic of selling and buying” (242b). If “laws” have been infringed, the authorities will mete out “punishment” 刑 (*kei*) sternly (242a). No forgiving should be shown as forgiveness violates the spirit of the “laws” (437) and induces the people to lose respect for the “laws” and break them (240). If the “laws” are well made (474), that is if the people know that they will be punished harshly, people will abide by them and stand in fear of “punishment” (241, 444). In the age of the “sages” this principle was kept without fail. In consequence, there was no need to apply “laws” and inflict “punishments” as the people knew that government would have no mercy. Accordingly they behaved so as not to come up against the “laws” (238, 472).

The principle of unyielding application of the “laws” should stand above all other considerations in order to preserve impartial and objective relations among men. This is because “laws” are an expression of the “principle of Heaven” and thus weigh heavier than the wish of the emperor (229).⁴⁵ If for such and such a crime a corresponding penalty is prescribed the verdict should be executed even when the ruler pleads mercy (225–30, 482).

Severity, therefore, is a necessary quality in officials (413). Office holders should be well versed in the “laws” and never show forgiveness 赦サヌ (*yurusanu*) (436). Looked at in this way, ruling by severe “laws” and unforgiveness is “benevolent rule” 仁政 (*jinsei*) (483), and “severe officials” 酷吏 (*kokuri*) who execute lawbreakers right away when they are apprehended have to be considered ultimately men of “benevolence” (484–5).

In his analysis Najita Tetsuo makes out inconsistencies in Seiryô’s argu-

43 Another source for Seiryô’s view of “law” was Han Feizi. In the Confucian tradition the view of “law” as a principle bringing order and structure to society was adamantly rejected as it made for superficial behaviouristic discipline but did not form man’s moral character. Seiryô, however, has no compunction about bringing Han Feizi to bear frequently as for him “law” is a direct expression of “principle” and thus needs no further legitimization.

44 “The principle of Heaven is [equivalent to] the law. If one applies it within one’s heart this is method. Law is a dead thing. Method is active wisdom. All the [stages] from governing the heart to managing family, state, and the realm [as explained in the *Great Learning* 大学 (*Daxue* / *Daigaku*)] cannot be attained without law and method.” *Yôshin dan*, *NKT*, vol. 27: 98.

45 Forgiving crimes is a poor kind of “benevolence” 仁 (*jin*) as it does not deter people from law-infringement at all (277).

mentation with his reasoning appearing to falter, drifting between a focus on merchant culture and a discussion of politics.⁴⁶ Again, “was he trying to solve the problem of luxury, or was he trying to protect *han* governments from insolvency?”⁴⁷ The reader used to logical stringency indeed may find the shifts disconcerting. However, the judgement of vagueness concerning the main subjects of *Talks about Teachings of the Past* is not justified. Taking the first part, it serves as a general outline for what is to follow and lays down the theoretical foundation for Seiryô’s later exposition.⁴⁸

Seiryô sets forth an objective frame of reference for the actions of government by discerning the workings of the “principle of Heaven” in human affairs. “Principle” constitutes the “underlying unity of all things according to an absolute norm”.⁴⁹ “If one preserves the principle of Heaven without diverting from it, peaceful government should come about.”⁵⁰ “Principle” does not allow for any deviations from the norms. It is an objective rule that calls for unflinching execution. The strength of this principle lies in its accountability (according to the “arithmetic of selling and buying”) and applies to all situations of human interaction, between individuals as well as at the level of state government. By following “principle” in all matters the conformity to rule of social intercourse, including economic activities as one kind of social exchange, is guaranteed and arbitrariness excluded. Thus, politics become predictable and actions can be planned in advance.

Seiryô’s vision of rule on the basis of an unflinching “law” may be considered a form of constitutionalism in so far as the government is not allowed to override it. This view of “law” and its application under the guidance of a pragmatic “active wisdom” (“method”) gives Seiryô a modern stance. However, this epithet makes little sense without understanding the background on which Seiryô formulated his ideas. He arrived at his position through his readings of works of ancient China considered unorthodox by Confucianism and under the precondition of his free and relativistic stance towards existing

46 NAJITA: 1978: 30.

47 Ibid.: 32.

48 Seiryô himself points out that a more detailed analysis and exposition of his ideas will be reserved for the following parts (394, 814). If his focus seems to shift to merchant life-style this is in order to make his readers familiar with the kind of thinking — the application of “active wisdom” that follows insight into the workings of the world and the mechanisms of human action — that Seiryô wants to promote among his contemporaries.

49 Ibid.: 24.

50 *Kôhan dan*, NKT, vol. 27: 392.

traditions. Thus he took recourse to the Legalist view of “law”. Binding it to a universal “principle of Heaven” and transcending the authority of the government Seiryô could make lawfulness a criterion for the legitimacy of all relations in society. This application of diverse tools for analyzing the problems at hand probably would not have been possible had Seiryô not lived at a time that was conducive to independent intellectual activities. In a liberal frame of mind he could bring together his own observations as well as his knowledge of diverse traditions of thought with the experiences of different social groups to arrive at a view of reality that struck a balance between old value orientations and accorded them a relativistic place under the rule of an impartial “principle” of social intercourse.

Positioning

“Ruling the state” 治国 (*zhi guo*) and “making the realm peaceful” 平天下 (*ping tianxia*) are common concepts in Confucian discourse and have their textual basis in a well-known dictum in the *Great Learning* 大学 (*Daxue / Daigaku*).⁵¹ In this context they are not the outcome of any specific policy and certain pragmatic measures of government, but take on an abstract and ideal character as the result of the moral cultivation of men in general and those in a position to rule in particular. However, in the genre of “deliberations on political economy” both concepts are, so to speak, set into their own right. Here they become the subject of specific deliberations on how to govern the state practically. The more these discussions take into account actual social, economic or political conditions the more “ruling the state” and “making the realm peaceful” are at a remove from their original place in a context of moral orientation.

Political Attitudes. The tradition of “deliberations on political economy” 經世論 (*keisei ron*) in Edo period Japan can be followed back to the 17th century. Kumazawa Banzan’s 熊沢蕃山 (1619–1691) *Questions about the Great Learning* 大学或問 (*Daigaku wakumon*) is a famous example followed by Arai Hakuseki’s 新井白石 (1657–1725) *Told round a Brushwood Fire* 折たく柴の記 (*Oritaku shiba no ki*). However, there was a marked change when these deliberations became much more systematic in method and scope

51 *Daxue*, “Text of Confucius”: 4–5, *SBBY*: 1b–2a.

during the Kyôhō era 享保 (1716–1736). Partly responsible for this shift doubtlessly have been the economical and social developments and their consequences for warrior rule hinted at above, as well as a turn in the authorities' approach to the growing problems. The rule of Tokugawa Yoshimune 徳川吉宗 (1684–1751) as shōgun from 1716 to 1745 is characterized by efforts to contain developments that had not been envisioned when the political and administrative institutions of the shogunal government evolved during the first half of the 17th century.

However, socio-economic developments and the authorities' attempts to cope with them do not yet account for the stance adopted by writers of "deliberations on political economy" since Sorai. They drew their motivation as well as the turn their arguments took from the quality of government and the underlying political structures. As Watanabe Hiroshi argues, the political approach of the bakufu as well as the regional lordships during the 17th century owed much to the warriors' outlook of the preceding age of warfare.⁵² With military concerns still being paramount, governmental structures reflected the organization of a regional lord's household of the 16th century constantly prepared for war. Military organization of the warrior retinue together with the procurement of provisions and arms were of foremost importance. Despite differences in scale and some diversification of offices since the beginning of the 17th century this holds true for the shogunal government, too. The considerable autonomy of regional lords in the internal affairs of their territories contributes another explanation why the administrative structures of the bakufu did not develop into a political system with civil as well as military and judiciary functions covering the whole country but remained in many respects one, albeit large, regional lordship among others.

Although concerns of civil government in consequence of the economic development began to play a role from the middle of the 17th century, the functions of the bakufu, as well as the regional lordships, primarily were restricted to the regulation of internal affairs of the warrior retinue (allocation of offices, guard duties etc.), exercise of police and judicial functions in towns as well as the countryside, tax collection, the organization of public works and the supervision of the minting of new money for the whole of the Edo period. Townships and villages were mostly left to themselves without serious interference in their internal affairs as long as they forwarded the stipulated amount of taxes. This is most acutely shown by the fact that the

52 WATANABE: 1985: 33–188.

shogunal government entrusted the care for the land under its direct control to low-ranking and ill-prepared warriors⁵³ and a small staff of assistants who for the administration of villages relied on village heads and other village officials that came to office without involvement from above.⁵⁴ Thus, no government apparatus for the regulation of social and economical developments took shape. When, therefore, the increase in production and commerce caused a rise in prosperity, the warriors lacked the institutional means to participate in and benefit from the economical development. On the contrary, a general rise in prices together with a fall of the rice price meant a severe loss of income and put many individual warriors as well as regional lordships in dire straits.

The need for adjustments took shape in the form of reform policies during the eras Kyôhō and Kansei 寛政 (1789–1801) on the part of bakufu, and in regional reform movements that became ever more numerous after the middle of the 18th century. However, these policies mostly brought only a temporary amelioration as they fell short of an institutional reorganization that made existing structures of administration fit for the regulation of social and economic developments.

The necessity of reforms that did not aim at a suppression of the economic development but tried to steer it into a direction beneficial for the authorities, and the warriors they represented was recognized. However, these authorities that at the beginning of the 18th century saw themselves confronted with problems of domestic administration more or less for the first time, lacked the experience to recognize systematic interdependencies not to speak of promoting and guiding current developments. In reaction to urgent problems a broad variety of countermeasures was adopted but a system crisis did not occur as the conceptual preconditions for recognizing or analyzing it did not exist. The decay of traditional customs, that was ascribed to the changeability of human feelings, could be deplored and their reform by return to the old propagated. However, in order to perceive a system crisis the notion that the social as well as the economic order are not static but underlie processes of development that can be shaped to a certain extent would have been necessary.

Ogyû Sorai. What makes “deliberations on political economy” since Sorai different from the predecessors is that their authors took notice of the lack of

53 “Administrators” 代官 (*daikan*) oversaw areas of 50.000 *koku* of rice each.

54 Similarly, the bakufu’s “commissioners for cities” 町奉公 (*machi bugyô*) relied on township heads chosen by the inhabitants of the townships large cities like Edo were divided into.

a theoretical foundation on which to develop a coherent and clearly defined policy. Sorai's analysis of the political conditions of his day is intimately linked to his interpretation of Confucianism. He understands the Confucian "way" 道 (*dao / dô, michi*) as the "way of the former kings" 先王の道 (*sennô no michi*).⁵⁵ It is neither the guiding principle of the metaphysical order nor of the ethical perfectability of man as in Song Confucianism but the "product" 制作 (*seisaku*) of the kings of antiquity who formulated the "way" as a means to shape and harmonize social relations and rule the "realm" 天下 (*tenka*). Therefore, Sorai defines it as the "way for keeping the realm in peace"⁵⁶ and makes out its contents most clearly in the institutions the "former kings" designed for government, namely "rites" 禮 (*rei*), "music" 樂 (*gaku*), "punishments" (*kei*) and "political measures" 政 (*sei*).⁵⁷

This conception of the "way" guides Sorai's political deliberations. The "way" constitutes the foundation any political or social system ideally should be based on and serves as a standard for evaluating existing political systems as well as a model for proposing reforms. In his analysis of the political situation, as Sorai points out at the end of *Talks about Government*, two aspects figure most prominently: the special conditions of his age that forced the warriors to lead a life as if they were staying in a "guesthouse" 旅宿 (*ryoshuku*)⁵⁸ and the lack of a "system" 制度 (*seido*)⁵⁹ for ordering society

55 *Bendô, NST*, vol. 36: 10.

56 *Ibid.*: 12.

57 *Ibid.*: 13.

58 *Seidan, NST*, vol. 36: 295. In the course of the "separation of warriors and peasants" 兵農分離 (*heinô bunri*) since the times of Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1536–1598), in general the samurai had to leave the countryside and to settle down in the castletowns. Instead of the land on which they had lived before and which they had helped to cultivate together with the peasants they now received a rice allowance out of their lord's storehouse which they had to change into money for buying the things for their daily needs. Moreover, since 1635 regional lords, according to the location of their territory, had to spend either half the year or every second year in Edo and to keep up a residence for their families and half of their retinue living there constantly (*sankin kôtai* 参勤交代, i.e. "alternate residence"). This is what Sorai means by living as though staying in a "guesthouse" as everything necessary for the warriors' and their families' upkeep had to be bought from merchants. When rice prices started to fall and their ostentatious life-style forced the regional lords to cut down on the allowances they paid their retinue the economical situation of the warriors began to deteriorate and they had to rely more and more on merchants for loans. It was this development that reached a first peak at the beginning of the 18th century and motivated Yoshimune's reform policy.

59 *Ibid.*: 305.

and ruling the country. As Sorai explains, the Tokugawa family after its victory at Sekigahara 関ヶ原 in 1600 failed to establish proper institutions of government modeled on the “way of the former kings”.⁶⁰ Thus, in the following one hundred and twenty years the different parts of society could evolve without proper guidance from above. In the end, the warriors ended up living at the mercy of the merchants who had benefitted most from the economic development, and social relations began to dissolve with people from the countryside flocking to the great cities, especially to Edo, in search of work. To redress this situation Sorai urges authorities to adapt the “way of the former kings” to the needs of the times and establish a “system” for government based on it.

This is of crucial importance as only a state that adopts the “way” for a foundation can expect to prosper over a long period of time. Sorai can point to historical evidence. The first three dynasties of Chinese history were firmly based on the “way” and continued for five hundred years each. The following Han⁶¹, Tang⁶², and Song⁶³ dynasties made the institutions of the “former kings” their guiding principle, too, but changed them when this seemed to be opportune. This did not always work out to their favour, but still they lasted for about three hundred years each. The same holds true for the governmental system of Heian 平安 Japan (794–1185). However, the Kamakura 鎌倉 (1192–1333) as well as the Muromachi 室町 (1333–1573) governments had no knowledge about the “way” and collapsed after only one hundred years.⁶⁴ Although Sorai does not say so, by implication the lifespan of the Tokugawa shōgunate has drawn near to its end since more than one hundred years had passed, since its foundation in Sorai’s day, without any “system” worth being so called having been established. This explains the author’s urgency

60 Ibid.: 306–7.

61 漢. Comprising the Former (-206 to +8) and the Later Han dynasty (+25 to 220).

62 唐. Dynasty ruling from 618 to 907.

63 宋. Comprising Northern (960–1126) and Southern Song dynasty (1127–1279).

64 Ibid.: 304–5.

in *Talks about Government* as well as the hope he invested in the reform policy pursued by Yoshimune.

“System” for Sorai means first of all the “institutions of law” 法制 (*hōsei*) and “rules [of propriety]” 節度 (*setsudo*).⁶⁵ More concretely he speaks of the “order of clothes, dwellings, utensils, as well as weddings, burials, correspondence, exchange of presents, and entourage” that has to reflect a person’s social standing. Habits concerning differences in status had developed in Tokugawa Japan, too, but in Sorai’s eyes these habits were a natural outflow of popular manners. They had no connection to the “way” of antiquity nor had they been set up by the rulers.⁶⁶ By a reform of public manners, based on the system of “rites” that will teach everyone his or her place in society, Sorai hopes that the tendency to luxury especially among the lower levels of society can be curbed and the balance restructed between all parts of society. However, this alone does not suffice to solve the warriors’ acute economic problems and redress their “guesthouse” life-style. He therefore proposes a resettlement of the samurai in the countryside⁶⁷ and the introduction of a registration system for making unauthorized travel or change of living place impossible.⁶⁸ By making the warriors live and work on the land once again, not only will their economic independence be assured, but the trend towards a trade economy based on a large consuming population and money circulation will be reversed in favour of a landed agricultural society based on rice. Thus, the services of the merchants will become unnecessary and the control of the warriors over a simple and stable rural economy will rest assured.

Dazai Shundai. Sorai himself at one time admits that conditions had already developed too far for his proposals to meet with success. However, henceforth the formulation of a basic principle on which politics should rest became a dominant theme with “deliberations on political economy”. Like his teacher Sorai, Dazai Shundai considers the “way of the former kings” as the “way for ruling the realm”⁶⁹ and begins his *Introductory Remarks* 凡例 (*Bonrei*) to *Records of Political Economy* with the following words: “Generally the techniques of political economy make the way of the former kings of the Flowery Middle [Kingdom] 中華 (*chūka*) their paramount [form].”⁷⁰ Among the insti-

65 Ibid.: 311.

66 Ibid.: 311–2.

67 Ibid.: 295–302.

68 Ibid.: 275–80.

69 *Keizai roku, NKT*, vol. 9: 383.

tutions devised by the rulers of antiquity Shundai puts stress on “rites” and “music”. Man is characterized by a “heart of competition” 争競ノ心 (*sôkyô no kokoro*)⁷¹, that pursues only what personally seems to be of the greatest benefit.⁷² This disposition as such is not bad⁷³, but it has to be controlled through the effects behaviour in conformity with the “rites” has on the inner personality, and “music” is necessary to bring it into harmony.⁷⁴

Shundai not only emphasizes the influence the “way of the former kings” has on the inner disposition of man more than Sorai did⁷⁵, he modifies his teacher’s position in his political thought, too, by limiting the universality the “way for the former kings” possesses. The validity of the “way” is supplemented by a number of principles that Shundai conceived of as means for flexible reaction in correspondence to ever-changing circumstances in the empirical world. While Sorai envisioned a society where adoption of the “way” ensures stability and wards off change to the greatest degree possible, Shundai already has lost this optimism in the efficacy of the “way”. He implicitly acknowledges the existence of natural factors and developments beyond the control of any government and tries to make provision for them in the form of four principles that should help rulers to steer their course under varying conditions.⁷⁶

First, an understanding for the circumstances of “time” 時 (*ji*) is required, including a knowledge of historical conditions and developments that led to the establishment of the present form of government.⁷⁷ Second is the insight into “principle” 理 (*ri*). For Shundai this does not any longer include the norms of morality (*dôri no ri* 道理ノ理) as in Song Confucianism, but consists of the “principle of things” 物理 (*butsurei*).⁷⁸ It has to be noted that it not only explains why “water flows downward and fire burns upward” but that it also

70 Ibid.: 387.

71 *Dialogue on the Teachings of the Sages* 聖学問答 (*Seigaku mondô*), *NST*, vol. 37: 79.

72 *Keizai roku*, *NKT*, vol. 9: 432.

73 *Seigaku mondô*, *NST*, vol. 37: 67–75.

74 *Keizai roku*, *NKT*, vol. 9: 432.

75 The whole of Shundai’s *Seigaku mondô* is devoted to questions about the “heart”, its nature, and its cultivation. Sorai was opposed to the view held by Song Confucian scholars that by cultivating his own personality man can free himself of bad influences and become a “sage” himself. The attempt “to mend one’s own heart with the help of one’s heart”, reminded him of the efforts of someone mentally ill, “to heal his own madness”. *Bendô*, *NST*, vol. 36: 27–8.

76 *Keizai roku*, *NKT*, vol. 9: 397–8.

77 Ibid.: 398–400.

works in social affairs. “As principle always lies behind all [natural] things, in the affairs of the realm, too, principle works without fail.”⁷⁹ However, as there are phenomena that are unexpected and cannot be explained by a constant “principle” alone, such uncontrollable and “unforseeable trends” 勢 (*sei*) have to be drawn into consideration, too.⁸⁰ Last and most important for the immediate business of government is an insight into the natural “feelings of men” 人情 (*ninjô*)⁸¹ that lie outside the range of “constant principle” 常理 (*jôri*) as well.⁸²

With the help of these four concepts the rulers will be able to pragmatically formulate a policy in conformity with the times. That does not mean that the “way of the former kings” has lost its overall validity. However, the motive of bringing it into alignment with varying circumstances by grasping its spirit and reflecting it in newly shaped institutions⁸³ becomes more and more pronounced and leads Shundai away from a strict adherence to the concept of “way” as the only guiding principle. More concisely, the sphere of validity of the “way” concerns the governmental “system of the realm” 天下ノ制度 (*tenka no seido*). This contrasts with politics at the level of regional lordships or “states” 国 (*kuni*).⁸⁴ In answer to the social and economic developments Shundai proposes not structural reforms for curbing these trends but a policy for bringing the economy under control of the authorities and for promoting production and trade in ways beneficial to the latter.⁸⁵ His analysis of political

78 Ibid.: 400.

79 Ibid.: 401.

80 Ibid.: 401–2.

81 Ibid.: 402–4.

82 Ibid.: 403.

83 Ibid.: 413. Shundai’s rulers are allowed to establish new “rites” and “music” fit for their age if these are based on the spirit of the “way”, something Sorai inveighed against heavily. Cf. *Bendô, NST*, vol. 36: 12.

