

Encountering the World: Kawai Tsugunosuke's 1859 Journey to Yokohama and Nagasaki

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The samurai Kawai Tsugunosuke (1827–1868) is the subject of numerous Japanese-language monographs, the protagonist of historical fiction, the hero of TV dramas and documentaries, and the main attraction in a Nagaoka (Niigata prefecture) museum.¹ He is, however, virtu-

* I would like to thank Morgan Pitelka, Philip Brown, Gregory Smits, and the three anonymous readers for their encouragement, suggestions, and constructive criticism.

A note about dates: throughout the manuscript, dates are provided using the lunar calendar employed in the early modern period. To facilitate cross-referencing with the western calendar, the corresponding Gregorian dates are indicated in parenthesis.

¹ The foremost historian of Tsugunosuke is Andō Hideo, whose works include *Kawai Tsugunosuke* (Tokyo: Shin Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1973); *Chiritsubo: Kawai Tsugunosuke nikki* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1974); *Teihon Kawai Tsugunosuke* (Tokyo: Shirakawa Shoin, 1977); *Kawai Tsugunosuke shashinshū* (co-edited with Yokomura Katsuhiko; Tokyo: Shin Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1986); *Kawai Tsugunosuke no shōgai* (Tokyo: Shin Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1987); *Kawai Tsugunosuke no subete* (Tokyo: Shin Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1997). For historical fiction, see Shiba Ryōtarō's novel *Tōge* (The Pass, 1968). TV dramas and documentaries include *Saigo no samurai Kawai Tsugunosuke* (1999) and *Kawai Tsugunosuke: Kakenuketa sōryū* (2005). The museum dedicated to Tsugunosuke is the Kawai Tsugunosuke Kinenkan (<http://www.tsuginosuke.net/>).

ally unknown to English-language readership, making only sporadic appearances in texts devoted, mainly, to other *bakumatsu* subjects.² Placing Tsugunosuke center-stage in an examination of the debate over the “opening” of Japan in the mid-nineteenth century means attuning our ears to that minority of voices which advocated a conciliatory position in regards to the issue of internationalism; it also means opening our eyes to (yet more) evidence that mass hysteria and rampant xenophobia, however prominent, were not the sole and inevitable outcomes of Japan's encounter with the world. Tsugunosuke's near-total absence from English-language scholarship may indeed be attributed, partially, to the sheer number of sources dealing with the issue of Japan's position vis-à-vis foreign cultures: virtually everyone, from commoners to the educated elites, from government diplomats to base-born rural women, had an opinion and a suggestion.³ In this

² Harold Bolitho introduces Tsugunosuke in his “The Echigo War, 1868,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Autumn 1979): 259–277. The article, however, is mostly a piece on military history and Tsugunosuke appears only toward the end. Moreover, Bolitho does not delve into Tsugunosuke's earlier life experiences, focusing mostly on his actions in the year 1868, before and during the Echigo War.

³ For the sake of conciseness, I have chosen not to include direct quotations of the various xenophobic voices of mid-nineteenth century Japan, mostly because they are readily available and generally well-known. Some of the works I have in mind when I argue that virtually anyone had an opinion include the following: for the reaction of commoners, M. William Steele's “Goemon's New World View: Popular Representations of the Opening of Japan” in M. William Steele, *Alternative Narratives in Modern Japanese History* (London and NY: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp. 4–18. Studies in the intellectual history of late Tokugawa Japan are simply too numerous to cite—see for example Harry D. Harootunian, *Toward Restoration: The Growth of Political Consciousness in Tokugawa Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970) and *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in*

cacophonous chorus of cries for reform and calls for the expulsion of the barbarians, of grandiloquent declarations of intents and vitriolic verbal exchanges, Tsugunosuke's voice may have been lost, but it was certainly not muted at the time. A poised, genuinely inquisitive, and broadminded participant in the debate over foreign encroachment, Tsugunosuke used intellectual curiosity as an antidote against irrational fears of the unknown and, as a result, his reactions before the foreign are characterized by a refreshing degree of openness and fearlessness. Whereas many of his contemporaries demonized the foreign Other and prophesized catastrophic scenarios, crying foul and plotting heroic actions, Tsugunosuke rejected fanaticism in favor of pragmatism. His intellectual journey emerges more clearly from the journal of his 1859 trip as well as from the letters he exchanged with his family members while away from home. At a time when, by and large, that which came from outside of Japan's borders was exorcised by way of mockery, stigmatized by way of demonization, or exoticized by way of "Othering," Tsugunosuke came to embrace the foreign and to cherish the prospect of cross-cultural exchanges. He actively investigated, eagerly asked questions, meticulously took notes, thoroughly considered the implications of introducing foreign customs, and eventually outlined the benefits of Japan's encounter with the world. His writings tell, by example, the story of a small group of thinkers who epitomized