84 *Supplement to Records of Political Economy* 經濟録拾遺 (*Keizai roku shûi*), *NKT*, vol. 9: 676–7, 681–2.

85 This is the message of his *Supplement to Records of Political Economy*. Ibid.: 675–86. In *Records of Political Economy* Shundai made policies for “enriching the state and strengthening the army” 富国強兵 (*fukoku kyôhei*) his subject. *Keizai roku, NKT*, vol. 9: 490. But at that time his discussion still lay on the line followed by Sorai. Together with peasants, artisans and merchants, too, have their place in society. But the government’s foundation should rest on a protection and promotion of agriculture as during the times of the “former kings”. Ibid.: 491. If it does not take care, peasants will abandon their hard work in the fields and seek easy profit as artisans or merchants. Thus, society will drift

and economical conditions had shown that he was living in an age ruled by trade transaction and the circulation of money. Therefore, the pursuit of money cannot remain only the business of the people below. Those above, too, inevitably have to earn money for buying the things necessary for daily life.⁸⁶ The economic and political measures Shundai urges regional lords to adopt are guided by the insight that the “strategy” 計策 (*keisaku*) for making their territories prosperous “lies in nothing else but to [earn] money in abundance”.⁸⁷

Threads of Influence. Obviously Seiryô received major elements of his thought from his predecessors. First, there is the necessity of adopting a guiding principle of theory in politics as formulated by Sorai. Second comes Shundai’s acceptance of empirical developments as given and his attempt to modify the principle in such a way that it serves to shape politics in conjunction with outward circumstances. For a third, the orientation towards politics on the level of individual regional lordships, that characterizes Shundai’s *Supplement to Records of Political Economy*, becomes a dominant theme with *Talks about Political Economy*.⁸⁸

towards a life in luxury while its true foundation, the agricultural sector, dwindles away. To prevent this development, government should introduce a system of family registration and prohibit the change of profession. Ibid.: 491–2.

86 *Keizai roku shûi*, NKT, vol. 9: 677.

87 Ibid.: 681–2.

88 These similarities lead to the problem of whether Seiryô knew the writings of his predecessors. In general, during the Edo Period public discussion of state affairs was forbidden. Sorai, who already had been consulted on political matters for some time by the shôgun’s confidant Arima Ujinori 有馬氏倫 (1668–1735), wrote *Talks about Government* shortly after 1725. As he relates himself, he had to do so in secret, despite his “old eyes and poor handwriting” and without help from his students. *Seidan*, NST, vol. 36: 445. Even the leading students seem to have been ignorant of this work as Hattori Nankaku 服部南郭 (1683–1759) did not include it in his *Catalogue of Master Butsu [Sorai’s] Writings* 物夫子著述書目録 (*Butsu fûshi chojutsu sho mokuroku*) of 1753 (Hôreki 宝暦 3). The author claims that all works ascribed to Sorai that cannot be found in this catalogue are not authentic. Cf. TSUJI: 1973: 625. However, *Talks about Government* seem to have been copied by officials of the bakufu. During the Hôreki Period (1751–1764) they became known in the public, the oldest known copy dating from 1759 (Hôreki 9). The work finally was printed in 1859 (Ansei 安政 6). Supposing that the *Strategies for the Highest Peace* were written by Sorai himself about 1721 (Kyôhō 6), this work is similar in case. Cf. MARUYAMA: 1973: 787–829. Its existence seems to have been unknown to Sorai’s leading students as it is not mentioned in Nankaku’s *Catalogue*. It cannot be specified when this work began to circulate publicly, but whereas it was not yet known at the beginning of the Meiwa 明和 Period (1764–1772) mention of it can be found in the first years of the era Tenmei 天明 (1781–1789). Ibid.: 806. Shundai’s *Records of Political*

However, the way in which Seiryô made use of these elements sets him apart from his predecessors. Sorai had derived his principle out of scriptural evidence and had accorded it preeminence over the contingencies of the factual world. Adoption of the “way of the former kings” therefore meant that actuality could be remodelled in conformity with the idealized conditions of Chinese antiquity. Shundai had tried to find the middle ground between scripture and actuality by retaining the “way” as the overall principle for organization at the level of the realm as a whole and by providing a set of concepts for making adjustments in the face of actual conditions possible. Seiryô, then, did away completely with the textual foundation of “principle” deducing it from empirical data arrived at through observation.⁸⁹ By this I do not want to imply a linear development of any kind leading to a predefined goal of ‘modernity’, ‘rationality’ or ‘empiricism’. Rather there exists a break in outlook between Sorai und Shundai on the one side and Seiryô on the other that shows in their approach towards tradition. Seiryô owes much to the unfolding of Confucian studies during the second half of the 18th century both as a philological science and as a mode of life.

With his emphasis on the necessity to gain a clear understanding of the language in which the classics were written Sorai had a decisive influence on the course philological studies took. However, for him the *Six Classics* 六經 (*Liujing* / *Rikkei*), the classics he values most, are not only texts consisting of characters but facts / truths as such. “The *Six Classics* are [real] things. The way completely exists inside them.”⁹⁰ The words which make up the classical scriptures are identical with the cultural facts / truths the “former kings” had created. Sorai’s “teachings of the old characters” 古文辞学 (*kobun ji gaku*) does not serve so much the critical analysis of the classics as the reconstruction of their language and thereby the “way of the former kings” itself. The language of antiquity is not only a historical form of expression for the ancient teachings but a truth itself created by the “former kings”. Thus,

Economy were written in 1729 (Kyôhō 14), the *Supplement* somewhat later, during the eras Kanpō 寛保 (1741–1744) or Enkyō 延享 (1744–1748). The date when these works spread publicly is not known. In his *KD* Seiryô only mentions *Talks about Government* by title. *KD*: 230, 312. He speaks of Sorai’s political writings in the first part and makes reference to Sorai’s praise for the official Nakayama Kageyu 中山勘解由 that appears at the beginning of *Talks about Government* (435). Cf. n. 238. Shundai is not mentioned in the *KD* but it can be surmised that Seiryô was familiar with his ideas through his studies under Usami Shunsui.

89 Textual sources have their place in Seiryô’s works, too, of course, but they serve the corroboration of his notions of “principle” not its deduction.

language and the object it represents are identical.

In contrast, scholars since the middle of the 18th century developed an undogmatic approach towards the classical texts and their language. This e.g. is true for Katayama Kenzan 片山兼山 (1730–1782), who had been the adoptive son of Seiryô's teacher Usami Shinsui for some time before their outlook on Sorai's teachings caused a break.⁹¹ For Kenzan the scriptures are not any longer holy in the sense that they cannot be subjected to critical philological and historical analysis. Their language does not constitute an autonomous entity as with Sorai. Language is seen as function, the means for representing and transmitting the "way". As such it is subject to inconsistencies that accumulated during the process of transmission. Confucian studies for Kenzan therefore meant the discovery and correction of faults and ambiguities in the texts, thereby uncovering the true contents of the "way" that are contained in them. For this purpose Kenzan also valued those scriptural traditions outside Confucianism, e.g. Taoism, as their texts, too, served to gain knowledge of the language of antiquity and the way it was used.⁹²

The second point I want to stress, scholarly work as a life-style, is conspicuous with Kenzan, too. After a disappointment early in life he did not seek employment again for the rest of his life. Instead, he devoted himself to the philological study of the texts of Chinese antiquity, retaining a standpoint of moral autonomy towards the surrounding society as well as a fierce aloofness from affiliation to any school of thought. These tendencies, privatization of scholarly work, independence in the style of study, and a critical approach to traditionally held beliefs, became more pronounced until the end of the 18th century⁹³ and gave rise to a culture of scholarly discussion that allowed for a plurality of opinions. It is in this context that Seiryô can be seen.

Tradition. Above, I mentioned Seiryô's independence of thought and his criticism of Confucian tradition. This needs clarification. Obviously, Seiryô relied heavily on texts that have their acknowledged place inside Confucian tradition. That is true of the *Records of Rites*, the *Great Plan*, as well as the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. The first is one of the *Six Classics*, and the second belongs as a chapter of the *Book of Documents* well into this canon, too. The third had been valued by Zhu Xi as a work of the Duke of Zhou, one of the

90 *Rules for Learning* 学則 (*Gakusoku*), *NST*, vol. 36: 192.

91 KINSKI: 1996: 39–40.

92 *Ibid.*: 65–6, 79–83.

“sages” of antiquity.⁹⁴ Confucian scholars in Edo Japan had already stressed its importance for learning how the “realm” was ruled in the age of the “former kings”.⁹⁵

The fact that Seiryô made use of these texts, however, does not yet say anything about his commitment to any school of thought. The *Record of Rites* as well as the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* incorporate a variety of material that came from outside the Confucian tradition. Just as Seiryô could find ideas of Legalist background in these classics that supported his own opinions he also drew on texts from outside Confucianism for corroboration, like e.g. the *Master Han Fei*.

His position towards the Confucian tradition in the first part of *Talks about Teachings of the Past* manifests itself most clearly in the treatment he accords Confucius and Mencius. Seiryô concedes that both were extraordinary men (23). But it is only in the context of their times that Master Kong’s “disdain for profit” and Master Meng’s “love for the people” can be understood (32–4). These measures are of no use in a society that has enjoyed peace and stability for a long time (36).

Whereas the criticism in the first part of *Talks about Teachings of the Past* is rather mild and confined to a comparison of historical settings, Seiryô finds stronger words in others of his writings. One is especially noteworthy as it directly comments on those institutions that for Sorai and Shundai were at the heart of the “way of the former kings”. “Rites and music, punishments and political measures of the former kings are only beautiful [in appearance], if one wants to say so, [but] they are of no use for our times. They are a real

93 This especially is true for the scholars grouped under the heading “Textcritical School” 考証学 (*Kôshô Gaku*).

94 UNODA: 1996: 29.

95 E.g. *Master Sorai’s Correspondence in Questions and Answers* 徂徠先生答問書 (*Sorai sensei tômon sho*), *OSZ*, vol. 1: 484–5.

waste of time. One could call them a plaything or a game for children.”⁹⁶ In general, “the thoughtless chatterings of today’s Confucian scholars are like the sleep-drunk words of old men”⁹⁷.

Seiryô’s high opinion of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* and the frequency with which he quotes from other ancient texts show that he did not deny tradition as such. But he values these works from a position of historical relativism that forbids to acknowledging tradition for its own sake only. Rather, the teachings of the past have to be rethought in the light of present-day problems and brought to efficient use for solving them.

Influence. Despite Sorai’s fears of the impending downfall of Tokugawa rule, the shôgun’s government did not adopt his suggestion for restructuring the political order. Far from coming to an immediate end it continued for more than another one hundred years in relative stability. And although there were critics who deplored the degeneration of their age⁹⁸, for many others their’s was an age of unprecedented peace even surpassing the age of the “former kings”.⁹⁹ And although the active economic orientation Shundai had proposed for the government of regional lordships finds its counterpart in the reform politics many regional lords adopted since the middle of the 18th century, there occurred no major reorientation of politics on the highest level. The reformers of the Kansei era did away with the pragmatic attempts of the preceding years to broaden the economic basis of the bakufu.¹⁰⁰ They envisioned a reform of society through moral regeneration¹⁰¹ and a limitation of expenses to the amount of income from agricultural sources.

96 *Talks of a General Merchant* 万屋談 (*Yorozuya dan*), *NKT*, vol. 27: 79.

97 *KD*: 244–5.

98 E.g. the anonymous author of the *Record of Worldly Affairs as Personally Experienced* 世事見聞録 (*Seji kenbun roku*).

99 WATANABE (1987) gives the example of the Confucian scholar Ôta Kinjô 大田錦城 (1765–1825).

100 Under the leadership of Tanuma Okitsugu 田沼意次 (1719–1788) the government had tried to develop new sources of revenue through e.g. promoting the production of goods for trade with the Dutch or the giving out of loans to regional lords.

101 Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信 (1758–1829), who dominated politics between 1787 and 1793, saw in Song Confucian thought a means for reforming society morally and promoted its study. Likewise, in many of the regional reform policies more and more weight was placed on the opening of academies where warriors as well as members of other social groups could be lectured on Confucian ethics.

Neither Sorai's nor Shundai's writings made themselves felt in the shogunal politics. This fate was shared by Seiryô. Although Kuranami tried to link his proposals for economic reform to the measures taken by the Kaga domain after 1814¹⁰², this connection remains rather spurious and lacks evidence for a direct link, not to mention that the reforms fell rather short of the fundamental change in approach to government that Seiryô had in mind. I think it is not off the mark to say that similar to Sorai and Shundai, Seiryô's insights found no institutional expression inside the governmental structures of Edo period Japan. The principles on which warrior rule rested, a finely balanced hierarchy of standing and honour among the warrior families themselves together with a sanctification of the institutions and the ways of political conduct established by the founders of the bakufu allowed only for outward readjustments. They prevented the development of a forum for discussing the adoption of different principles of government that would have made a change of outlook on politics as well as of self-perception necessary.

102 KURANAMI: 1973: 492–500.

*Talks about Teachings of the Past, Part One*¹⁰³

[1a] [For its meaning] the character 稽 (*ji / kei*) draws on the components 禾 (*he / ka*), 尤 (*you / yû*) and 旨 (*zhi / shi*).¹⁰⁴ [1b] 禾 denotes things of the same length growing one beside the other.¹⁰⁵ [2] Among these a plum tree that stands out [from among other trees] and is especially conspicuous is called 稽.¹⁰⁶ [3] 尤 refers to anything extreme.¹⁰⁷ [4] 旨 has the meaning of “good / exactly right”.¹⁰⁸ [5] Accordingly 稽古 (*jigu / keiko*) means to measure up ancient and present times and to make use of what has been found excellent among the things past.¹⁰⁹ [6] Therefore, [this word] has been commented on

103 This translation is based on the edition of the *KD* in *NST*, vol. 44: 215–346. Numbers in square parentheses count sentences in the original. Where one sentence in the original could not be translated in one, I divided it into two or more parts counting the parts with small letters.

104 Seiryô here cites the *Explanation of Letters* 說文 (*Shuowen / Setsumon*). *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字, *SBBY* 6B: 4a.

105 For this character MOROHASHI gives the following meanings: “1. rice plant, the very best among cereals [...]; 2. cereals, general term for cereals [...]; 3. seedling / sapling, straw, stalk of grain plants [...]; 4. grain plants that have come into ears [...]; 5. rice cultivation, rice harvest [...]; 6. two-branch tree, name of the [character when used as a] radical; 7. family name [...].” *Ibid.*: 8: 8657. These interpretations take the form of the character as depicting a corn stalk with a hanging ear. The *Explanation of Letters* however knows of a different interpretation. According to this the character depicts a tree whose growth has come to a stop. This interpretation gave rise to “coming to a stop” and “think / deliberate” as meanings for 禾. *SBBY* 6B: 4a. Seiryô seems to follow the tradition found in the *Explanation of Letters*. Therefore in the following “tree” was chosen for translation.

106 According to MOROHASHI this character has among its numerous meanings: “1. to come to a stop [...]; 2. to bring to a stop [...]; 3. store [...]; 4. measure, count [...]; 5. think [...]; 6. ask, divine [...]; 7. compare [...].”

107 In MOROHASHI one finds seventeen different meanings in the Chinese context and three that developed in Japan. Those related to Seiryô’s definition are: “1. to be different [...]; 2. to be far apart [...]; 3. doubtful / strange [...]; 4. something surpassing others [...]; 5. extremely, especially, particularly [...]; 6. extreme [...]”. *Ibid.*: 4: 3514.

108 For this character MOROHASHI lists among other meanings: “1. delicious, of good taste [...]; 2. something delicious [...]; 3. good, beautiful [...]; 4. purport; a. heart, intention; b. meaning, taste [...]; 5. imperial will [...]; 6. command [...]”. *Ibid.*: 5: 5381.

109 MOROHASHI defines 稽古 as: “1. to deliberate about the way of antiquity [...]; 2. [...] learning, or to study, to exercise [...]”. *Ibid.*: 8: 8747.

as meaning “deliberation”, or “likeness”, or “matchedness”.¹¹⁰ [7] One should reflect on the way the realm was governed in antiquity and set [the past] in relation to e.g. the present state, the household, or one’s own person. [8a] Trees grow together on ground of exactly the same kind. [8b] Therefore, one tree standing out considerably from among the others can be recognized as an excellent one. [9a] People nowadays neither compare height or length, nor do they take into account the evenness or unevenness of the ground. [9b] Heedless [of these things] they carry on their studies (*keiko*). [9c] [But] this does not accord with the true meaning [of *keiko*].

[10a] Nowadays, when talking about the government of the realm or the states, it often happens that [people] cite Kong¹¹¹ and Meng¹¹² while studying this and that. [10b] It never comes to their mind to call into question if the ground 土地 (*tochi*) in the times of Kong and Meng was or was not of the same evenness as that in our times. [11a] Master Kong lived during the Spring and Autumn period¹¹³. [11b] Although there still was a Son of Heaven in [the state of] Zhou¹¹⁴, it was an age in which the entire country was usurped completely by the regional lords 諸侯 (*shokô*), [the state of] Qin [e.g.] invading Chu and Qi attacking Song. [12] The lifetime of Master Meng was an age when [the house of] Zhou had almost exhausted itself while [the regional lords] all unjustly claimed the royal title and each tried to capture the entire realm for himself. [13] [Likening this to the example of the ground again, the times of Kong and Meng] thus fell on very uneven ground. [14] [By contrast], our own age is an age of peace already lasting for more than two hundred years¹¹⁵ with arms and armour merely being kept ready out of precaution. [15] Thus we live on very even ground. [16] Since people compare these [grounds] without any regard [to the differences] in their dealings with governance, their discussions are beside the point.

110 Cf. *Broad Elegance* 広雅 (*Guangya / Kôga*), 5A.11a. *Smaller Blooming Elegance* 小爾雅 (*Xiao Erya / Shô Jiga*), *SBBY* 2: 13b.

111 Master Kong 孔子 (Kongzi / Kôshi) or Confucius (trad. -552/1 to -479).

112 Master Meng 孟子 (Mengzi / Môshi) or Mencius (trad. -372 to -289).

113 During the Spring and Autumn Period 春秋 (*chunqiu / shunjit*; -722 to -481) the ruling Zhou 周 dynasty lost more and more control over their regional vassals, the most powerful of whom contended for hegemony in the realm.

114 Zhou was the name of the dynasty which ruled between c. -1100 and -256 as well as the name of the state under the direct control of the Zhou kings.

115 Reckoned since the decisive battle of Sekigahara 関ヶ原 in 1600 and Tokugawa Ieyasu’s 徳川家康 (1542–1616) appointment as shôgun in 1603.

[17] During the Han period, government did not rest on [the tenets of] Confucianism; instead the technique of the Yellow [Emperor] and the Old [Master]¹¹⁶ was used. [18] During Tang and Song [times], Confucian scholars were entrusted with [composing] texts, but government was government by its own devices. [19] Texts could only be written by Confucian scholars. [20] But government was mostly in the hands of people who were not Confucians. [21] At times when Confucian scholars were in charge of government, they disregarded [their status as] Confucians while lending a hand to governmental affairs. [22] That was because the discussions of Kong and Meng did not fit in with well-ordered times 治世 (*chisei*). [23] Kong and Meng were undoubtedly extraordinary trees. [24a] But the evenness or unevenness of the ground [in their age] was different from present times. [24b] Therefore, the norm for measuring the surface was greatly different. [25] Master Kong did not talk in detail about government, but Master Meng discussed it minutely. [26] “The appropriate amount for the annual land-tax 年貢 (*nengu*) collected from the people should be fixed at one tenth. [27] Everything less is the sign of a barbarian nation. [28] If one takes more than this, one does not differ from [the policy of] King Jie,”¹¹⁷ [Meng] said.¹¹⁸ [29a] There were many Confucian scholars in later ages who were in charge of the government. [29b] But there was not one among them who fixed the annual land-tax at one tenth. [30]

116 黄老 (*Huanglao / Kôrô*). Compound made up from the names of Huangdi or Yellow Emperor, one of the mythical rulers of antiquity responsible for the institutions of civilization, and Laozi, the founding-father of Taoism who traditionally is believed to have been an older contemporary of Confucius but whose historicity is in doubt. *Huanglao* denotes a mode of thought flourishing especially during the Former Han Period among officials and literati. Generally considered to be a fusion of Taoism and Legalism, Schwartz stresses its “pluralistic attitude to the relative merits of various schools” (SCHWARTZ: 1985: 252), not only Taoism and Legalism. While for the ruler a stance of Taoist nonintervention 無爲 (*wuwei*) was claimed as the governing principle, the insights of the other schools, including Confucianism and Legalism, seemed to have been accepted for the technical ruling of the realm. *Ibid.*: 237–54.

117 桀. Last king of the Xia 夏 dynasty who together with Zhou 紂, the last king of the following Yin 殷 dynasty, is the epitome for a cruel and tyrannical ruler.

118 This account of Master Meng’s words draws on *Mengzi*, 6B10: 1–7, *SBBY* 6: 21b–22a. LEGGE, vol. 2: 441–3. Actually, on this occasion Meng does not speak of the tithe as the right measure for taxation. In contrast to the one-twentieth Bai Guei 白圭 proposes, *Mengzi* refers to the “way of Yao and Shun” 堯舜之道 (*Yao Shun zhi dao*), those mythical rulers of antiquity responsible for the institutions of civilized government. The tithe as the appropriate tax rate is mentioned in *Mengzi*, 3A3: 6, *SBBY* 3: 4a. LEGGE, vol. 2: 240–1. Cf. n. 190.

And although [Master Meng] made the well-field system¹¹⁹ mandatory, there was not one who put it into effect. [31] The reason is that [Master Meng] caressed the surface without giving consideration to the evenness or unevenness of the ground and tried to think about extraordinary cases.

[32] Because Master Kong wanted to retrieve the [abuses of] his day — rulers being slain, fathers being killed, and brothers fighting each other — he expounded disdain for [material] profit. [33] That is because slaying one's ruler or father resulted from coveting profit. [34a] Master Meng [advocated] taking the realm [by force] like Tang¹²⁰ of the Yin dynasty and Wu¹²¹ of the

119 井田 (*jingtian* / *seiden*). According to this system traditionally believed to have been practiced during Zhou times an area of one *li* 里 (three hundred paces or 405 meters) square was divided into nine plots of one hundred *mu* 畝 (about 182 a) by two vertical and two horizontal lines forming the character “well” 井 (*jing* / *sei*). Eight families were each given one of the outer plots for cultivation, the central plot being cultivated by all families together. The crops of the central lot were paid as taxes. Master Meng explains, “[A piece of land measuring] one *li* square is a *jing*, and a *jing* consists of nine hundred *mu*. [Of these], the central [plot of one hundred *mu*] is public land. Eight families all hold one hundred *mu* in private, and take care together of the public land.” *Ibid.*: 3A.3.19, *SBBY* 6: 6b; *LEGGE*, vol. 2: 245.

120 湯. Legendary “sage” king in antiquity. By deposing Jie, the last ruler of the Xia dynasty, he earned the kingship for himself and became founder of the Yin dynasty.

121 武. Legendary “sage” king in antiquity. Like Tang, Wu had to battle a tyrant who this time is Zhou, last king of the Yin dynasty. Wu defeated his opponent and thus won the rule over the realm for the Zhou dynasty. Master Meng elaborates the topos of a pair of kings, one a tyrant the other virtuous. He legitimates the concept of a change of dynasties by force, when the ruling dynasty has lost all the virtues it possessed at the outset and a new ruler full of virtue has to stand up in order to bring back peace and prosperity to the people of the realm. In *Mengzi* (1B.8) one reads, “King Xuan of Qi asked, ‘Is it true that Tang banished Jie and King Wu attacked Zhou?’ Master Meng answered, ‘In the records it says so.’ ‘Is a retainer permitted to kill his lord?’ [The Master] said, ‘Someone who ravages benevolence is called a ravager, and someone who ravages righteousness 義 (*yi* / *gi*) is called an oppressor. A man who is [both] a ravager and an oppressor one calls a mere fellow. I have heard that [Tang] killed the fellow Jie, but I have not heard that he killed a lord.’” *SBBY* 1: 20b, *LEGGE*, vol. 2: 167. “Master Meng said, ‘It was through losing the people that Jie and Zhou lost the realm, and through losing the people’s hearts that they lost the realm. There is a way to win the realm. Win the people and you will win the realm. There is a way to win the people’s hearts. Win their hearts and you will win the people. There is a way to win their hearts. Amass what they want for them. Do not impose on them what they dislike. [...] Jie and Zhou drove the people to Tang and Wu. Now, if a ruler in the realm is fond of benevolence, the various [regional] lords will drive [the people] to him. Even though he does not wish to become king, he cannot help but to be so.’” *Ibid.*: 4A.9: 1, *SBBY* 4: 6ab, *LEGGE*, vol. 2: 299–300. About the people Meng said, “The people are the most important; the altars to the spirits of earth and grain come next; the ruler is the lightest.” *Ibid.*: 7B.14: 1, *SBBY* 7: 17a, *LEGGE*, vol. 2: 483.

Zhou dynasty. [34b] Therefore, he taught to give to the people unreservedly, and not to worry about this if only it served to draw the people to one's side. [34c] [This he advised] without being worried by the absence of any precedent in ancient times or minding other considerations out of [a wish] to make the people prominent and due to an excessive love for them. [35] This is the measuring rod 定木 (*jôgi*) of Kong and Meng. [36] If one tries to apply this measuring rod to present times, it naturally does not fit. [37] The slaying of one's ruler or father or the struggle among brothers, first of all, do no longer occur today. [38] Even if they occur, they do so only on a very small scale. [39] Since there are no battles [nowadays], the reasons [that account] for slaying one's ruler or father are greatly different. [40] What Master Kong says has nothing to do with today's parental murder. [41] He put an end to the great lords 大名 (*daimyô*) going to war and striving for control over the country. [42] Nowadays it is unconceivable that there are some among the great lords starting a war and fighting each other for the control over the country.

[43a] Well, today one only has to fulfill one's obligation of alternate residence in Edo¹²², in order to discharge oneself of one's service responsibilities in the proper way, to refrain from borrowing money 金 (*kane*) that one does not really need, so that [subsequently] peasant uprisings will not occur in one's territory, and to entertain good relations with other [lords] of the same standing as one's own in Edo. [43b] [Thus], everything will be for the best. [44] To seize the realm for oneself or to follow in the steps of Tang of the Shang dynasty and Wu of the Zhou dynasty — I do not know about those mentally deranged, but in our times this will not work out in any way. [45] This is sufficient proof that Master Meng is not suitable as a measuring rod. [46a] Nevertheless Confucian scholars of our day square their elbows and declare "One ought to disdain profit; Master Kong said so," or "One should love the people without reservation, such taught Master Meng". [46b] One cannot help but holding one's sides with laughter.

122 Cf. n. 58.

[47a] I¹²³ would like humbly to draw attention to the fact that fortunately even today the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*¹²⁴ have not been destroyed. [47b] In the opinion of Jia Gongyan¹²⁵, too, [the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*] have to be treated as if they were a work of antiquity. [48] And Ban Gu¹²⁶, too, considers them in this way. [49a] In the *Master Meng* the following is written: [49b] The regional lords indulged in luxury. [49c] Thus, if there were old [books of] rites [warning against luxury], they just burned them because they got in their way.¹²⁷ [50] Because the First Emperor of Qin¹²⁸ wanted the people to remain foolish, he burned the old books.¹²⁹ [51] After the rise of

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- 123 Seiryô talks of himself as “Tsuru” 鶴 meaning “crane”. “Tsuru” is the second part of Seiryô’s personal name “Takatsuru” or “Kôkaku” 皐鶴. “Kôkaku”, the name of a crane living on the fringe of marshes, is also used as a metaphor for someone whose name becomes widely known although he tries to hide himself.
- 124 The *Zhouli* 周禮 (*Shurai*; also known as *Zhouguan* or *Offices of the Zhou Dynasty* 周官; *Shûkan*) together with the *Records of Rites* 禮記 (*Liji* / *Raiki*) and the *Ceremonies and Rites* 儀禮 (*Yili* / *Girai*) forms the *Three Rites* 三禮 (*Sanli* / *Sanrai*). Following Liu Xiang 劉向 (-77 to -6) and his son Xian C (-53? to +23) tradition ascribes it to the Duke of Zhou (-12th century) who supposedly outlined the institutions of the Zhou dynasty in it. However, the *Zhouli* probably was not compiled earlier than near the end of the Period of Warring States (-403 to -221), giving the model institutions for an ideally ordered state. It divides the government into six departments, the “Offices of Heaven” responsible for general government, the “Offices of Earth” responsible for land administration and education, the “Offices of Spring” responsible for religious institutions, the “Offices of Summer” responsible for military affairs, the “Offices of Autumn” responsible for juridical institutions, and the “Offices of Winter” responsible for institutions related to the manufacturing of wagons, clothes, bows, arrows etc. The departments with altogether more than 270 offices were headed by a director each. Because the volume with the “Offices of Winter” was lost, it was replaced by the *Record of Deliberations on Industrial Arts* 考工記 (*Kaogong ji* / *Kôkô ki*) during the Former Han Period. Wang Mang 王莽 (-45 to +23) and Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–86) drew on the *Zhouli* for their reform policies.
- 125 賈公彥. Tang Period scholar. Wrote a commentary on the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. *Elucidation of the Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* 周禮義疏 (*Zhouli yishu* / *Shurai giso*).
- 126 班固 (+32 to 92). Author of *History of the Han Dynasty* 漢書 (*Hanshu* / *Kanjo*).
- 127 *Mengzi*, 5B: 2. “Beigong Qi 北宮D asked, ‘What was the system of rank and income under the House of Zhou?’ Master Meng said, ‘This cannot be known in detail. The various [regional] lords hated what was detrimental to them and therefore destroyed the records. But I have heard an outline of it.’” *SBBY* 5B: 14b, LEGGE, vol. 2: 373.
- 128 Qin Shihuangdi 秦始皇帝 (ruled -221 to -210). First emperor of the short-lived Qin 秦 dynasty who deposed the last king of the Zhou dynasty and brought under his rule by force the other regional kingdoms remaining from the Warring State Period.
- 129 Incident mentioned in the *Records of the Grand Historian* 史記 (*Shiji* / *Shiki*), *SBBY* 6: 18ab. It is explained as a means to achieve unity of thought under the new regime and suppress any tendency inimical to it. In the same context hundreds of Confucian scholars

the Han dynasty [however], Emperor Wu¹³⁰ was the first to look out for the old books. [52] During the times of Emperor Jing¹³¹ it happened that Liu Xiang¹³² and his son [Xin]¹³³ were charged with editing the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*.

[53] Now, if one looks at the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* today, it indeed does not appear to be the work of the Duke of Zhou¹³⁴. [54] And it is unlikely that he really set up the government bureaus 官 (*kan*) in this way. [55] In the opinion of Xie Zhaozhi¹³⁵, the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* required much too many people for them to be put into practice during the Zhou period. [56] Both our country's *Commentary on Administrative Laws*¹³⁶ and the Chinese *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* probably never really came into effect. [57] In this they are similar to the customary directions [for placing stones] in *Go*¹³⁷, the fixed stances of swordplay, and the catalogue of bridle-holding in horsemanship. [58] They give only a general outline. [59] They show how to adopt a model form at the outset. [60] Although [the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*] is not a book of antiquity itself, it is undoubtedly a book from before the Period of the Warring States. [61] In any case, it is well thought out. [62] It seems that it expanded on the [chapter] *Offices of the Zhou Dynasty* in the *Venerable*

are said to have been killed by being buried alive.

130 Han Wudi 漢武帝 (-156 to -87).

131 Han Jingdi 漢景帝 (ruled -157 to -141).

132 劉向 (-77? to -6). Confucian scholar employed by the imperial court. Among his numerous works, the *Garden of Narratives* 說苑 (*Shuoyuan / Zeten*) and *New Things Lined up* 新序 (*Xinxu / Shinjo*), both collections of historical accounts from antiquity, were much valued and often quoted. *Hanshu*, SBBY 36: 5b-31a.

133 劉歆 (-46? to +23). Like his father he was employed by the court. Both of them were ordered in -26 to edit the works collected in the imperial archive. *Ibid*.

134 Dan 旦, the Duke of Zhou, was the younger brother of King Wu whom he helped to defeat the last Yin ruler. Tradition holds that he was responsible for elaborating the institutions of government with which the Zhou kings ruled the realm as they can be found in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. He is counted among the "sages" of antiquity.

135 謝肇淛 (1564?-1642?). In his work, *On Various Things in Five Divisions* 五雜俎 (*Wu zazu / Go zasso*), he deals with the various phenomena of heaven, earth, the world of men, etc.

136 *Ryō no gige* 令ノ義解. Commentary dating from the year 833 on the famous law code from the era "Great Treasure" 大宝 (Taihō; 701-704) in the version compiled during the era "Fostering the Old" 養老 (Yōrō; 717-724) in 718.

*Documents*¹³⁸. [63] And because it is a book from before the Period of the Warring States, it probably relied on hearsay information anyhow. [64] But in any event, it is an excellent work. [65] First of all, it is a book from well-ordered times. [66] It is of great use to the present age. [67] Its ground is different from that of Kong and Meng. [68] Because it is a book from an age when the lay of the land was similar to present times, it would fit our age nicely to put the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* into practice and to leave at rest for the time being Kong's and Meng's teachings about disdaining profit and loving the people. [69] Although all the Confucian scholars in later periods explain that it is bad to exact taxes [on merchandise] 運上 (*unjô*) from the people below, the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* profess exactly this [system of] taxation. [70] Now this is the method of lending rice or money to the people and drawing interest from them.

[71] It is strange that the Confucian scholars of later days all agree that Master Meng's method of [revolutionizing] the country, as Tang of the Yin dynasty and Wu of the Zhou dynasty did, should be adopted for their own day. [72] It is a big mistake to make Kong's and Meng's methods of saving their times one's own measuring rod without relying on the fixed principle of Heaven¹³⁹. [73] Already in the *Analects* one finds the story of Ning Wuzi, [of whom] it was said that "he was a wise man in times, the way was practiced in the country but a fool in times it was not"¹⁴⁰. [74] Master Kong's and Master Meng's was an age of disorder 乱世 (*ransei*) where the way did not exist. [75] Ours are well-ordered times where the way is practiced. [76] Seen through the eyes of Ning Wuzi, someone who in our day pays whole-hearted

137. 碁. Boardgame.

138. 尚書 (*Shangshu / Shôsho*). Other name for the *Book of Documents*. *Offices of the Zhou Dynasty* 周官 (*Zhouguan / Shûkan*) is the name of a chapter therein. Although the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* and the *Offices of the Zhou Dynasty* show some similarities in style, it cannot be maintained that the first is based on the second or that it expounds on it. The *Offices* belong to those chapters in the *Book of Documents* that are considered as forgeries dating from the Wei-Jin Period (220–419). Even if this chapter is based on old materials it did not serve as a source for the *Records of the Zhou Dynasty*. In some parts it may have been the other way round. Cf. Onozawa 1986: 503–4.

139. 天ノ定理 (*ten no jôri*)

140. 甯武子. High official of the state of Wei 衛. Mentioned a number of times in the *Commentary of Zuo* 左傳 (*Zuozhuan / Saden*) in the period -632 to -623 as a wise man and loyal retainer who helped his lord, Duke Cheng 成, survive during conflicts between the powerful states of Jin 晉 and Chu 楚 in which Wei had become involved. Cf. *Lunyu* 5.21. *SBBY* 3: 6a, *LEGGE*, vol. 1: 180.

devotion to the words of Kong and Meng, is a fool in times when the way is not pursued in the country as well as in times when it is being followed. [77] Surely he would laugh [about such a one].

[78] Profit is nothing to be disdained. [79] The people should not be loved excessively. [80] To forfeit profit in well-ordered times is not in accord with the principle of Heaven¹⁴¹. [81] In times of disorder [a way of thinking] like that of Master Meng is in agreement with the principle of Heaven. [82] To make the times of Kong and Meng when the way was not practiced, the standard for our times is misconceived. [83] All things told, the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* which set down the method for governing in well-ordered times should be taken as the standard.

[84] During the Song period outstanding scholars of Confucianism appeared one after another. [85] They all were men who were excellent at writing and had a profound understanding of books. [86] But all of them were poor at governance. [87] Therefore, [the Song dynasty] was the weakest among all dynasties, and its downfall was the one most easily accomplished. [88a] Only Wang Anshi¹⁴² was a formidable master of governance. [88b] However, he was on extremely bad terms with other Confucian scholars of the times like the Cheng brothers¹⁴³ as well as Dongpo and his brother¹⁴⁴. [88c] And his relationship with Sima Guang¹⁴⁵ was so bad that it virtually sprouted flames. [88d] Therefore, later Confucians reached the conclusion in their

141 天理 (*tenri*)

142 Prime minister known for his "New Laws" 新法 (*xinfa / shinpô*). Wang tried to reform the social, economic and military structure of Song China in order to strengthen the country against the threatening power of Western Xia 西夏 to the north, a realm founded by nomadic people under the leadership of the Tanguts in the early 12th century. Wang's reforms were aimed at lightening the burden of the small peasants, who had to bear the brunt of taxation. Thus he hoped to gain their support for the campaigns in the north. However, his vision of a just society met with the resistance of the powerful landowners and merchants, who eventually brought about his fall. Wang took the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* for a model and wrote a commentary on this work under the title *New Meaning of the Offices of the Zhou Dynasty* 周官新義 (*Zhouguan xinyi / Shûkan shingi*).

143 Cheng Hao 程顥 (1032–1085) and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1107). Contributed much to the Song Period reformulation of Confucianism that culminated in the thought of Zhu Xi. From the point of a Confucian view of "virtue" 德 (*de / toku*) they criticized Wang Anshi's reform policy.

144 Su Shi 蘇軾 (1036–1101) and Su Zhe 蘇轍 (1039–1112). Two scholars during the times of the Northern Song dynasty. Because the elder brother Shi was banished to Dongpo 東坡 in the South for criticizing Wang Anshi's policy, he took the name of this locality for a pen name (Dongpo Jushi 東坡居士, "The Man Living at Dongpo").

discussions that Wang Anshi was a villain. [88e] However, the reason why he acquired such a bad reputation was that his method was different from that of the Confucian school.

[89] Already Ouyang Xiu ¹⁴⁶ patronized [Wang Anshi]. [90] Confucian scholars advocate a method that trusts in dead things 死物 (*shibutsu*). [91] They adamantly make the words of Kong and Meng their standard and hold renunciation of profit and love of the people 棄利愛民 (*kiri aimin*) as their main tenets. [92] Wang Anshi adhered to liveliness and did not set store by dead things. [93] However, his enemies were exceedingly numerous, and, what is more, they all were great Confucian scholars of distinction. [94] Moreover, among the people below, too, Wang Anshi was not well received. [95] That was the result of his extreme love for the people. [96] Well, if one turns into enemies a large number of distinguished Confucian scholars as well as the people of the whole realm, it becomes difficult [to succeed]. [97] And Wang Anshi himself aimed at Sima Guang on purpose. [98] Therefore, he was by no means free of biased views. [99] In the meantime, [Emperor] Shenzong¹⁴⁷ died and Wang was dismissed. [100] Thereafter, at long last renunciation of profit and love of the people were made the main tenets of Confucian scholars.

[101] Well then, although Sima Guang took charge now and altered the laws of Wang Anshi completely, the Song dynasty collapsed not long after. [102] Wang Anshi had adjusted the laws in accordance with the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. [103] [His] laws are the laws of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. [104] Whichever one [of his laws] one takes they are good laws. [105] Among them one finds many that are [still] in effect today. [106a] But [Wang Anshi] took on powerful enemies. [106b] Therefore, his arguments

145 司馬光 (1019–1086). Scholar, statesman and poet who is famous for the compilation of the *Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government* 資治通鑑 (*Zizhi tongjian* / *Shiji tsugan*), a chronicle of Chinese history from -403 to +959. Between 1069 and 1085 he led the opposition against the reforms of Wang Anshi. In view of Wang's radical measures he argued for the cause of good government through moral leadership and existing institutions of proved value.

146 歐陽修 (1007–1072). Politician and scholar under whom Su Shi and Su Zhe as well as Wang Anshi had studied. Although he had supported progressive ideas, at the end of his life his stance turned conservative and he opposed the reforms of Wang Anshi. Instead he advocated a reform of politics by a return to the idealistic conditions of antiquity when state and society, government and education were supposed to have been united in harmony.

147 神宗 (1048–1085; ruled 1067–1085).

were at odds with his age, and it was his fate that [in the end all he had done] came to pieces. [107] If the [opposing] Confucian scholars at that time had been less gifted, all would have turned out well. [108] But since his enemies were only all too formidable, they were very strong. [109] Wang Anshi's personality was like that of Gongsun Hong¹⁴⁸ of the Han period. [110] He gave himself a boorish appearance and had a character like Ishibe Kinkichi¹⁴⁹. [111] It was but to be expected that he did not get along with someone like Dongpo. [112] He was a man of no refinement. [113] Someone without any forbearance. [114] In terms of scholarship, memory, talent, literary style, erudition and determination it was still said of him in later ages that he was someone of the first order. [115] But since he was a boorish man, he was at several removes from the general feelings of the public, and [therefore] the introduction of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* [to Song society] did not work out well.