Japan's intellectual openness, ability for tolerance, and quest for intelligent compromise in light of the profound changes and great challenges of the mid-nineteenth century.

Tsugunosuke's Intellectual Journey

Kawai Tsugunosuke (rarely read Tsuginosuke) was born and raised in Nagaoka domain, Echigo province.⁴ With an income of 120 *koku*, the Kawai family was moderately wealthy and would have placed, as Ōta Osamu points out, "low among high-ranking samurai, and high among middle-ranking ones."⁵ Tsugunosuke's father, Kawai Daiemon, had served the domain and its rulers, the Makino family, in the Arms Office (*obuki yakusho*) and as Head of Accounting (*kanjō gashira*); not only a bureaucrat, he also practiced Zen and the tea ceremony, and enjoyed composing Chinese-style poems. He was, like many samurai of the Tokugawa period, "a man of letters more than a warrior."⁶

Tsugunosuke received his formal education in the domain's academy, the Sūtokukan, where he was first introduced to the Confucian classics; he was also trained in sword- and spear-fighting, archery, horse-riding, and administration.⁷ In 1852, at age twenty-six (by Japanese counting), he traveled to Edo to further his education. He began training under Saitō Setsudō (1796–1865), whose academy was renowned for its Neo-Confucian studies. However, Saitō's approach did not provide Tsugunosuke with the focus on

Tokugawa Nativism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). More recently, see Susan Burns, *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Early Modern Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003) and Mark McNally, *Proving the Way: Conflict and Practice in the History of Japanese Nativism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005). For diplomacy, see Michael R. Auslin, *Negotiating with Imperialism: The Unequal Treaties and the Culture of Japanese Diplomacy* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004). Finally, Anne Walthall describes the political activities of a peasant woman in *The Weak Body of a Useless Woman: Matsuo Taseko and the Meiji Restoration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁴ The yearly income of the domain was 74,000 *koku*, which placed Nagaoka among the top three wealthiest domains in the province. Harold Bolitho, "The Echigo War, 1868," p. 260.

⁵ Ōta Osamu, *Kawai Tsugunosuke to Meiji ishin* (Niigata-shi: Niigata Nippō Jigyōsha, 2003), p. 39.

⁶ Ishihara Kazuaki, *Ryōchi no hito Kawai Tsugunosuke: gi ni iki gi ni shinan* (Tokyo: Nihon Keizai Hyōronsha, 1993), p. 2.

⁷ Inagawa Akio, "Hokuetsu no fūunji Kawai Tsugunosuke," *Ryōzen rekishikan kiyō*, 11 (1998): 3–14. Dōmon Fuyūji, "Ore ga ore ga no kenka shitei," *Ushio* 4 (April 2005): 222–227. Ishihara Kazuaki, *Ryōchi no hito Kawai Tsugunosuke*, p. 13.

economics he desired, so he eventually dropped out.⁸ The following year he enrolled in the Edo academy of Koga Sakei (1816–1884), an authority in Chinese and Western studies (he would later become head of the “Institute for the Study of Barbarian Books,” or *bansho shirabesho*).⁹ At this stage he also became acquainted with Sakuma Shōzan (1811–1864), from whom he received training in western military science and the use of firearms.