[116] Now, even if the rulings of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* have not been laid down by Dan, the Duke of Zhou, nevertheless they were written by someone with a formidable understanding of the economy 經濟 (*keizai*), by someone who had undertaken to govern a great country himself. [117] Therefore, they are all very much to the point. [118] If put into effect forthwith, they would be very useful. [119] The arguments of Confucian scholars sound very beautiful but they are impractical under the present conditions. [120a] They involve Master Meng's method of taking over the realm in its entirety. [120b] They are a provisional measure that can be administered for a short period of time in order to pull the people of the realm to one's own side.

[121] That Gaozu¹⁵⁰ of the Han dynasty annihilated the Qin dynasty under the pretext of helping the people who suffered under the tyranny of the Qin dynasty is on the same line as the pretence of Tang of the Yin and Wu of the

148 公孫弘 (-199 to -121). Prime minister during the reign of Emperor Wu who earned the emperor's trust because of his integrity and his knowledge of law and administration. However, Sima Qian describes him as someone full of distrust and jealousy who behaved magnanimously on the outside but really was a cruel person at heart. *Shiji*, *SBBY* 112: 1a-4a.

149 石部金吉. Fictive character whose name is made up of the words for two hard substances, namely stone (*ishi*) and gold (*kin*). Symbol for a morally steadfast character who is not swayed by any temptations. The word takes on negative connotations when a person becomes too frank and unforbearing.

150 高祖. Posthumous title the founder of a new dynasty was given. Here Liu Bang 劉邦 (-256? to -195) is meant.

Zhou dynasties to come to the aid of the people [that suffered under the despotic] Xia and Yin dynasties. [122] And Xiao He's¹⁵¹ wisdom of promising the Three Law principles¹⁵² after all is similar to Master Meng's provisional love of the people. [123] But after the whole realm had come into the possession of the Han dynasty it could not rule on the basis of only the Three Law principles. [124] They are a method for gaining the attention of the people. [125] If one wants to copy the way of the government of the Han period in our age, it will not do to copy the Three Law principles. [126] One has to copy those laws that [were proclaimed] after them. [127] If Master Meng had taken in Xuan of Ji¹⁵³ and Hui of Liang¹⁵⁴ completely, they would inevitably have finished up loving the people too much. [128] [Meng's teachings] all involve the method of satisfying one's deepest desire.¹⁵⁵ [129] This is evidence [again] that one cannot apply the words of Master Meng to our times.

[130a] In the days of Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty many formidable men were at court. [130b] It really was an age of the worthy men 賢者 (*kenja*) gathered in abundance. [131a] During the era "Original Light"¹⁵⁶ [the emperor] went to war and attacked the Xiongnu¹⁵⁷. [131b] The expenses for this were enormous so that the financial resources 財用 (*zaiyô*) became very scarce. [131c] [Thus] from among the officials 役人 (*yakunin*) there came the following proposal in the fourth year of the era "Original Hunt"¹⁵⁸: "[131d] His Majesty's coffers are empty, gold and silver are in great shortage. [132a]

151 蕭何 (? to -193). Together with Zhang Liang 張良 (? to -189) and Han Xin 韓信 (? to -196) one of the "Three Heroes" 三傑 (*sanjie / sanketsu*) who helped Liu Bang in founding the Han dynasty.

152 法三章 (*fa san zhang*, jap. *hō sanshō*). After overthrowing the Qin dynasty Liu Bang abolished the harsh laws of the preceding government. In their place only the three crimes of murder, injury and theft were ruled out. *Shiji*, *SBBY* 8: 13a.

153 *Mengzi*, 1A7: 1–24, *SBBY* 1: 7a–12b, LEGGE, vol. 2: 137–49. King of the powerful state of Ji during the lifetime of Mengzi, who employed many scholars at his court and succeeded in maintaining the dominant position of his country.

154 *Ibid.*: 1A: 1–6, *SBBY* 1: 1a–7a, LEGGE, vol. 2: 125–37. King of the state of Wei who moved his capital to Da Liang and therefore also was called King Hui of Liang. Mengzi visited both kings during his travels and lectured to them on benevolent government.

155 But after this "desire", rule over the "realm", is attained they are of no help.

156 元光 (-134 to -129, Yuanguang). Era name during the reign of Emperor Wu.

157 匈奴. Nomadic people in the region of present-day Mongolia who regularly harassed the Chinese empire since the -4th century. The Huns are said to have their roots in the northern branch of the Xiongnu, who moved into the Kirghizian region in the +2nd century.

158 元狩 (-122 to -117, Yuanshou). Era name during the reign of Emperor Wu.

However, the wealthy merchants have amassed wealth all the more, piling up gold and silver and hoarding it. [132b] This [in turn] has put His Majesty's finances in tight circumstances. [133] We have to reform the exchequer 御勝手 (*o katte*) either by reminting gold and silver or by issuing paper money 羽書 (*hagaki*) and bills フリ手形 (*furi tegata*).” [134a] Upon this [the emperor] appointed Minister of Agriculture someone by name of Kong Jin¹⁵⁹ who had a deep understanding of the economy and who was a master at figure-work and invested him with an office that could be called Commissioner of Finance 御勝手方御勘定奉行 (*o katte gata o kanjô bugyô*) [in our parlance]. [134b] Likewise, he raised [into office] someone called Sang Hongyang¹⁶⁰ who was of merchant origin and very skilled in arithmetics, too. [134c] The high officials consulted with these people and issued laws for reforming the exchequer. [134d] [In this way] gold and silver began gradually to flow again.

[135a] Therefore, it seemed that although many worthy dignitaries of distinction stood side by side — and with Dong Zhongshu¹⁶¹ and Gongsun Hong in the front many of them started out from among the ranks of Confucian scholars — they were totally at a loss when it came to reforming the exchequer. [135b] [Only] after Sang Hongyang had been put in the central position a reform [of the finances] was achieved at long last. [136] [Shouldering] the expenses at that time was no petty affair at all. [137a] Since the forces sent against the Xiongnu were replaced constantly [by larger forces] — [first] one hundred thousand [soldiers], then two hundred thousand and then even up to three hundred thousand — the amount of rewards for them was staggeringly high. [137b] Nevertheless, due to the designs of Sang Hongyang no impasse was caused [by this]. [138] His reform was such a brilliant performance that the exchequer was not blocked again although the attacks went on relentlessly until the Xiongnu sued for peace.

159 孔僅. Politician during the reign of Emperor Wu. The Ministry of Agriculture 大農丞 (*da nongcheng*) was responsible not only for the levying of taxes but for financial administration on the whole. *Hanshu*, *SBBY* 24B: 9a–14b.

160 桑弘羊 (? to -80). Sang Hongyang was entrusted with the reform of the finances during Emperor Wu's reign. His policy of establishing state monopolies on salt and iron and regulating prices through a control over the supply of commodities (cf. n. 165, 166) helped to increase state revenue. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 24B: 14b–16a.

161 董仲舒 (-179? to -104?). Scholar and official known for his alleged formulation of Confucianism as the basis of an official political philosophy. *Shiji*, *SBBY* 121: 7a–8a; *Hanshu*, *SBBY* 56: 1a–19b.

[139] Before long, a sorcerer 魔法ツカヒ (*mahô tsukai*) appeared and taught the method for becoming an immortal¹⁶². [140a] This was a method that again required a huge amount of money. [140b] The emperor had a large platform erected inside the palace, the expenses for which were staggering. [140c] Nevertheless, work on this went on [without drying up the finances]. [140d] This again was an astounding feat. [141a] Expenses for the Oakbeam Tower¹⁶³ and the Dew-gathering Bowl¹⁶⁴, as well as for general palace upkeep, expenses needed for the Taoist immortal and frequent campaigning [had to be met]. [141b] Be it coming or going envoys, be it Xiongnu surrenderers, gold and silver kept spouting as if they were water in order to show off the wealth of the Han dynasty. [141c] That nevertheless [all needs] could be satisfied smoothly is a thing for wonder. [142a] The expenses for imperial visits and [the times when the Emperor] himself led the army were immense. [142b] And although the Northern barbarians 夷狄 (*iteki*) one and all submitted to him eventually, still a vast amount of money was needed for having them submit. [142c] But in spite of this no [financial] shortfall occurred. [143] Sang Hongyang's [policy] abode by the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* after all and embraced the Law of Regulation¹⁶⁵ and the Law of Equal Distribution¹⁶⁶.

[144] As has been said from the past, the Han dynasty's gaining [the support] of [many talented] men was remarkable. [145a] [For] Confucian scholars [there were] Dong Zhongshu and Gongsun Hong, illustrious deeds were performed by Shi Jian, Shi Qing¹⁶⁷, Mi Zhen¹⁶⁸, Ji An¹⁶⁹ and Bu Shi¹⁷⁰,

162 仙人 (*xianren / sennin*). By living in harmony with the "way" in the loneliness of the mountains and practicing the techniques that developed in the Huanglao-School these "mountain sages" (literal) were believed to acquire the knowledge for prolonging their lives or even gaining immortality.

163 Observation tower said to have been erected in -115.

164 Structure consisting of a pillar made from copper on which a bowl in the form of a Taoist immortal's hand was placed for collecting dew. By drinking the dew it was believed that long life without ageing would result.

165 平準ノ法 (*heijun no hô*). A part of the commodities received by the government as revenue was stored up to be sold in times of scarcity and high prices. Vice versa in times of abundance and low prices goods were bought up for storage. Thus Sang Hongyang aimed at balancing prices and increasing the government's revenue.

166 均輸ノ法 (*kin'yu no hô*). Also a measure for increasing state revenue. The surplus from regions with a good harvest was either transported for selling to regions where the harvest had been bad or stored in cities to be sold at times when prices were high.

167 石建, 石慶 (-2nd century). Virtuous officials mentioned in *Shiji*, *SBBY* 103: 1a-4a.

168 *Hanshu*, *SBBY* 58: 12ab.

[model-like] wisdom was demonstrated by Han Anguo¹⁷¹ and Zheng Dangshi¹⁷², laws were laid down by Zhao Yu¹⁷³ and Zhang Tang¹⁷⁴, literary style [was exhibited by] Sima Qian¹⁷⁵ and Sima Xiangru¹⁷⁶, comical literature [was composed by] Dongfang Shuo¹⁷⁷ and Mei Gao¹⁷⁸, [with] answering and replying¹⁷⁹ Yan Zhu¹⁸⁰ and Zhu Maichen¹⁸¹ [coped brilliantly], [with] calendar calculation Tang Du¹⁸² and Luo Xiahong¹⁸³, [with] harmonizing musical performances Li Yannian¹⁸⁴, Sang Hongyang [was a model for] shrewdness and

- 169 汲黯 (? to -112/09). Official during the reigns of Emperors Jing 景 (-157 to -141) and Wu. Due to his integrity and frankness when criticizing his ruler to his face he earned Emperor Wu's respect. *Shiji*, *SBBY* 120: 1a-6b.
- 170 卜式. During Emperor Wu's wars with the Xiongnu he offered up half his wealth for helping people suffering from the war. *Hanshu*, *SBBY* 58: 7a-9a.
- 171 韓安國 (? to -127). Official, who rose to the position of vice-prime minister. Known for his wisdom in coping with changing conditions and his ability to draw talented men into government service. *Shiji*, *SBBY* 108: 1a-6a.
- 172 鄭當時. As Minister of Agriculture, Zheng sought the advice of celebrated men throughout the realm without consideration of social standing. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 120: 5a-6b.
- 173 趙禹. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 122: 4a.
- 174 張湯 (d. -115). Together with Zhao Yu the *Records of the Grand Historian* mention Zhang Tang as responsible for the compilation of a law code. Because of their harsh application of law rulings in deciding lawsuits they met with Sima Qian's contempt for a merely legalistic approach and accordingly appear in the *Biographies of Severe Officials*. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 122: 4b-9a.
- 175 司馬遷 (-145? to -85?). Renowned for his authorship of the *Historical Records* or *Records of the Grand Historian* 史記 (*Shiji* / *Shiki*), which recorded the history of the Middle Kingdom from the times of the mythological Yellow Emperor 黃帝 (Huangdi / Kōtei) down to Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty and gave the model for all later official accounts of dynastic histories. Cf. n. 233.
- 176 司馬相如 (-179? to -117). Literate whose works contributed to the establishment of narrations in verse 賦 (*fu*) as a literary genre of their own. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 117: 1a-37a.
- 177 東方朔 (-154? to -93?). *Hanshu*, *SBBY* 65.1a-19b.
- 178 枚臯. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 51.18b-23a.
- 179 *Lunyu* 19.12, *SBBY* 10: 2b, LEGGE, vol. 1: 343.
- 180 嚴助. Yan Zhu was executed for involvement in a case of rebellion, after Zhang Tang had remonstrated against the emperor's wish to pardon him. *Hanshu*, *SBBY* 64A: 1a-9a.
- 181 朱買臣 (? to -109). Appointed to high office through recommendation by Yan Zhu he met with disfavour and was executed for his criticism of Zhang Tang. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 64A: 9a-11a.
- 182 唐都. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 58: 12ab.
- 183 洛下閭. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 58: 12ab.
- 184 李延年. Musician who became brother in law to Emperor Wu after the emperor had

economic talent, and [as] imperial envoys [there were] Zhang Qian¹⁸⁵ and Su Wu¹⁸⁶. [145b] Of officers there were too many to be counted. [146] All of them achieved things others were unable to do.¹⁸⁷

[147] Sang Hongyang's policy bespeaks amazing wisdom. [148a] However, in later ages he was called a villain. [148b] The reason for this is that for Confucian scholars the renouncement of profit is [a concomitant of a good] person. [149] If one renounces profit one remains poor 貧 (*hin*). [150] Therefore, Confucian scholars all stay poor. [151] In our country it has come about that the court nobles and the warriors renounce profit. [152] The [doctrine of] renouncing profit is something contrary to reason. [153] It implies that people who do not do so must be villains. [154] This is a ridiculous stance [coming into] vogue. [155] In China it is the same. [156] People who are skilled in [making] profit are reviled by bad names like "profitmonger". [157] If collecting taxes from below means to be a profitmonger, then the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* are the book of a profitmonger. [158] If lending rice and money to the people and drawing interest from them means to be a profitmonger then the Duke of Zhou was a profitmonger, too.

[159] In the first place, the fastest way [to understand] something, is to look at its roots 根元 (*kongen*). [160] What does it mean to give fields to the people and then make them pay rice [as tax]? [161] What is the reason for exacting rice from the people? [162] If only one knows the principle behind this, everything will be clarified. [163] Fields, mountains, the sea, gold and rice, everything between Heaven and Earth are commodities [for trade]. [164] That commodities again bring forth more commodities is the principle [of Heaven]. [165] That fields yield rice is not different in the least from gold giving rise to interest. [166] That mountains produce timber, that the sea

taken his sister, a dancer, as one of his wives. His performances met with the emperor's tastes and he was appointed to the position of highest court musician. *Shiji*, *SBBY* 125: 3a–3b.

185 張騫 (d. -114?). Leader of the famous embassy Emperor Wu sent to the West in -139 to conclude an alliance against the Xiongnu with the Great Yueshi 大月氏 who had moved west after having been dislocated by the Xiongnu some decades before. The mission failed but when Zhang Qian returned home in -126 after travelling as far as western Turkestan he brought back accurate information about the hellenized countries of Iran and Central Asia. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 111: 14ab; *Hanshu*, *SBBY* 61: 1a–7b.

186 蘇武 (-143? to -60?). Sent as an envoy to the Xiongnu in -100 he was imprisoned and lived through great hardship for nineteen years without renouncing his loyalty to the Han dynasty. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 54: 13a–19a.

187 The whole passage is modeled on a similar one in *ibid.*: *SBBY* 58: 12ab.

yields fish and salt, and that gold and rice generate interest is the principle of Heaven and Earth¹⁸⁸. [167] If one abandons the fields, they do not bring forth anything. [168] If one allows gold to be idle, it gives birth to nothing. [169] Renting fields to the people and demanding one tenth [of the produce] as annual land-tax [in return] is the same as drawing one tenth of interest [on a loan of money]. [170] When it says five out of twenty-five lacquer trees in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* this means a profit of four *shu*.¹⁸⁹ [171a] Of course, in giving birth to profit some things are slower and some faster. [171b] Therefore, [in drawing] interest one has to [take this into account by drawing] more or less. [172] The annual tax on fields, mountains, and on sea products all are a kind of interest. [173] One lends commodities and takes interest [in return]. [174] This interest has to be taken. [175] This has got nothing to do with being a profitmonger or something else. [176] It is the principle of Heaven and Earth.

[177] Bai Gui was an ancient economist. [178] He told Master Meng: “I intend to take a twentieth as annual land-tax on the fields.”¹⁹⁰ [179] [His words] express the conviction that the country has grown so prosperous that the revenues of the state will be sufficient even if one exacts only one twentieth [for tax]. [180] At that time Master Meng answered: “For annual

188 天地ノ理 (*tenchi no kotowari*)

189 In *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* it says, “The tax on lacquer trees alone amounts to five out of twenty.” *SBBY* 13: 5a. This means a tax rate of twenty five percent as the product of five trees out of twenty is taken as tax. Equated to the gold currency of Seiryô’s times, twenty five percent or one quarter of one *ryô* 兩 of gold, the largest denomination of gold coins, would be four *shu* 朱. “Five out of twenty five” in the text has to be a mistake.

190 Seiryô here summarizes the passage in *Mengzi*, 6B10: 1–7, *SBBY* 6: 21b–22a. LEGGE, vol. 2: 441–3 already mentioned above: “Bai Gui said, ‘I intend to take a twentieth [of the produce only as tax]. What do you think?’ Master Meng said, ‘Your way would be that of [the barbarian state of] Mo [in the north]. In a state of ten thousand families, would it do to have [only] one potter?’ [Bai Gui] replied, ‘That would not do. The vessels would not be enough to use.’ [Meng] said, ‘Mo does not produce the five grains; it only produces millet. There are no fortified cities, no palaces, no ancestral temples and no rites of sacrifices; there are no gifts and banquets for princes; it does not have the one hundred offices with all their officials. Therefore it would suffice to take [only] a twentieth [as tax]. But now we are in the Middle Kingdom. To give up the relationships of men, and have no superior men – how can that be possible? With but a few potters [even] a state cannot be governed. How much less so without any superior men! If we wish to make [the taxation] lighter than [laid down in] the way of Yao and Shun, we shall just have a great Mo and a small Mo. If we wish to make it heavier, we shall just have a great Jie and a small Jie.’”

land-tax one has to take one tenth. [181] Taking only one twentieth is the way of the barbarians エビス (*ebisu*). [182a] The barbarians have neither castles nor palaces nor do they know rites and music. [182b] Therefore, there will be no shortcoming of state revenues even if one takes only one twentieth. [182c] But because the [Realm of the] Flowery Middle 中華 (*chûka*) pursues a refined mode of living one has to take one tenth.”¹⁹¹ [183a] This means that one has to rent the fields [at an interest rate of] ten percent. [183b] Renting them for [only] five *shu* would be the way of the barbarians. [183c] [Renting at an] interest of five *shu* would not recompense the leaser.

[184] To talk in this way is the language of the merchants from down below. [185a] There is nothing bad about the language of the merchants from down below. [185b] It [only] says that the [relationship between] lord and retainer [is based on] the ways of the market from ancient times.¹⁹² [186a] [The lord] gives a fief to his retainer and lets him work [in return for it]. [186b] The retainer sells his [bodily] strength to his lord and takes rice [in exchange]. [187a] The lord buys the retainer and the retainer sells to the lord. [187b] Accordingly, it is [a matter of] selling and buying. [188] Selling and buying is good. [189] There is nothing bad about it. [190] Those who say that selling and buying is something the superior man does not engage in, have all swallowed at one gulp the disdain of Master Kong for profit and now choke on it. [191] From contending that [the relation of] lord and retainer is not [based on] selling and buying a lot of parasitism 喰ツブシ (*kui tsubushi*) and fruitless efforts 骨折損 (*honeori son*) have resulted. [192] Parasitism is to the loss of the lord. [193] Fruitless efforts are to the loss of the retainer. [194] Both are [cases of] extreme miscalculation. [195] And both are at variance with the principle of Heaven and Earth.

[196] Master Meng said, “In shoes made from hemp as well as in [textile fibres such as] silk, linen, flax and cotton¹⁹³ one finds high, medium, and low quality. [197] The price has to vary [accordingly]. [198] The same price will not do. [199] If the price for [all] shoes is ruled to be the same and the price

191 Ibid.

192 In the *Records of the Grand Historian* it says, “The [people of the] realm associate with one another according to the way of the market. If the ruler is powerful, we follow him; if he is without power, we leave him. This is the [basic] principle from the start. How could one feel rancour against it?” *SBBY* 81: 7b. And Master Han Fei wrote, “The retainer makes tremendous efforts and thereby trades with [his] lord. The lord confers rank and income and thereby trades with [his] retainer.” *Han Feizi*, *SBBY* 15: 4a.

193 In the original it says “flax, linen, silk, and cotton”. Cf. following note.

for big shoes were the same as for small ones, no one would make big shoes anymore. [200] This would lead to all making poor shoes only for which less material [is needed].¹⁹⁴ [201] That is why in all cases the price has to vary [depending on quality or size]. [202] The guard in the front lobby¹⁹⁵ receives 300 *koku*¹⁹⁶ [of rice], and the steward¹⁹⁷ receives 300 *koku*, too. [203] [If expressed in terms of textiles] the guard is an article worth one *tan*¹⁹⁸ of cotton. [204] Because the steward's is a task for which intelligence is required, he is an article worth one *hiki*¹⁹⁹ of *crêpe de Chine*. [205] To buy one *hiki* of *crêpe de Chine* at 30 *monme*²⁰⁰ is cheap. [206] It does not repay the seller. [207] To sell one *tan* of cotton at 30 *monme* is expensive. [208] It is disadvantageous for the buyer. [209] I want to set forth clearly the principle of selling and buying and of [taking] interest. [210] This is a measure of teaching the warriors a sense of shame effectively. [211] Since selling and buying are

194 Seiryô here refers to a discussion between Master Meng and Chen Xiang 陳相. The latter became a follower of Xu Xing 許行, who advocated ideas reminiscent of the “Agriculturalist School” 農家 (*nongjia / nôka*) like the necessity for all men down from the ruler to sustain themselves by their own labour in the fields. Cf. *Mengzi*, 3A: 3, *SBBY* 3: 7b. “[Chen Xiang said], ‘If one would follow Master Xu’s way, there would not be two prices in the market, nor any deceit in the state. If a boy of five feet were sent to the market, no one would impose on him. Linen and silk of the same length would be of the same price. [And bundles of] flax, linen, silk, and floss of the same weight would cost the same, too. So it would be with the five kinds of grain, being the same in quantity; and with shoes which were of the same size.’ [Master Meng] replied, ‘That things are of unequal [quality] is their nature. Some are twice, some are five times, some ten times, some a hundred times, some a thousand times, and some ten thousand times [as valuable as others]. You intend to fix them all at the same [price]. That will throw the realm into disorder. If large shoes and small shoes were of the same price, why should anyone [bother to] make them? To follow the way of Master Xu means to lead one another on to practice deceit. How could one rule the state [with such ideas]?’” *Ibid.*: 3.A4: 17–8, *SBBY* 3: 11b; LEGGE, vol. 2: 255–6.

195 広間 (*hiroma*)

196 石. Cubic volume used for measuring rice. One *koku* amounts to about five bushels.

197 用人 (*yônin*). Responsible mostly for financial administration and other administrative duties in the shogunal household as well as that of regional lords and high ranking warriors.

198 反. A roll of cloth of about twelve yards in length.

199 疋. Used for measuring rolls of silk. Two *tan* in size.

200 匁. About 3,75g, one thousand *monme* equal one *kan* 貫 or *kanme* 貫目. Whereas gold was minted in coins, silver was used in unminted pieces that had to be weighed.

considered to be something the superior man 君子 (*kunshi*) does not concern himself with, the guard in the front lobby openly takes 300 *koku* without feeling ashamed.

[212] In the first place, Heaven and Earth conform to principle. [213] Selling and buying and [taking] interest conform to principle, [too]. [214] If one wants to make the country prosperous one has to revert to principle. [215] If one reverts to principle [for a moment, one finds] that the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* are exceedingly good means [for ruling]. [216] The emperor is a powerful man in possession of a commodity called “the realm”²⁰¹. [217] The various lords are powerful men [too] who are the owners of a commodity called “the state”²⁰². [218] They lease [the use of] their commodity to the people and live on the interest [they take]. [219] And the dignitaries and retainers sell their intellectual powers to the lord and live on the daily wages [they receive in return]. [220] This is in no way different from the palanquin bearer carrying the palanquin for one *ri*²⁰³ and taking the appropriate fare, thereby [earning the money for] buying rice cake and wine.

[221] When seeing it written that “in the times of the sages even the people below did not pick up anything [another] had lost on the road,”²⁰⁴ this is very interesting. [222] And when seeing it written that “in the times of the sages punishments were laid down but not inflicted,”²⁰⁵ one is deeply impressed.

201 天下 (*tianxia / tenka*). A literal translation would be “all below Heaven”.

202 国 (*guo / kuni*)

203 里. About 3,93 km in length.

204 This serves as a simile for the ideal conditions of an age or a state in which the “way” was practiced. Seiryō alludes to a passage in the *Master Han Fei* where other examples are given. The lord of the small state of Zheng 鄭 reproaches Zi Chan 子產 for the state not being governed well. “[Thereupon] Zi Chan withdrew and after having conducted the government for five years, there were left no thieves in the state [any longer], and [things] lost on the road were not picked up. Even though the peach and date trees were heavy with fruit in the streets, no one plucked them. Even if someone lost [something as cheap as] the head of a drill on the road, it was returned to him within three days. Even though [unusual weather conditions] continued for three years, the people did not have to go hungry.” *SBBY* 11: 10b.

205 There are two passages in the *Documents of the Han Dynasty* on which Seiryō’s comment is based. “The reason why the Zhou dynasty ruled well and [could] lay down punishments without using them was that it forbade wickedness without drawing notice and put an end to evil before it could arise.” *SBBY* 72: 6b. “Kings Cheng 成 and Kang 康 of the Zhou dynasty laid down punishments but did not use them, [their] virtue reached even the wild animals, and the teachings were practiced throughout the whole world.” *SBBY* 6: 3b.

[223] That the sages firmly established the arithmetic of selling and buying, is meant by “comparing achievements and words”²⁰⁶. [224] “Comparing achievements and words” is the principle of Heaven and Earth. [225a] One clearly [has to] expound principle to the people. [225b] And when the people do not somehow take to heart the principle of humanity²⁰⁷, things will not work out like they did in the times of the sages.

[226a] In the *System of Kingly Rule* one finds the following: [226b] When there is a criminal and he is sentenced to death, [the officials] explain to the emperor that he was sentenced to death because he committed such and such a crime. [226c] Then the emperor tries to stay their hands three times by saying “I pray you, pardon him”. [226d] But even though he [tries to] stop them, the officials execute [the criminal] without complying [to the request].²⁰⁸

[227] This was the law of antiquity. [228] That someone who committed a capital crime was sentenced to death, shows that the arithmetic of selling and

206 形名参同 (*keimei sandô*). In the thought of philosophers like Shen Buhai 申不害 (-385 to -337) and Han Feizi this concept means to compare the words 名 (*ming / mei, na*) with the actual achievements 形 (*xing / kei, katachi*) of a retainer and to deal out rewards or punishments according to their correspondence or the lack of it. Master Han Fei says, “Those who have something to say, will express it in words; those who want to do something, will express it in their achievements. By comparing achievements and words the lord has no need to do anything further and can leave [everything] to circumstance.” *SBBY* 1: 10a. Somewhat further Master Han Fei explains, “The ruler appoints [his retainers] according to their words, and if he does not know their words, he inquires into their achievements. He compares achievements and words, and decides [on rewards or punishments] according to what comes out of this.” *SBBY* 2: 9b.

207 人理 (*jinri*)

208 The *Records of Rites* advise that great care has to be taken before someone is sentenced to some punishment and the sentence put into effect, especially so in cases where some doubts remain. The case has to be considered from different viewpoints and the opinion of as many people as possible has to be asked. Only then can the sentence be written down and forwarded to the Great Minister of Justice 大司寇 (*da sikou*). “The Great Minister of Justice reports [the case] to the king after examining it [himself]. [Thereupon], the king orders the Three Dukes 三公 (*sangong*) to listen together [to the minister’s report]. The dukes report to the king [after having examined the case]. Only after the king has three times asked to lighten [the sentence], the punishment is settled. After is the punishment laid down, no pardon is given however light [the punishment] may be. [The character] 刑 (*xing*) [for ‘punishment’] is the same as [the character] 刑 (*xing*). And 刑 means to settle [something]. If something is settled [already], it cannot be changed anymore. Therefore, the superior man does his best [when deciding on a punishment]. [Those who] manipulate words, break the laws, throw into disorder names [and the congruent affairs denominated by them], and who choose evil ways to throw government into confusion are executed.” *Liji*, *SBBY* 4: 14ab.

buying had been firmly established. [229] Although the emperor [tried to] stop them, the officials did not comply and maintained the death penalty because the principle of Heaven weigh heavier than the emperor's opinion. [230] Consequently, the arithmetic of selling and buying weighs heavier than the emperor's opinion.

[231] "Comparing achievements and words" is important. [232] To moderate the death sentence and change it into banishment [instead] means to sell a commodity at fifteen *monme* that should be sold at thirty *monme*. [233] It means to buy a commodity worth fifteen *monme* at [a price of] thirty *monme*. [234] This does not [agree with] "comparing achievements and words". [235] The reason for not picking up something [another] has lost on the road is, that there is no reason for oneself to take it. [236] Someone who has got enough food while aimlessly enjoying himself from morning to evening eats without any reason for him to be able to do so. [237] With such people being around, public morals like not picking up what [another] has lost will never come about. [238] Now, the reason [why in the age of the sages] "punishments were laid down but not inflicted" was that the government's rule was unforgiving. [239] If it forgives the people will break the [laws for] punishment. [240] Since [they know] that they will be sternly punished the people will be frightened by the punishments. [241] When people stand in fear of punishments, they will make sure not to incur any. [242a] The people break the [laws for] punishment and the authorities mete out punishment sternly. [242b] [This is an example of] the arithmetic of selling and buying attaining its ultimate point. [243] Han Fei said, "To make [the punishments] even heavier than the crime, that is benevolent rule."²⁰⁹ [244] If one does not want to kill even one

209 There are no words in *Master Han Feizi* corresponding to those quoted by Seiryō. However, the idea that severe punishments are a precondition of good government is expressed in several places, e.g. *SBBY* 18: 4b–5a. Seiryō's use of the word "benevolence" 仁 (*ren / jin*) here as well as later (274–80) contrasts with that in Confucianism. In the *Analects* the expression on the one side is linked to a number of "virtues" and rules of conduct that concern the upkeep of harmonious relations between men. "Benevolence" fills the "rites" as the proper rules for social intercourse with inner life that lets them be more than just outward forms of behaviour. On the other hand it is the manifestation of an inner ethical disposition that endows the individual with a sense of moral autonomy. In the Song Period formulation of Confucianism this aspect of "benevolence" as the foundation of the ethical nature of man is further enhanced. The use of the word in the political context meant that the ruler let the moral superiority of his character take effect on the people below, thus drawing them to a life in "virtue", too. Seiryō turns this conception upside down. "Benevolence" is not any longer the goal of personal cultivation nor does its possession serve to lead society as a whole towards an ideal level of

of the people, there is no better way but to make the punishment considerably heavier than the offence. [245] Then it does not pay off at all for the pickpocket. [246] Therefore, this is the principle of getting rid of pickpocketing. [247] If one inflicts the death sentence on people who quarrel, it does not pay to quarrel. [248] This is the principle for ridding the realm of [both] pickpockets and quarrelmongers.

[249a] When the arithmetic of selling and buying is clearly established, the realm will be calm. [249b] It will be [like in] the age of the sages. [250a] [But] it was recognized that should the arithmetic of selling and buying [in later ages] be considered something the superior man looks down upon, the realm would turn into wilfulness and lose its [harmonious] order. [250b] Therefore, probably the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* were written and the arithmetic of selling and buying firmly established. [251] If one tries to guess at the secret intention of the author of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*, one discovers the arithmetics of [taking] ten percent in interest. [252] When Sang Hongyang reformed the financial policy of [Emperor] Wu of the Han dynasty, he brought to life the arithmetics of ten percent, too. [253] And it seems that Wang Jingong's²¹⁰ New Laws imposed [taxes] according to the arithmetics of ten percent as well. [254a] Anyway, what is called "one tenth from the people tilling" in antiquity [meant to take] an interest of ten percent [of the produce as tax from them]. [254b] Therefore, it appears that [...] ²¹¹ an interest of ten percent in all cases is the principle of Heaven and Earth.

[255a] The highest position among all the nobles and officials of the realm in antiquity was that of Prime Minister²¹². [255b] And the task of the man who held this office, as is written in the *System of Kingly Rule*, was to exert control over the expenditure and the revenue 出入 (*deiri*) of the exchequer.

morality. Whereas rule by "virtue" and rule by "law" served as opposites in Confucianism Seiryô now uses "benevolent rule" as an equivalent for rule by "law" that does not perfect people morally but through its severity teaches men respect and keeps them away from committing crimes.

210 王荊公. Wang Anshi.

211 Omission in the text.

212 In the *Records of Rites*, chapter *System of Kingly Rule* 王制 (*Wangzhi*), there is the following passage. "The prime minister 冢宰 (*zhongzai*) lays down the state's expenditure [for the following year] at the end of the year. [Only] after the five cereals have all been brought in does he lay it down. He surveys the harvest of every year with due consideration of the size of the land, and lays down the state's expenditure on the basis of the [average harvest of the last] thirty years. He expends [only] after sizing up the income." *Liji*, *SBBY*4: 7b.

[256] If the arithmetic of selling and buying were something the superior man is not concerned with, the Prime Minister of former times should not have cared about expenditure and revenue. [257] To calculate the budget of the state, to allow for the state expenditure two thirds of the whole revenue, and to keep one third for savings.²¹³ [258] That was the Prime Minister's task. [259] Although he delegated the [actual] calculation to someone well-versed in [the use of] the abacus, the supervision was something the Prime Minister exerted himself. [260] If he had not known how to check the arithmetics for [calculating] an interest of ten percent, he could not have accomplished [control over the exchequer]. [261] Because the people in high office in later ages in fact were no longer acquainted with the basic principle, they were in distress whenever they had to dispose of a heavy [duty]. [262] However heavy [a duty] may be, if one has taken to heart the principle of general supervision there is no reason to become flurried. [263] [For] the general supervision [of the state's finances], at any rate, there are the arithmetics of [calculating] an interest of ten percent. [264] The principle of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* is like this.

[265a] If the government above takes too much, the people below will suffer. [265b] But if it takes too little, the government above will be in distress. [266] It is the principle of Heaven [to make it such] that those both above and below will not suffer. [267] It is only to be expected that the government above wishes to be comfortably off. [268] And it is only natural that the people below want to be at their own convenience. [269a] That everything should go for the government's convenience is not in accordance with the principle of Heaven. [269b] Therefore, this is the reason why in the end it will turn out badly for the government's convenience. [270] The same is true when everything goes at the convenience of the people below. [271] The people below are foolish people who have no wisdom. [272] To let the convenience of the people below not prevail is benevolence. [273] [And] that the government above does not [only] mind its own convenience is benevolence ,[too]. [274] To pursue the middle way is the principle of Heaven.

[275a] When today one [means] to love the people one only thinks of allowing them to do as they please. [275b] [However], this is lesser benevolence only. [276] To forgive crimes is lesser benevolence. [277] This is harmful to

213 This is implicated in the same context as the passage quoted above, when it says that the state has to take care to lay in stock enough food for its people for one year from the harvest of three years, for three years from the harvest of nine years, and for nine years from the harvest of thirty years. Ibid.: *SBBY* 4: 7b–8a.

the greater benevolence. [278] It is lesser benevolence to be content with an interest of five *shu* where an interest of ten percent should be taken. [279] This, [too], is harmful to the greater benevolence. [280] Anyway, it is good that the people work. [281a] If one is lenient in exacting [taxes], the people will [be able to] lay that much [more] aside. [281b] This may meet [the government's] calculations. [281c] However, because the people are foolish they will squander away recklessly what is left over on idle pleasures, if one exacts only low [taxes].

[282] When Wang Jinggong laid down the Law of the Green Seedlings²¹⁴, Su Zhe criticized this. [283] His [line of] argumentation is so interesting that everyone who wants to take charge of the government should be familiar with it. [284a] The Law of the Green Seedlings appears in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. [284b] There it says “to distribute in spring and to collect in autumn“. [285] Spring is the season when the peasants fertilize コヤシヲスル (*koyashi o suru*) [the ground]. [286] A lot of money 金 (*kane*) is required [for this]. [287a] If one uses lots of dung 糞 (*kuso*), a lot of rice grains will grow. [287b] Therefore, one wishes to use lots of dung. [287c] But because this requires a lot of money one reduces the [quantity of] dung in full knowledge of the effect. [288] The less dung one uses the less rice will grow. [289] If only a little rice is produced, this is to the disadvantage of the government above. [290] Therefore, in spring [the government] lends the people the means 代物 (*shikomono*) [required for buying fertilizer]. [291] Because a lot of rice will grow, when the people borrow [the necessary money] and use a lot of dung, [the government] lends to them and demands rice [in return]. [292] This lending [of money for buying fertilizer] is called [Law of the] Green Seedlings. [293] This is what is meant by “distributing in spring and collecting in autumn“ in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*.²¹⁵ [294] The interest rate [charged] is ten percent. [295] In the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*, it is ten percent. [296] And Wang Jinggong [took] ten percent, [too]. [297] However, Su Zhe maintained that it is not appropriate to lend money to the people and

214 青苗ノ法 (*seibyô no hô*). According to this law, in spring or autumn the government lent money or grain at an interest rate of twenty percent to the peasants, who had to pay back loan and interest together in the next autumn or spring. These arrangements were much more favourable to the peasants who sometimes had to pay as much as one hundred percent interest when borrowing from money lenders or land owners.

215 There it says, “One uses rice grain and distributes it in spring and collects it in autumn.” *Zhouli*, *SBBY* 16: 1b. And Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200) explains in his commentary, “In times of distress one gives, and in times of abundance one collects it back.” *Ibid*.

to take a ten percent interest in autumn. [298a] The reason for this is the people's lack of wisdom. [298b] If they have no money, they cannot spend it. [299a] [However], though they have used up [everything] already, in the autumn they have to pay ten percent interest. [299b] For this reason some of the people will turn to crime at that time. [300] Since [this law] pushes the people into crime on purpose, it would be better to do [things] as before, [Su Zhe] argued. [301] His argumentation is quite interesting.

[302] It is true, the people are foolish 不知 (*fuchi*). [303] If they have [money] at their disposal, they probably will spend it all. [304] The author of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* will not have overlooked this. [305] [But] when among the people there are those who will be in trouble because they have spent [all their money], there will be others who from the next year on will have learnt the lesson and will put their mind to earning [money]. [306] And there will [even] be some who from the beginning bear in mind [that in autumn they have to pay the interest] and will act prudently. [307] If one always holds oneself back, because [one knows that] the people are foolish, and thinks "If one does it this way [some people] will turn criminal, and if one does it that way criminals will show up, [too]," one will never be able to make any laws. [308a] If criminals turn up [from among them], one punishes the people. [308b] It is also possible that this will mend the ways of the people. [309] It is possible, too, that the people's mind will duly become careful. [310] To be loath of criminals turning up among the people [and to rule accordingly] is not [really] a good policy. [311] Su's argumentation is interesting but not everything is [the way he says]. [312] After all, to lend [to the people] in spring and make them pay back with an interest when it turns autumn is the principle to increase commodities in the realm. [313] As to the term "[Law of the] Green Seedlings": In spring, the seedlings are still green, but because [the government] lends [money] in hope of [their growth] one speaks of "Green seedlings".

[314] Anyway, this [way of thinking] considers it desirable that the ground yield a lot of products. [315a] It does not make any difference if those below profit [from it] or those above. [315b] One should be aware that to [make] the ground yield a lot of products is the strategy of bringing prosperity to the state. [316] Su's argument is good [for argument's sake], but on this point he is mistaken. [317] His argument, that when the people have money at their disposal they will spend it right away and that they will be in distress and in a bustle when autumn comes, is beyond doubt. [318] This [point] one has to take very much to heart. [319] However, in the broad view of things, if the ground yields even one more seedling, this increases the wealth of the realm.

[320a] If one were to introduce the Law of the Green Seedlings now, out of one hundred persons, at the outset seventy will be careless. [320b] [Only] thirty will be diligent [and put the loan to good use]. [320c] Even so, in the end the assiduity of these thirty persons will increase the grain production in the realm. [321] [Of those who] have been careless [this year], [only those who] are laggards will get into more of a bustle, borrow from somewhere else, pay their taxes first and then be careless [in the same way] next year again.

[322] It is a bad thing to [always] think of keeping the people from distress. [323] If one gives the people some small distress, this is good because in the end they will come to live comfortably. [324] If one puts the people at ease for even a short while, that does not mean that one makes them comfortable, because [in the long run] they will be in distress without end. [325] [On the other hand], if one distresses the people for some time, this does not mean that one oppresses them [either], because [eventually] one leads them to be better off forever. [326] Su's is a makeshift argument [only]. [327] Although it grasps the feelings of the people very well, one has to say that it is not an argument of deep insight. [328] Whereas it cannot be excluded in Wang's argument that [some] people will be pushed towards crime, in the end the people will be at ease. [329a] Even though one finds the law for "distributing in spring and collecting in autumn" in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*, Su's argument prevails in the realm. [329b] That is because it meets well with the foolish feelings of the people. [330] What is praised by the people often are laws that will cause them trouble [eventually]. [331] If one consults a child about treatment by moxabustion, it will say that it hates moxa. [332] If someone says that there is no need to place a moxa, the child will praise him as a man of benevolence. [333a] Although it is only for its own benefit if one treats it by moxabustation, the child will resent this treatment, because [the spot chosen for placing the moxa] will get hot at that time.²¹⁶ [333b] This is something the man who has to deal with the people always should take into consideration.

216 Seiryô may have modelled this passage on a similar one in *Master Han Fei*, where Han Feizi argues that the people do not understand what is good for them in the end any more than a wailing child can be made to understand the pain inflicted when the parents lance the abscess on its head. *SBBY* 19: 12b.

[334] Generally speaking, material force²¹⁷ belongs to Yang 陽. [335] The outer form relates to Yin 陰. [336] What belongs to Yang, always rises up. [337] And what relates to Yin, always sinks down. [338] Man, too, gradually climbs upwards and wants to live in luxury 奢侈 (*shashi*). [339] [His] hands and feet gradually sink down and want to be lazy. [340a] If one leaves the people to themselves a little while, they incline towards luxury and their hands and feet get lazy. [340b] This has been so from the past. [341] To love the people is the same as to love children. [342] To be indulgent is very poisonous. [343] [...] ²¹⁸ It is the beginning of becoming poor.

[344a] Without exacting interest, commodities should not be lent. [344b] [Otherwise], the people will shirk their duty and go idle. [345] It should be the case that one lends them things with interest and thus induces them to work assiduously. [346] In the laws of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*, there are taxes on all articles of commerce 商物 (*akinaimono*). [347] To say that taxes put the people in distress is only lesser benevolence. [348] Taxes are [a kind of] interest, too. [349] Interest is something that should be exacted. [350] That is the principle of Heaven and Earth. [351a] When one looks at the principle of Heaven and Earth for a moment, one finds some aspects that seem to violate benevolence or righteousness. [351b] But in the end these, too, are in accord with benevolence and righteousness. [352] Therefore, if it is not a man with a broad view of things, one cannot consult him on [the methods of] governing.

[353a] The rulings of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* require a lot of officials. [353b] But when one looks at their range of activity, it reaches down to very minute details. [354] Therefore, even people in antiquity said that this cannot be the law of the Duke of Zhou. [355] They said that under the circumstances of the Zhou period, it was impossible to get together as many officials as figured in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*. [356] Probably a wise person of a later age composed it wishing to demonstrate that nothing is left unaccounted for if one proceeds this way. [357] Therefore, I think that by its degree of comprehensiveness, this work probably reaches much farther than the [original] work of the Duke Dan of Zhou. [358] What is meant by adopting the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* for our times is not to gather as big a number of officials as [is laid down] there. [359] What is meant is that one should take [the *Rites*] as a model for the collecting of taxes, the taking of interest, the opening-up of land and the posting of officials. [360] Since in our day there is no limit to

217 氣 (*qi / ki*)

the number of big, medium-sized, and small states, there will be those places where [the *Rites*] can be adopted. [361] But there will be others, too, where that will not be feasible. [362] What is meant is that they all [should] capture the spirit of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* and borrow its wisdom. [363] What Sang Hongyang adopted for the Han Dynasty and Wang Anshi for the Song Dynasty, also was only a likeness.

[364] There is no doubt that a country's becoming poor originates in its government not being in accordance with principle. [365] If the configuration 仕掛ケ (*shikake*) [of society] in the realm is not at variance with principle, principle will move into the hearts of the people of its own accord. [366] Planting principle into the hearts of the people will not work at all by proclaiming official notices or decrees. [367] But if the configuration [of society] in the realm conforms to principle, the people will behave [in reasonable ways, too], because [acting in accordance with] principle will become a habit [with them]. [368a] It only stands to reason that mugwort²¹⁹ growing among flax²²⁰ must of needs grow straight in spite of itself.²²¹ [368b] And [therefore] it grows straight. [369] If only flax grows in the field, the mugwort growing between it will be straight. [370] If the configuration [of society] in the realm conforms completely with principle, the people growing up [under these conditions] will all [act according to] principle. [371] A look at the configuration [of society] in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* will show that it is charged with principle to the fullest. [372] That can be seen from the [regulation of] measurements 寸法 (*sunpô*) for artisans in the *Record of Deliberations on Industrial Arts*.²²² [373] The measurements for [making] a bow or a set of armour [for example] agree with principle completely. [374] Also that in the case of a cart, one third of the [length of the] shaft [equals] the [diameter of a] wheel, that half of a wheel equals [the length of] such and such, or that this and this part of the [diameter of a] wheel is such and such is fully in accordance with principle.²²³ [375] To [fix] the annual land-tax on fields at ten percent and take it as interest conforms to principle²²⁴, too.

218 Omission in the text.

219 蓬 (*yomogi*)

220 麻 (*asa*)

221 This simile can be found in *Master Xun* 荀子 (*Xunzi / Junshi*). It is used to explain that people turning out good or bad depends on their environment. *SBBY* 1: 2ab.

222 Cf. n. 124.

223 See *Zhouli*, *SBBY* 39: 6ab; 42.7a; 39.14b–15b.

[376] The measurements for ruling the realm all are firmly established as in constructing a cart. [377] If the cart diverges from these measurements even by a bit, it will not move. [378a] The *shamisen*²²⁵, too, has its measurements. [378b] One third of the neck is the measure for the belly, if one divides the [length of the] belly into so and so many parts one gets the measure for such and such, and this divided in so many parts again is equal to the thickness of the belly. [378c] In this way everything is fixed by exact [relations], and if one diverges from these measurements by only a bit, one will not get a *shamisen*. [379] That a cart does not move well, that a *shamisen* does not sound well, that a person's hands and feet do not work well, that the realm is governed well or not, all this depends on whether or not the measurements are firmly established.

[380a] In this way, the people will be born under [conditions where] the measurements are fixed. [380b] Therefore, the measurements of their hearts will be firmly established, too. [381] There will be no room for even a bit of deviation. [382] That the people of Han times grumbled about Sang Hongyang's laws, and that the people during the Song period found fault with Wang Anshi's laws, was because their hearts did not give attention to principle. [383] That the people do not heed principle in the end is due to the configuration [of society] in the realm being at odds with principle. [384] Therefore, the laws of the realm are an institution to be grateful for. [385] They are not something difficult to know. [386] That the way for making *shamisen* and for constructing wagons [is fixed] is a thankworthy thing. [387] [This way] is not difficult to know. [388] In all these cases, the measurements are fixed. [389] Therefore, the measurements for the [social] configuration of the realm are established, too. [390] Since these measurements are found in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* they are a work for which to be thankful.

[391] Although I do not obtain support from any lord and therefore am entirely unfettered, I have no spare time either. [392] Therefore, although it is not possible to copy the measurements of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* and put them into effect as a whole, I would like to talk about the measurements in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* concerning the principle of ten percent interest. [393] In between earning the means for my livelihood I write about these things little by little. [394] From the next volume on, I will inquire into the import of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* and demonstrate that [collecting] the annual land-tax and taxes [on merchandise] is in accordance with principle

224 In the text one finds the character 利 (*ri*, "profit") instead of 理 (*ri*, "principle").

and that they exactly meet with the measures. [395] That is because the arithmetic of selling and buying and the ten percent interest will be passed on forever and will never be altered.

[396] If one governs in well-ordered times with the method of Yao and Shun²²⁶, Yu²²⁷ and Tang, Wen²²⁸, Wu and the Duke of Zhou, [the realm] will be well-governed. [397] However, what later Confucian scholars told about Yao, Shun and the others are not authentic records at all. [398a] When Master Meng talks about them, he refers to them where it suits his purposes. [398b] And because [what he says] was invented by him, it is not authentic at all. [399] Master Kong's account does not draw on the distant past. [400] [The main point] of what he has to say is that it is bad to pursue profit. [401] Under this theme, [the teachings of the past] became a means for retrieving his own times. [402] It looks as if [Master Kong] considered the means for putting an end to the atrocity of killing one's own lord or father the most important. [403] Because in the case of Master Meng, the wish to find relief from [the abuses of] his times was very urgent, he had the tendency to [exaggerate and] make a pin look like a rod. [404] He made loving the people his one main point. [405a] Disdain of profit and love of the people are catchwords for finding relief from [the abuses of] one's times. [405b] However, they are not a measuring rod that can be used in well-ordered times. [406] If one uses Kong's and Meng's methods for retrieving an age of disorder, one can save it. [407] But one has to know that it is not the method for ruling in times of good order. [408] In the *Book of Documents* and in the inner and outer commentaries on *Spring and Autumn* one can see the method [for ruling] in the times before Master Kong and Master Meng.²²⁹ [409] And in

225 三味線. Guitar-like instrument with three strings and long neck.

226 Yao 堯 and Shun 舜 are mythical "sage" kings in antiquity who brought order to human society and ruled over the realm by "virtue".

227 禹. Sage king in antiquity and founder of the Xia dynasty.

228 文. Father of King Wu and one of the "sage" kings. Although he had already won two thirds of the realm, his "virtue" did not allow Wen to overthrow the corrupt Yin rulers to whom he owed allegiance. Under his rule the rites greatly flourished. *Lunyu* 8.20, *SBBY* 4: 13a; *LEGGE*, vol. 1: 215.

229 The works mentioned here all have for their subject the history before the times of Confucius and Mencius. The *Book of Documents* relates events from the age of the "sage" emperors Yao and Shun down to early Zhou times. The *Spring and Autumn* or *Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋 (*Chunqiu* / *Shunju*) record the history of the state of Lu 魯 in a very concise style, and traditionally are attributed to Confucius whose home-state Lu was. With "inner commentary" 内伝 (*neizhuan* / *naiden*) the *Commentary of Zuo* 左

the words of the Various Masters beginning with the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*, one can find the strategy for peaceful government.²³⁰ [410] If one knows the strategy for peaceful government and thereafter looks at the methods of Kong and Meng for retrieving their times one can recognize the way for saving every time. [411] Is not this a tale where the measures fit exactly?

[412] The word “severe official” is a strange word.²³¹ [413] Officials should be severe. [414a] Sima Qian wrote the *Biographies of Severe Officials* and demolished [these men]. [414b] Because he himself became entangled in the downfall of Li Ling²³² and had to step down into the plain ranks, he wrote these [biographies] repaying for his grudges with the pen.²³³ [415] Later Confucian scholars deprecated severe officials so acidulously since they contrasted sharply with Master Meng’s teachings of loving the people.

[416] Sorai was a man of such a high learning as one finds only on rare occasions. [417] He was ordered by Yûtoku In²³⁴ and wrote the *Talks about Government*. [418] He had to talk about [conditions in] the realm as they

伝 (*Zuozhuan / Saden*), with “outer commentary” 外伝 (*waizhuan / gaiden*) the *Conversation Records of [Different] States* 国語 (*Guoyu / Kokugo*) are meant.

- 230 “Various Masters” 諸子 (*zhuzi / shoshi*) denotes the schools of thought that flourished after the death of Confucius until the end of the Period of Warring States. Among them one can find Confucians, Taoists and Legalists. From the Confucian point of view the rivals were considered heretics. However, Seiryô valued these traditions highly as can be seen here as well as in his frequent quotations from the *Master Han Fei*. Another instance for this is his commentary on the *Master Lao*, one of the most noteworthy interpretations of this text written during the Edo Period. Cf. n. 24.
- 231 By “severe officials” 酷吏 (*kuli / kokuri*) was meant those who in the application of the “laws” are unremitting and in their treatment of the people were considered cruel (cf. n. 233). They contrasted with Sima Qian’s “dutiful officials” 循吏 (*xunli / junri*), who abided with the “laws” but made Confucian tenets their standard for ruling. *Shiji*, *SBBY* 122: 1a–15b.
- 232 李陵 (? to -74). General during Han times. When Li Ling in -99 deeply penetrated Xiongnu territory with only five thousand foot soldiers, he was surrounded by vastly superior Xiongnu cavalry forces and after continuous fighting had to surrender in the end. The shame of his defeat, enraged Emperor Wu and he ordered an investigation of Li’s defeat, sentencing his family to death in the end. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 109: 7a–8a.
- 233 Sima Qian had succeeded his father Sima Tan (died -110) in -108 in the office of Grand Historian. When he defended his friend Li Ling he incurred Wu Ti’s anger and was charged with “defaming the Emperor”. But instead of being executed he was demoted and castrated. *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 130: 9b. Although later he rose to the position of palace secretary he never forgot his shame and expressed his indignation in the *Biographies of Severe Officials*. In these he describes the careers of eleven officials about whom he says: “All of them acquired a reputation for being cruel.” *Ibid.*: *SBBY* 122: 15a.
- 234 有徳院. Posthumous name 諡 (*okurina*) of the eighth shôgun Tokugawa Yoshimune 徳

really existed when he set to writing down the *Talks about Government*, hence [his account] had to be an authentic account. [419] When one gives an authentic account, it [naturally] turns out to be different from the argumentation of Confucian scholars. [420] Hakuseki²³⁵ was a Confucian scholar, too. [421] He was loved by Bunshō In²³⁶ and took part in the government. [422] Because his argumentation looked at the realm as it really exists, it is different from [the argumentation] of Confucian scholars. [423] [Among] recent Confucian scholars, Hakuseki and Sorai were those who placed the actual state of affairs before them and reasoned about it. [424] What the run-of-the-mill Confucians have to say is very different. [425a] The Confucian scholars of our day say this and that about the conditions of our age. [425b] However, because [Hakuseki and Sorai] looked at conditions as they really are, [what they said] does not seem to be anything different from what people nowadays do. [426] Hakuseki and Sorai were men of rare learning. [427] They argued about things as they actually are, and differed in no way with [the actual state of affairs]. [428] In twisting around the smallest pieces of every minute detail, [the other Confucian scholars] are at variance with the people of our times. [429] [Hakuseki and Sorai] are not at odds at all with present-day conditions.

[430] Confucian scholars disdain profit. [431] However, both Hakuseki and Sorai deemed most important the method of reforming the exchequer and of gaining profit. [432] Confucian scholars consider loving the people their first duty. [433] But both, Hakuseki and Sorai adopted the present way of collecting [taxes] as well as the present-day way of punishments. [434] Confucian scholars detest severe officials. [435] But in the *Talks about Government* [Sorai] praises highly the harshness of Nakayama Kageyu²³⁷, stopping

川吉宗 (1684–1751) meaning “Virtuous Palace”.

235 Arai Hakuseki. Confucian scholar and informal advisor to the sixth shōgun Tokugawa Ienobu 徳川家宣 (1663–1712). In *Told round a Brushwood Fire* he recorded events during his career and justified his contributions to politics during Ienobu’s reign from 1707 to 1712.

236 文昭院. Posthumous name of Tokugawa Ienobu meaning “Palace of Brilliant Letters”.

237 In the first part of *Talks about Government* Nakayama Kageyu is described as a man who had criminals executed as soon as he arrested them, thereby causing thieves and others to keep low. *NST*, vol. 36: 263–4. Somewhat later Seiryō writes that Nakayama served as “City Commissioner” 町奉行 (*machi bugyō*). This term generally denotes the City Commissioner of Edo of whom there mostly were two serving on a monthly shift. They were responsible for city administration including police and juridical functions. In fact, Nakamura served as “Prosecutor of Arsonists and Robbers” 火付盗賊改 (*hitsuke*

short of eating him up [out of pleasure]. [436] By severe officials are meant men who are well-versed in the penal laws 律 (*ritsu*) and who are unforgiving. [437] They do not forgive because [forgiving] does not agree with the penal laws. [438] Not to forgive means to be a man who does not bend the penal laws. [439] If one bends the penal laws they are no longer penal laws. [440] Therefore, severe officials are true and honest officials. [441] To forgive after all is the method of loving the people, and is only a provisional expedient. [442] It is not a method to be used in well-ordered times. [443] To forgive those who are guilty is the reason for lots of evil-doers showing up. [444] If it is known that if one is guilty one cannot by any means whatsoever escape [punishment], people will be deterred from things that will lead them to commit crimes. [445] It is because they can escape [punishment] that [people] will not see crime as crime any longer.

[446] In the *Conversation Chronicles of the States* one finds the words of Yang Shezhi who said that if good men 善人 (*zennin*) rule there will be no lucky people in the state.²³⁸ [447] Luck 幸 (*saiwai*) in this context means un hoped-for luck コボレ幸 (*kobore saiwai*). [448] In the *Smaller Words as They Should Be* it is written, “To gain something although it is not one’s due is called luck.”²³⁹ [449] [Luck] means to gain what should not be gained and to escape what should not be escaped. [450] What I called good men above are severe men. [451] Those who on no account allow [people] to gain what should not be gained or to escape a punishment that should not be escaped are good men. [452] Under such conditions people will not think of gaining things they should not gain or expect escaping a punishment they should not escape. [453] Thus, there will be no profitmongers. [454] And there will be no thieves either. [455] Nor will there be criminals. [456] And it will not happen that people are murdered or injured. [457] This has to be called good government. [458] Therefore, good government, good men, benevolent lords and worthy ministers [in fact] are severe. [459] They do not forgive. [460]

tôzoku aratame) and as such was responsible for the elimination of robbers in Edo from 1683 to 1686. Cf. *ibid.*: *NST*, vol. 36: 264.

238 Yang Shezhi 羊舌職 is not mentioned in the *Guoyu* but in the *Commentary of Zuo*, under “Duke Xuan 16th year”. There he is quoted as saying, “If there are good men above, there will be no lucky people in the state.” *SBBY* 11: 19b; *LEGGE*, vol. 5: 330.

239 *Erya*, *SBBY* 4: 1b; *Blooming Elegance* 爾雅 (*Erya / Jiga*), *SBBY* 1B: 27b.

They count like a woman²⁴⁰, [which means that they] do the arithmetic of selling and buying correctly, do not take even one penny of profit too much, and do not allow for an unreasonable loss either.

[461a] [There is the following saying:] “Not to forgive shows confidence, to forgive means a lack of benevolence.” [461b] Emperor Wu of Liang²⁴¹ was fond of Buddhism 仏法 (*buppô*) and frequently performed the Ceremony of Releasing Living Beings²⁴². [461c] At such a time an envoy from Tuoba Wei²⁴³ was present. [462a] Emperor Wu prided himself upon being a man of benevolence, and before the eyes of the envoy of Wei, he set free an enormous number of living beings. [462b] Then he asked the envoy, “Do you not set free living creatures in Wei?” [463] The envoy of Wei answered, “In Wei we do not set free living creatures. [464] But we do not catch them either.” [465] It is said that Emperor Wu felt very much ashamed by this answer. [466] Indeed, a Ceremony of Releasing Living Creatures is something strange. [467] Birds and fish are caught and then they are released. [468] If one did not catch them, one would not have to release them. [469a] One releases them after one has caught them. [469b] Is not therefore the Ceremony of Releasing Living Creatures contrary to benevolence? [470] To forgive means to forgive after catching. [471] Is not catching contrary to benevolence?

[472] The sages ruled in such a way that no one had to be arrested. [473] Because no one was arrested no one had to be forgiven. [474] If the laws are made well, the people fear [to commit] crimes and behave so as not to face arrest. [475] In order to have no need to arrest [someone] it is best never to forgive. [476] Nakayama Kageyu probably was the ancestor of today’s Lord Kuroda Yamato no Kami²⁴⁴ with [a fief of] fifty thousand *koku*. [477] When

240 メノコ算用 in the text or 女ノ子算用 (*me no ko san'yô*) as it also could be written. To count “like a woman” here means to count cautiously one by one.

241 武帝 (464–549). Founder of the Liang dynasty 梁 (502–556) in Southern China during the time of division of the whole realm in several short-lived dynasties, the Period of Northern and Southern Dynasties (420–589). Known for his love of literature and Buddhism which flourished during his reign.

242 放生会 (*fangsheng hui / hôjô e*). Ceremony held in temples during which animals bought for this purpose were set free in order to gather merits for the next life.

243 拓跋魏. The Tuoba were a tribe of the proto-mongolic Xianbei 鮮卑. Under the leadership of Tuoba Gui 拓跋圭 (371–409) they united the whole of northern China and in 386 founded Wei or Northern Wei, the first of the northern empires during the Period of Northern and Southern Dynasties.

244 By “Kuroda Yamato no Kami” 黒田大和守 or “Governor of Yamato” Seiryô probably means Kuroda Naoatsu 黒田直温 (1784–1801), lord of Kururi 久留里 in the province of

this man was appointed city commissioner 町奉行 (*machi bugyô*) [his policy relied] only on not forgiving. [478] He gave no pardon. [479] He did everything according to the policy of the sages. [480] The city commissioner is an official. [481] Even if from above there came the request “Please forgive [this criminal]”, it was the law of the Three Dynasties not to grant pardon. [482] Because the principle of Heaven is even heavier than the lord’s will, it indeed is the duty of the official not to forgive. [483] Not to forgive is benevolent rule. [484] Therefore, Nakayama was a man of benevolence. [485] Consequently, a severe man is a man of benevolence. [486] If someone thinks that a severe official is to be detested, he should not serve [as] city commissioner.

[487] Among the emperors after the Three Dynasties²⁴⁵, Emperor Wen of the Han Dynasty²⁴⁶ was [the first to appoint severe officials again]. [488] Severe officials became numerous from [the times of] Emperor Wen onwards. [489] Because in well-ordered times the people behave like spoiled children, they complain about the interest taken for rice or a loan. [490] They complain about the collecting of taxes [on merchandise]. [491] This means to behave like a spoiled child. [492] To complain about the laws of the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* is the same as to complain about the principle of Heaven. [493] If [society] falls into such ways one has to reform it. [494] To reform means that one has to bring the government into accord with the principle of Heaven because it lacks accord with it. [495] If one [wants to] bring [the government back] into accordance with the Heavenly principle, one has to appoint men who abide by it and who will be unforgiving as officials. [496] The reason why Emperor Wen appointed severe officials was that he wanted to tighten

Kazusa 上総 (present-day Chiba 千葉 prefecture). In 1799 (Kansei 寛政 11) Naoatsu received the title “Yamato no Kami” or “Governor of Yamato” like several others of his forbears. This was an honorary title conferred by the imperial court (at the suggestion of the shogunal government) and did not imply real governorship over the province of Yamato (present-day Nara 奈良 prefecture) according to the old imperial system of administration. The lordship of Kururi was evaluated at 30.000 *koku* (Seiryô’s figure probably is mistaken). The connection between Nakayama Kageyu and the lords of Kururi cannot be verified but until the family changed its name to “Kuroda” (the then time head of the family, Naokuni 直邦, had been foster son to the family Kuroda who held high office in the Tatebayashi 館林 domain) during the second half of the 17th century it had been called “Nakayama”.

245 These are the first three dynasties of Chinese history, the legendary Xia 夏 dynasty (trad. -2205 to -1766), the Yin 殷 dynasty (about -16th to -11th century, also called Shang 商), and the Zhou 周 dynasty (about -11th century to -221).

246 文帝 (ruled -179 to -157)

up the [lax] government [of his day] and make it comply with the principle of Heaven according to the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty*.

[497] Anyway, in the times of Master Meng “love of the people” was good wisdom one could not say anything against. [498] But it is an argument that does not fit in with well-ordered times at all. [499] And it is not in keeping with the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* in the least. [500] It is not a strategy for making the state rich. [501] It is a method for capturing the realm quickly. [502] It cannot be applied at all in our times. [503] The extent to which the people below are spoiled probably has never before gone to such an extreme before since the beginning of the world as in our age. [504] The laxness and luxurious [habits] of the people below probably never have been so extreme as in present days. [505] Their complaints probably never have been so numerous as in our times. [506] The power of the people below probably never has been so great as nowadays. [507] And as for the possession of cleverness and [the capacity for] devising stratagems, they probably never have been so shrewd as today.

[508a] That I argue in this way is not because I want to criticize the government above. [508b] What I wish [to do] is to urge the people below to be cautious. [509a] If one considers [things] with the times of Wu of the Han Dynasty [for a model], it will be nothing remarkable that [severe] officials who comply with the Heavenly principle are appointed. [509b] And if therefore from now on caution is taken that the boundaries are not overstepped, this would be a matter for congratulation; that is what I want to say. [510] I have not the least intent to criticize the government above. [511] I want to make the people below listen. [512] The people of Kyô[to] are different from the people of Edo in that they have the habit of listening attentively to what others have to say. [513] They listen with attention first and decide then what to accept and what to reject. [514] This is a very fine trait. [515] It should indeed be the case that at first one listens attentively and thereafter adopts what is useful and rejects what is not. [516] Therefore, it is good to cause [others] to listen to what one has noticed, whatever it may be.

[517a] The people of Edo [however] — it is their habit maybe — dislike to listen to what others say. [517b] That is the reason why there will be no increase in wisdom. [518] [The people of Edo] are stout-hearted, brusque, and always reject what others say. [519a] Theirs seems to be a disposition that in fact derives from the temperament of the times when [Tokugawa Ieyasu] entered the [Kantô] provinces.²⁴⁷ [519b] Then the warrior spirit 武風

(*bufû*) was very strictly enacted, one did not back off for even one inch, and did not on any account give way to others. [520] For going to war, at times when the warriors had to wear armour and give battle every day, this was a highly appropriate attitude. [521] Then it was good to be stronger even by a little bit. [522] It was good to be brusque. [523] It was good, too, to dismiss what others said. [524] Only someone with hard muscles and a very stout-hearted disposition was considered a brave man. [525] Nowadays there are no campaigns and no battles [anymore]. [526] These are not times when only people of this stance are needed. [527] For a warrior house, of course, armaments are obligatory. [528] But except for armaments, there is no need for everything to be according to the warrior spirit. [529] Because the temperament of Edo is ruled by the warrior spirit, this spirit spread to the people, too, so that they all have become stout-hearted. [530] Even the warriors [today] have no need to all prepare arms. [531a] But because [Edo] is wholly under the domination of the warrior spirit, the people do not listen to what is said and are headstrong. [531b] If someone says right they say left, and if he says left they say right, thereby [readily] taking up a quarrel. [531c] In this [comportment], the street knight mentality 男達風 (*otokodate fû*) is still left over after all. [532a] The [attitude of a] street knight is the temperament of a time when the clamour of arms [still was ubiquitous]. [532b] But seen [with the eyes of] our day, these are extremely impolite, rude, and distorted bad habits.

[533] Since in Edo even the [ordinary] people are of this disposition, it also spread over to the other territories so that now the people of all castle towns have acquired Edo's street knight mentality. [534] If the government goes right, the people turn left. [535] If the government turns left, the people go right. [536] In fighting the authorities above they are unyielding. [537] This bad habit has spread over to the other territories. [538] If therefore in the domains one now intends to keep one's military retainers and the castle town residents under control, one should take the purport [of what I have set out above] for a measuring rod, and make one's retainers and the castle town residents a little more gentle and pliant, and inspire in those below some awe of governmental authority 上ノ威光 (*ue no ikô*). [539] As one wants those below to stand in awe of governmental authority, it is only reasonable to appoint severe officials.

[540] In fact, if one looks at the old regulations 古ノ式 (*inishie no shiki*), in

247 In 1590 Ieyasu moved his base to Edo, at the time still a fishermen's village, to exert control over the Kantô area at the behest of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

all ministries 諸省 (*shoshô*), departments 諸府 (*shofu*), and bureaus 寮 (*ryô*), *jô* and *sakan*²⁴⁸ were established. [541] In the case of the ministries, these were called 丞 (*jô*) and 録 (*sakan*). [542] In the departments, one found [them written] 尉 and 吏. [543] And in the bureaus, there were 允 and 属. [544] And in the provinces 諸国 (*shokoku*), one had [the characters] 掾 and 目. [545] However small the office, these two sections were invariably established. [546] The *jô* probably were something like today's general managers²⁴⁹. [547] And the *sakan* probably resembled today's supervisors²⁵⁰. [548] About [the government in] Edo I do not know anything. [549] But if one looks at the posting of officials in the government of the regional lords, [one finds that] supervisors are extremely rare. [550] General managers are very rare, too. [551] That [a lord's] finances deteriorate is the result of the low number of general managers. [552] And the law system comes to pieces because the supervisors do not suffice. [553] Anyhow, the people do not fear the authority of the government above, because there are too few supervisors.

[554] In my opinion, it would be good, if in all offices, without any exception, general managers and supervisors would be posted. [555] However, general managers and supervisors should not be added to the present number of officials. [556] The present number is in fact sufficient. [557] For example, if there are fifty guardsmen for the front lobby, one could appoint as general manager from among those fifty someone who has a sense for economics. [558] He would be the general manager for the guards. [559] And someone who has some interest in law could be appointed supervisor. [560] He would be the supervisor of the guards. [561a] For the other offices one could proceed in the same way. [561b] In the case of offices with only a small staff one

248 Seiryô gives these names in *katakana* and writes the latter as サツクワン (*sakkan*). The Taihō Code of 701 contained both penal 律 (*ritsu*) and administrative 令 (*ryô*) law and laid down the institutions of government according to the model of Tang China. Each government office had four grades of officials: chief 長官 (*kami*), vice-chief 次官 (*suke*), discipline officers 判官 (*jô*), and clerks 主典 (*sakan*). It obliged the *jô* to take care of internal regulation and organization inside the office, whereas the *sakan* were responsible for the examination of documents and the keeping of records. According to the office, different characters were used to write *jô* and *sakan* (pronunciation was the same). Seiryô gives examples in the following.

249 元鈔役 (*motojime yaku*). Officials in charge of the financial management of a lord's castle or residence.

250 目付役 (*metsuke yaku*). Post found in the shogunal government as well as in the administration of regional lordships. Official holders were charged to supervise personal conduct and duty acquittal of retainers.

could group two or three into one [unit] and appoint someone general manager of one office and someone else supervisor of another office. [562] In this way, one would have brought back to life the *jô* and *sakan* of old.

[563] Now, the general managers should report to the house elder in charge of the exchequer. [564] The supervisors should be placed under the control of the house elder watching over law enforcement, and they should directly consult with him on all matters. [565] In this way, representatives of the house elders will be present in each office. [566] Thus, even if a chopstick rolls down, it will come to the ears of the house elders. [567] However confidential a thing the house elders deliberate upon, it will not leak out. [568a] [However], by the present way of making laws in the regional houses, those below know nothing about those above, and those above know nothing about those below. [568b] Therefore, imprudent things occur above, while things below happen that escape the eyes of those above. [568c] The laws do not stand firmly, and the economy is in disarray. [568d] It is a bad situation [on the whole]. [569] [But] if for each office there is one general manager and one supervisor, [the offices] will be under control all the time. [570] Under the present system people are allowed to become negligent and will pay dearly in the end. [571] People on purpose are led to become self-indulgent and end up impoverished. [572] This is not at all rewarding.

[573] In the lord's house where I served for some years²⁵¹, there was a big tea pot in the lounge for the shaven heads²⁵², and they had a fire always burning. [574] And this fire also was brought to the lounge of the pages²⁵³ and that of the servants²⁵⁴. [575] In the lounge of the house elders and officials, [fire burned] only until noon, hence [expenses for charcoal] were a negligible matter. [576] But all those serving in the inner chambers took fire [to their rooms] indiscriminately to warm themselves. [577a] Especially among the shaven heads, there were many who took fire [for themselves]. [577b]

251 Seiryô served the Aoyama 青山 family for seven years and the Tokugawa branch-house of Owari 尾張 province for three years as a Confucian scholar. Cf. n. 7.

252 坊主 (*bôzu*). Known as “tea monks” 茶坊主 (*cha bôzu*), *bôzu* meaning “monk” or “s.o. with shaven head”. Persons serving in connection with the preparation of tea. The name is a remnant from times when Zen monks were employed in this function. In the shogunal household there were one hundred “shaven heads of the inner chambers” 奥坊主 (*oku bôzu*) and two hundred “shaven heads of the outer chambers” 表坊主 (*omote bôzu*).

253 小納戸 (*ko nando*). Retainers serving near the shôgun in charge of tasks such as hair dressing, gardening, serving of food, or horse grooming.

254 近習 (*kinju*). Servants waiting on the shôgun.

This put the officials of the exchequer in great distress. [577c] [Therefore], they deliberated upon [what to do], and high and low together they came up with a very good plan. [578a] According to this strategy, they called from among the shaven heads two who were a little more advanced in years and had some authority among them. [578b] And because [the shaven heads] served on a two-day shift, they called one from each shift telling them: “[578c] Now, although we order charcoal every year from our regular charcoal merchant, in recent years the consumption of charcoal requires an immense sum. [579] Totally unlike the past, much more is needed now. [580] [The reason] seems to be that people from various other offices foolishly come [to your lounge] in order to receive [fire] and warm themselves.

[581] Because all other offices, too, have a budget [for this purpose] they should have no need to come to your quarters to get charcoal. [582] But it may not be possible for you to all of a sudden say that you cannot give them any when those from other offices come to get charcoal from you. [583] Therefore, on this occasion matters have been regulated anew clearly and [the following] has been ordered. [584a] First, the two of you are appointed to the posts of charcoal managers. [584b] Therefore, you will [calculate] how much charcoal [is needed] in one winter, how much in autumn, and the same for spring and summer, and write down for us the amount of charcoal that should be sufficient for about one year. [585a] Then we will provide as much charcoal as you have specified for us. [585b] If any charcoal remains, you two may keep it as a reward for [your service as] charcoal managers. [585c] Therefore, you two should apply yourselves [to your task] diligently and strive to reduce the consumption of charcoal. [586] Now, even if [people] from other offices still come to ask for charcoal [from you], you should refuse them and explain that because under the new reform of regulations things have been revised in this way you cannot comply with the request. [587a] If there are still some who will not listen, you should inform us.” [587b] So they instructed [the two] firmly. [588a] Because [under this system] the [supply of] charcoal came to be used up [when more was consumed than originally planned for] and the two shaven heads had to buy it on their own [if they wanted to use more], they did not give any to other offices any longer. [588b] They told those of the next rank about what is [written] above and asked them not to feed [the fire] too much. [588c] Consequently, the consumption of charcoal decreased of its own, and the expenses for it were much lower than previously. [589] By this [arrangement], in effect, general managers were placed in the office of the shaven heads. [590] From among

the shaven heads [those two] were made to serve as general managers. [591] If from the beginning general managers and supervisors had been posted in their office, it would not have been possible that more charcoal than necessary had to be provided.

[592a] In the [city-quarter] Banchô²⁵⁵ in Edo, many bannermen²⁵⁶ are gathered together. [592b] This is an unsafe place. [593a] In Edo, associations are organized: [593b] Several bannermen join together and set up guard stations. [593c] [In this way], there are joint crossroad guardstations²⁵⁷ for each subward. [594a] During the night the guardmen of these stations [patrol the streets] dragging sticks behind them. [594b] Their task is to hinder miscreants and to detect thieves and so on. [595] However, some years ago [instances] of highway robbery occurred along the embankments in the Ichigaya and Ushigome²⁵⁸ [wards] every night, when the purses and clothes of passers-by were stolen. [596a] Every time the crossroad guards were sternly exhorted [to put an end to the crimes], but because the above situation continued [without improvement], secret investigators²⁵⁹ were entrusted [with the case]. [596b] When they went about catching the thieves those turned out to be the crossroad guards themselves. [597] When those who should prevent robberies commit them [themselves], all is lost. [598] If the supervisors were furtively to break the law and if the general managers were secretly to borrow money against the rules, this would be the same as the guards committing robbery and could not easily be suppressed. [599] Therefore, if one does not very carefully

255 番町. Locality in present-day Chiyoda ward of Tōkyō.

256 旗本 (*hatamoto*). Retainers of the shōgun numbering ca. five thousand with incomes of less than ten thousand *koku* and the privilege of direct audience by the shōgun.

257 寄り合い辻番 (*yoriai tsujiban*). In Edo, guardstations 番所 (*bansho*) were organized on crossroads 辻 (*tsuji*) in quarters where warriors lived. Besides guardstations maintained by “public authority” 公儀合い辻番 (*kōgi ai tsujiban*), i.e. the shogunal government, there were others supported by *daimyō* or *hatamoto* families. *Daimyō tsujiban* 大名辻番 (in the late Edo Period there were more than two hundred) were maintained by one *daimyō* house each. As with “associated crossroad guardstations” 組み合い辻番 (*kumiai tsujiban*) and “joined crossroad guardstations”, of which there were well over six hundred, several bannermen were responsible for one station. In addition, there were nearly one thousand so called “self-supported crossroad guardstations” 自身番 (*jishin ban*), supported by the residents of city quarters where merchants and others lived.

258 市谷, 半込. Both are place names in present-day Shinjuku ward.

259 隠密ノ役人 (*onmitsu no yakunin*)

examine the people [to be appointed] general managers and supervisors, this will be the beginning of law-breaking and self-indulgence. [600] It is the first duty to make them compete for integrity 潔白 (*keppaku*) with the general managers and supervisors of other offices.

[601] In fact, there should be general managers and supervisors in the castle town's city [districts], too. [602] Among headmen of single villages and headmen of village units²⁶⁰, as well, there should be [some who fill] these two positions. [603] Then without fail, the law as well as frugality 儉約 (*ken'yaku*) will diligently be practiced. [604a] Nowadays, in every territory [people] call "Frugality, frugality". [604b] However, because no attention is paid to the how of practicing frugality, nothing comes of it. [605] If one does not go to the root of things and sets them right at their foundation, and only meddles with them at the end points, it is of no use whatsoever as [one only touches] the surface. [606a] There are reasons why a country falls into poverty or why it attains prosperity. [606b] Urgent concerns should be dealt with at once, and general concerns should be recognized. [607] The policies of Edo and those of the regional lords are the opposite of each other in many respects. [608] One should carefully pay attention to this. [609] The method of dealing with immediate concerns will be expounded in the next book.

[610] By "recognition of general concerns" 一体ノ心得 (*ittai no kokoroe*) deliberations on fundamental principles 本源 (*hongen*) are meant. [611] Because the latter serve as a framework structure, they apply not only in one instance but reflect on all cases. [612] For example, the wealthy merchant houses in the regional castle towns provide the money for the lord's expenses and help him out in an emergency. [613a] Moreover, because the lords cannot return the money at once that the [merchants] have provided for their expenses, they have no justification to give to these [merchant] houses. [613b] [Therefore], they want to reward the wealthy merchants in some way [instead]. [613c] Thus, it has become common practice to confer rank 格式 (*kakushiki*) or family insignia 紋付 (*montsuki*) on them or entitle them to the bearing of swords. [614] This is something that should be performed in Edo and not in the castle towns. [615] The reason for this is that the merchants are wealthy [exactly] because their rank is low and their possessions numerous. [616] The warriors [on the other hand] are poor because their rank is high and their

260 Of village headmen there were those for one village only (called *shōya* 庄屋 or *nanushi* 名主 etc. in different regions), but also those for larger units made up of several tens of villages called by names such as *ō shōya* 大庄屋.

material assets small. [617] If now rank and wealth become matched, [a merchant's] fortunes will not turn bad but they will not become better either.

[618] There are two persons in Edo, Gotô Shôzaburô²⁶¹ and Gotô Nuinosuke²⁶², who are completely destitute. [619] The reason why they became destitute is that they were given rank. [620] Both of them go to work on horseback. [621] Shôzaburô even has a rank that allows him to take along samurai retainers. [622] The two Gotôs have elders, stewards, supervisors, chamberlains, attendants, stable grooms and horsekeepers, too, [in their service]. [623] Because thus the retainers are numerous, their lord never has seen an abacus himself. [624] A merchant who never has seen an abacus [normally] is unheard of. [625] Anyway, a man who sits in his sitting-room and eats his meals while he makes others serve him, becomes estranged from [the world of] profit, because his rank on the whole is [equal to] that of a warrior. [626] A real merchant of prosperity eats his meals from where he can overlook the kitchen. [627a] It is not that he could not eat while sitting in the sitting-room. [627b] But if he were to eat his meals there, he would have to clap his hands to call someone. [628] Under such conditions he would have to give up handling the receipts and expenditure himself, hence he would stop doing the calculating on his own, too. [629] He would not see the abacus any longer. [630] He would [start to] live in luxury. [631] For everything [his expenses] would increase tremendously. [632] In this way, it would be inconceivable should he not become destitute. [633] The reason why he does not eat his meals [any longer] in a place from where he can overlook the kitchen is that now he has acquired rank for himself. [634a] If he still behaved like someone without rank after it has been conferred upon him, it would look as if he were ungrateful for the distinction given him from above. [634b] Therefore, he increases his expenses tremendously, being intent on appreciating the marks

261 後藤庄三郎. Hereditary name of the head of the Gotô family. The first Gotô served the shôgun Ashikaga Yoshimasa 足利義政 (1436–1490) as metal carver. Toyotomi Hideyoshi ordered the fifth head of the family to accompany Tokugawa Ieyasu when the latter moved to Edo. Thus, the Gotô family came to serve the Tokugawa as money-changers and heads of the state mint. In addition, sword-smiths and other metal-working artisans were placed under their supervision. The family came to an end with the death of the eleventh Gotô in 1810.

262 後藤縫殿助. Official draper to the shogunal household who was given warrior status with a rice allowance, a residence, the right to bear swords and a family name, and the privilege to be received in audience by the shôgun.

of distinction [he received] from above. [635] That one's fortune is scattered in all directions if one increases one's expenses can be seen from the example of the two Gotôs.

[636] Because, looked at from Edo, the merchants of the entire realm are the merchants of Edo, there is no reason why one merchant should be [especially favoured as] one's own merchant over another. [637] Consequently, because one has to take care that all the money is not accumulated in one place, it is good to confer rank on those merchants, who own too much money. [638] Conferring rank is a device for making someone poor. [639] One confers rank with the intention of making someone destitute. [640] But the day [regional lords] confer rank on wealthy merchants only two or three of whom can be found in [each] regional castle town at best, they bring about the undoing of these wealthy merchants whom [the lords] ought to love and take good care of. [641] That one confers rank on wealthy merchants in Edo is extremely praiseworthy, but that regional lords confer rank on the merchants of their castle towns shows a lack of deliberation. [642] If there is a wealthy merchant in the castle town, one should in any possible way take care that he does not become poor and help him to ever more increase his fortune. [643] There is no greater benefit for a state but having wealthy merchants [reside] in the castle town. [644] Sucking up the money of neighbouring states and other [domains] in the vicinity shows the loyalty of a prosperous merchant house towards its lord. [645] To confer rank on [such a] house is the way of reducing one's own country to poverty. [646] For a regional lordship to adopt the policy of Edo is proof of a misunderstanding.

[647] It is a general human feeling 人情 (*ninjô*) to be jealous of someone who excels oneself. [648] A fool envies a wise man, an ugly woman is jealous of a beautiful one, and a poor man begrudges a rich one. [649] To be jealous of a wise man causes oneself to fall into foolishness. [650] To envy a rich man causes oneself to become poor. [651] The warriors in any case begrudge the merchants their wealth, and that is the reason why the state will be impoverished. [652] All officials are warriors. [653] That they all take pleasure in distressing the merchants is the general condition of the world. [654] This is the utmost of a foolish strategy, an extreme case of a policy for causing poverty. [655] To love the poor and hate the rich is a misconception

[handed down] from antiquity. [656] In lawsuits concerning the repayment of loans, the city commissioners' decision in favour of the borrower and to the detriment of the lender proceeds from the jealous heart of the warriors who in their bowels envy the merchants and intend to stop them amassing money.

[657] Han Fei said the same [in the following way]. “[658] Rich people become rich because they work assiduously and strive hard. [659] Poor people are poor because they are lazy and shun work.”²⁶³ [660] If one loves the lazy people and hates those who work hard, the products of the land gradually diminish. [661] If the quantity of money dwindles in the state, it will be absorbed by another state with ample resources. [662] This is great foolishness. [663a] It can also be understood by looking at [the conditions in] a household. [663b] The man in the household who owns the money will be hated by the other housemembers. [664] They plan to cause this man harm somehow. [665] They tend to take pleasure in seeing that this wealthy person suffers losses, even though they themselves will come to some harm by this. [666] All this arises from a jealous heart. [667] In one office, [people] plan how to cause another office to commit a blunder. [668] [The disposition] that sets [people] to draw each other into making blunders proceeds from the jealous heart of men in service. [669a] If orders are [to practice] frugality, [some people] try to keep other offices from being frugal. [669b] Thus frugality will never be achieved. [670a] They rejoice if they can prevent other offices from being frugal, even if this entails that their own office, too, will stray from frugality a little. [670b] With this attitude [at large], frugality certainly has no chance to be realized.

[671a] At the moment, [the policy of] [ten]-percent-frugality *ワリ儉約* (*wari ken'yaku*) is popular. [671b] This is an interesting [concept]. [672] It was contrived by a wise person. [673] [According to the concept of] [ten]-percent-frugality, each office is called upon to economize. [674] If, for example, the expenses of this office so far amounted to about one *kanme*²⁶⁴, it is ordered to save ten percent [on them]. [675] [Thus], this office has to make ends meet with nine hundred *monme*. [676] [However], there are no concrete

263 There are no similar words in *Master Han Fei*. KURANAMI sees an allusion to *SBBY* 19: 5b. “Thus the state grows poor all the more. That is, because the people talking about tilling are numerous, but those, who [actually] take the spade [into their hands] are few [...]” In his opinion, Seiryō interpreted this as an example of “idleness”. *NST*, vol. 44: 237.

264 Cf. n. 200.

instructions on how to do this or that. [677] It is left to the discretion of the officials in this office how to cut down [expenses] by ten percent. [678] Without bothering how things are achieved, it is only ordered to save ten percent [of the expenses]. [679] In the end, this, too, is a method of establishing general management in each office. [680] If ten people work in one office, these ten will pull together and strive to somehow reduce expenses by ten percent. [681] If each office saves ten percent, in case the expenses have totalled one hundred thousand *ryô*²⁶⁵, this will yield [a saving of] ten thousand *ryô*. [682] This [system] is called [ten]-percent-frugality.

[683] Among the offices in Edo there is one called “revenue bureau”²⁶⁶ and [another called] “expenditure bureau”²⁶⁷. [684] These are extremely interesting institutions. [685] I do not know Edo well. [686] If one looks at the government of a regional lord’s house, there are only records of expenditure, records of revenue are extremely sketchy. [687] The expenditure bureau takes care of outgoing money. [688] The revenue bureau is in charge of incoming money. [689] Whichever [regional lord’s] economy one looks at, only the outgoings are accounted for, but one never hears that the incomings are accounted for, too. [690] The [ten]-percent-frugality [policy], too, is a method for cutting down on expenditure. [691] To begin with, the term “frugality” is equivalent to the expression “cutting down on expenditure”. [692] The function of the revenue bureau is almost non-existent. [693] In so far as its task only involves collecting the money that has been set aside in the expenditure bureau, the expenditure bureau is exceedingly busy, whereas the work of the revenue bureau can be done by anybody. [694] It is very easy work. [695] At first, when the revenue bureau and the expenditure bureau were separated and

265 Cf. n. 189.

266 元方御納戸 (*motokata onando*). Cf. following note.

267 払方御納戸 (*haraikata onando*). The *onando* was an office in the shogunal administration responsible for the provision of money, clothes, and other items for the shōgun’s personal use as well as the handling of gifts to and from regional lords and direct retainers of the shōgun. It was divided into a department in charge of procurement and storing (*motokata*), and one in charge of the gifts to be given to lords and retainers (*haraikata*). Seiryō’s following explanation of these two offices makes it unlikely that he really had the *motokata onando* and the *haraikata onando* in mind. His explanation meets much better with the tasks of the office of Money Commissioner 御金奉公 (*okane bugyō*), who was in charge of administrating the money resources of the shogunal government. This office, too, was divided into a “revenue” department (*motokata*) responsible for all revenue received in cash, and an “expenditure” department (*haraikata*) responsible for the payment of money.

given [different] tasks, there certainly existed no discrepancy like this. [696] As the expenditure bureau is in charge of outgoing money, it should be its task to reduce the outgoings if even by a little bit. [697] And since the revenue bureau handles incoming money, it has to strive for increasing the receipts, even if by small amounts.

[698] The expenditure bureau has a duty implied by the word “buying”. [699] It buys goods. [700] It buys goods by spending money. [701] It probably is called expenditure bureau because it spends money. [702] The revenue bureau has a task implied by the word “selling”. [703] It sells goods. [704] It probably is called revenue bureau because it earns money by selling goods. [705] Although the regional territories nowadays make a great fuss about the word “buying”, they do not mind the word “selling” at all. [706] This is probably an expression of the warriors’ frame of mind for whom the selling of goods does not exist. [707] But if there is no selling, there should be no buying either. [708] If the set-up of the times is such that goods need to be bought, then [conversely] there should be the necessity of selling [goods], too. [709] That the warriors do not sell goods is unreasonable. [710] This indicates for certain that they will become poor. [711] Where does the money for buying goods come from? [712] [The warriors’ lack of concern for] pursuing the principle of things is extreme. [713] That the warriors are not ashamed of buying goods but that they consider it a great shame to sell anything is very one-sided. [714] From this mistaken approach everything gets to be disordered.

[715] What the warriors receive [for their service] is rice. [716] They receive several ten thousand *koku* or several thousand *koku* of rice. [717] This rice they sell [and with the money they get for it] they have to buy the things [they need]. [718] The shore tax²⁶⁸ implies, that the beach is sold and money received [in return]. [719] What is called “revenue” in fact all proceeds from “selling”. [720] Taxes are [a kind of] selling. [721] The only ones who do not sell are the [warriors’] servants²⁶⁹. [722a] The servants receive money from their lord, e.g. two *ryô* and two *bu*²⁷⁰ in gold or three *ryô* in gold. [722b] They have no need to sell anything. [723] In fact they sell their bodily power of course, but they do not sell something they have received [from someone else]. [724] Because the warriors receive rice they [are able to] sell it. [725]

268 浜運上 (*hama unjô*). A kind of tax levied on salt farms.

269 中間 (*chûgen*)

270 歩. There were four *shu* to one *bu* (also written 分), and four *bu* to one *ryô* of gold.

The regional lords sell beaches, fields, rice, and the products of their territory. [726] Selling goods is nothing to be ashamed of. [727] Because the warriors claim not to sell anything, the commodities throughout the country do not increase. [728] Revenues do not grow. [729] There exists a great misunderstanding [in this point].

[730] Selling goods is nothing shameful. [731] But to borrow money from a merchant house and not to return it is very shameful. [732] However, this [the warriors] do not consider a shame. [733] To refuse [repaying] principal and interest within the first five years, to refuse [to pay] the interest permanently and to return only the principal in annual installments should be something very mean and shameful. [734] Not to return [borrowed] money is the same as just taking someone else's things and not return them. [735] What does one call a person who just takes things from others but does not return them? [736] It is strange not to consider this to be shameful but to think it is a shame to sell commodities and take money [in return]. [737] Moreover, what does it mean to say that one does not sell, while one engages in selling year in year out? [738] It should be taken for granted that the country will fall into poverty once the argument appears that selling goods is shameful for warriors to do.

[739] The method described in the *Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* is the method of selling things. [740] It is the method of exacting an interest of ten percent. [741] Does it not turn things upside down entirely to consider a shame the method of the sages and not to feel shame just taking things from others, something which the sages prohibited and punished? [742] If one tells the warriors that in Holland even the king is involved in trade, they burst out laughing. [743] However, they themselves after all sell and buy goods. [744] To sell and buy goods is the principle of the world. [745] There is nothing despicable about it. [746] To laugh about the principle of the world is irreverent. [747] To just take things from others is not the principle of the world. [748] It is something the Lord of Heaven²⁷¹ loathes. [749] To practice openly something which is contrary to the principle of the world without shame, but to slight the principle of the world and to roar with laughter is an extreme case of human folly!

271 天帝 (*tentei*)

[750] Sonobe²⁷² in [the province of] Tanba is a territory of twenty thousand *koku*. [751] Since [the domain] is near to Kyô[to] it maintains a residence there. [752a] Because its finances were in a strained situation, it tried to tackle this [problem] in various ways. [752b] Then, in recent years, a very talented man was found among the household warriors. [752c] Thinking intently [about what to do] he came up with interesting economic measures without bothering about the “discussions [on the essence] of warriorhood” 武士ノ論 (*bushi no ron*) as these do not fit in with principle at all. [752d] Thus he started to sell the products of Sonobe on the grounds of the Kyô[to] residence. [752e] In response to this, the [domain’s] finances now are flourishing. [753] In fact, it is not so difficult to bring prosperity to the state. [754] Only because their eyes and nose are affixed differently, warriors embrace poverty on purpose. [755] If only they put on the right face²⁷³, they would be prosperous at once. [756] Because their way of tackling things does not make ends meet they stay poor.

[757] Now, the products of Sonobe range from tobacco and rapeseed to *matsutake* 松茸 mushroom and vegetables. [758a] But previously these have been commodities sold by the peasants individually.²⁷⁴ [758b] Therefore, all these [goods] amounted only to small loads, and each was brought to Kyô[to] in small quantities to be sold there. [759a] Since the peasants brought their small loads [to Kyôto] apart for selling, the fat part of the profit was taken by the wholesale dealers 問屋 (*ton’ya*) while the peasants were kicked about here and pushed around there, getting only an extremely small margin for themselves. [759b] But even in that way it still seemed better to them to sell [their goods] in Kyô[to] than to dally away their time in Tanba. [760a] The talented warrior mentioned above thought about this in earnest. [760b] He consulted with the peasants, and first submitted the proposal of selling the Sonobe products in the Kyô[to] residence to the city commissioner [of Kyôto] through [his] lord. [761] For this there was an old precedent when the lord of

272 園部. Domain of 29,000 *koku* rice in Tanba 丹波 province (parts of modern Kyôto and Hyôgo 兵庫 prefectures). Fief of the Koide 小出 family since 1619 to the end of the Edo Period.

273 真ノ面目ニサヘナレバ (*makoto no menboku ni sae nareba*). Means that the warriors, too, should recognize the true importance of economic principles and behave accordingly.

274 納屋物 (*naya mono*). Literally “outhouse goods”. Expression used in Edo times for rice and other articles of trade marketed by private merchants. Commodities sold by the authorities of regional lordships directly were called “storehouse goods” 蔵物 (*kuramono*).

Obama²⁷⁵ sold his domain's products in the [Kyôto] residence on Sanjô street²⁷⁶. [762] As Obama is not even thirty *li* away from Kyô[to], selling the domain's products such as salt and fish in the Sanjô residence probably turned a tremendous profit. [763] Thereafter, the lord of Hikone²⁷⁷, too, sold Hikone's products in the Kyô[to] residence after the Obama precedent. [764a] However, the [domain's] residence in the Marutamachi²⁷⁸ quarter is very small. [764b] Nowadays [the products] are sold in the house of a merchant [under Hikone's patronage], but this, too, is an instance of selling [domain products] in the residence. [765] Sonobe submitted its request to sell in the Kyô[to] residence after the precedent of these two lordships. [766] And because there already was the instance of these two houses, the petition passed without meeting any obstacles.

[767a] Now, the afore-mentioned talented warrior consulted with the peasants of Sonobe, then he bought up the products listed above, such as tobacco, in the name of Sonobe's lords on a whole, and had them transported as the cargo of Sonobe to the Kyô[to] residence. [767b] Last he called the commission merchants 仲買ドモ (*nakagai domo*) together and sold [the products] inside the residence. [767c] Regarding this, [one should assess] the power of owner and customer 主客の勢 (*shukyaku no ikioi*). [767d] Their powers are greatly different according to who is owner and who is customer. [768] Because up to now [the Sonobe products] were goods offered by the peasants themselves, [the peasants] could take [their goods] to the wholesale dealers, but they had to ask [them] to buy [their goods]. [769a] And even when they asked them to buy, the right [to do so or not and at what price] rested with the wholesale dealers. [769b] This is called the customer's power. [770] Because now this has been changed into the mode of selling at the residence, one calls upon the commission dealers [to gather] and favours them with selling. [771] And because the dealers also ask "Please kindly sell to us," all the rights rest with the owner. [772] This is called the owner's power. [773] He can decide on

275 小浜. Domain of 103,000 *koku* rice in Wakasa 若狭 province (western part of modern Fukui 福井 prefecture). Since 1634 in possession of the Sakai 酒井 family. In accordance with the system of "alternating residence" all regional lords had to maintain a residence in Edo. In addition, many domain lords near the imperial capital had a residence there, too.

276 三条. Name of a street in Kyôto south of the Imperial Palace, running from east to west.

277 彦根. Domain of 350,000 *koku* rice in Ômi 近江 province (modern Shiga 滋賀 prefecture). Since 1601 in possession of the Ii 井伊 family.

278 丸太町. City quarter south of the Imperial Palace and north of Sanjô Street in Kyôto.

the price for himself. [774] That in the residence one can lay down everything freely [at one's convenience] as did the wholesale dealers earlier, shows that the powers of owner and customer have been reversed completely. [775] First, from the outset Sonobe reaped a very large profit. [776] Thereafter, the peasants toiled all the harder to produce all the more. [777] That the peasants rejoiced at this [turn of affairs] stands to reason. [778] Once they rejoice they are carried away. [779] Because they even [tended to] pass over their hardship only thinking of producing more, a lot of products could be harvested.

[780] Originally it is in the nature 性 (*sei*) of the ground to bring forth products. [781] There is no reason that these should decrease by harvesting them. [782] The more one takes the more come forth. [783] This is like hair falling out when one does someone's hair. [784] If one leaves the hair undone, no hairs fall out. [785] The hair just withers away and turns thinner. [786] If one combs it often, lots of hairs fall out. [787] But the hair [on the whole] grows ever thicker. [788] It is the nature of the head that hair grows on it. [789] This is not different from the ground yielding things. [790] To the southwest I travelled as far as Sanshū²⁷⁹. [791] To the north I travelled as far as Echigo. [792] Now, in the southern seas fish are extremely plentiful, but in the northern seas they are extremely rare. [793] In the southern seas the fish catch is abundant, in the northern seas [the catch] is poor. [794a] Where only few fish are caught fish on the whole are few, and where a lot are caught they are numerous on the whole. [794b] This seems to be similar to the relationship between hair and [single] hairs falling out. [795] In case of the things yielded by the ground, too, they abound in places where much is reaped. [796] In places where one does not harvest them, they do not come forth. [797] I have heard, too, that in Sonobe the products have increased by several times in comparison with former times, since the peasants now have found the taste for it and put a lot of energy in the production. [798] But because the warriors hold selling in disregard, the things the ground would yield do not come forth. [799] The ground has grown barren. [800] It is the same as not combing the hair on one's head. [801] And because in addition they make no use of any method to encourage the peasants, the things that should come forth [from the ground] decrease the more. [802a] Because the yield of products is low the state's profit is low, too. [802b] Therefore, the means to buy up the people's products decline gradually, too. [803] This means to take pleasure in being poor. [804] Selling and buying both are the

279 讃州. Sanuki 讃岐 province, present-day Kagawa 香川 prefecture.

principle of Heaven. [805] *The Rites of the Zhou Dynasty* contain [the principle of] selling and buying at their core. [806] [What I said about the warriors above] results from their ignorance that the method of the sages rests with selling and buying.

[807] What I heard from time to time about the principle of product distribution²⁸⁰ in Ôsaka sounded extremely interesting to me. [808] Wax and paper from Chôshû²⁸¹, paper from Geishû²⁸², tobacco and lead from Bungo²⁸³ all amount to a big cargo. [809] The coarse paper チリ紙 (*chiri kami*) from Geishû [for example] is distributed by five to seven sampan²⁸⁴ of a tea boat²⁸⁵ [after arrival in Ôsaka]. [810] This coarse paper is taken in by a certain merchant on the northern premises of Watanabe Bridge in Dôjima²⁸⁶. [811] This merchant owns a very large house with a frontage of fifteen to sixteen *ken*²⁸⁷. [812] He is a wholesale dealer of coarse paper only. [813] Product distribution demands a highly organized method. [814] I will embark on this in the course of time.

280 産物廻シ (*sanbutsu mawashi*). In order to increase their incomes authorities in many domains obliged the producers of special articles to sell their products to the regional lordship exclusively. Thus authorities were able to establish monopolies for marketing the special products of their territories in central markets like Ôsaka.

281 長州. Nagato 長門 province, corresponding to present-day Yamaguchi 山口 prefecture.

282 芸州. Aki 安芸 province, corresponding to present-day Hiroshima 広島 prefecture.

283 豊後. Present-day Ôita 大分 prefecture.

284 ハシケ船 (*hashike fune*). Light barge for transportation of passengers and commodities between bank and larger boats.

285 茶船 (*chabune*). Small riverboat used during the Edo Period for transportation of freights.

286 堂島. Place name in the northern parts of Ôsaka. Developing into a center for banking and rice trade since the beginning of the 18th century. Many regional lords maintained storehouses in Dôjima and sold the products of their territories there.

287 間. One *ken* is a little less than two yards long.

Abbreviations

<i>KD</i>	<i>Keiko dan</i>
<i>NKT</i>	<i>Nihon keizai taiten</i>
<i>NM</i>	<i>Nihon no meicho</i>
<i>NST</i>	<i>Nihon shisô taikai</i>
<i>OSZ</i>	<i>Ogyû Sorai zenshû</i>
<i>SBBY</i>	<i>Sibu beiyao</i>

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