During Tsugunosuke’s stint in Edo, Commodore Perry paid his first visit, arriving at Uraga on 1853/6/3 (July 8, 1853). On that occasion Tsugunosuke submitted a memorial on domain reform to his lord, Makino Tadamasu, who was also serving as assistant to the *rōjū*; impressed, Tadamasu offered him an administrative position in the domain. At that point Tsugunosuke left Edo and returned to Nagaoka, where for the next few years he served the domain in various capacities; he was first appointed inspector consultant (under the titles of *ometsuke* and *hyōjōhō shitagai yaku*) and later became *tozama ginmi*.¹⁰

In the winter of 1859 Tsugunosuke, by then aged thirty-three, returned to Edo and re-enrolled in Koga Sakei’s academy. He arrived in the city in early February and resumed his studies nine days later. However, in a letter to his parents dated 1859/4/24 (May 26, 1859), Tsugunosuke hinted at a growing dissatisfaction with the Edo intellectual circles: “This is a big city and schol-

ars abound. In truth, many of them could be my teachers, inexperienced as I am. But while many have made of learning their profession, those [devoted to] practical learning (*jitsugaku*), those who combine talent and virtue, are few and far between.”¹¹ In the same letter he expressed his intention to leave Edo and travel to Matsuyama domain, in faraway Bitchū province, in order to continue his studies under Yamada Hōkoku (1805–1877), a scholar whose work he “truly admired” (*jitsu ni kanshin tsukamatsuri sōrō*).¹² Hōkoku, a prominent Wang Yangming (Ōyōmeigaku) expert trained under Satō Issai (1772–1859), had opened his private school in 1838. Paramount to his teachings was an emphasis on the “investigation of things” (*kakubutsu*) as a prerequisite for the performance of meritorious deeds.¹³ According to Imaizumi Shōzō, Tsugunosuke was precisely attracted to Hōkoku’s reliance on practical deeds over intangible principles.¹⁴ And an eye for the practical and for the “investigation of things” is indeed what characterizes Tsugunosuke’s general approach to the issue of Japan’s dealings with the outside world.

⁸ Arai Kimio, *Nihon o tsukutta senkakushatachi: Ii Naosuke, Oguri Tadamasu, Kawai Tsugunosuke* (Tokyo: Sōgō Hōrei, 1994), p. 165.

⁹ Andō Hideo, “Kawai Tsugunosuke shōden,” in Andō Hideo, *Chiritsubo: Kawai Tsugunosuke nikki* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1974), p. 274.

¹⁰ The *hyōjōhō shitagai yaku* decided rewards and punishments and drafted new laws. In Nagaoka, civil cases were supervised by three authorities: the *daikan*, the district magistrate (*kōri bugyō*), and the city magistrate (*machi bugyō*). Cases of particular complexity were referred to the office of the *tozama ginmi*, which decided who to put in charge. See Andō Hideo, “Kawai Tsugunosuke shōden,” pp. 275–276, and Ōta Osamu, *Kawai Tsugunosuke to Meiji ishin*, p. 62.

¹¹ In Andō Tetsuya, *Ri ni ikita otoko Kawai Tsugunosuke* (Niigata-shi: Niigata Nippō Jigyōsha, 2000), p. 87. See also Andō Hideo, *Chiritsubo: Kawai Tsugunosuke nikki* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1974), p. 195.

¹² Andō Hideo, *Chiritsubo: Kawai Tsugunosuke nikki*, p. 196.

¹³ Takehiko Okada, “Neo-Confucian Thinkers in Nineteenth-Century Japan,” in Peter Nosco ed., *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 225.

¹⁴ Imaizumi Shōzō, introduction to “Chiritsubo,” in Miyamoto Tsuneichi, Tanigawa Ken’ichi, and Haraguchi Torao eds., *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shūsei*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: San’ichi Shobō, 1969), p. 398. A list of titles included at the end of Tsugunosuke’s travel journal *Chiritsubo*—books he read, acquired, or copied during his stint in Matsuyama—confirms Tsugunosuke’s interest for Ōyōmeigaku. The list includes such titles as *Yōmei bunroku* and *Ōyōmei zenshū*. Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” in Miyamoto Tsuneichi, Tanigawa Ken’ichi, and Haraguchi Torao eds., *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shūsei*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: San’ichi Shobō, 1969), p. 432.

On 1859/6/4 (July 3, 1859) Tsugunosuke dropped out of Koga's academy for the second time and embarked on his journey to Matsuyama. On his way out of Edo, Tsugunosuke visited the newly opened port of Yokohama. Then, during his seven-month stint in Matsuyama, which lasted from the summer of 1859 until the spring of 1860, Tsugunosuke traveled to Nagasaki, the "historic" international port of Tokugawa Japan (see Table 1 for a chronology of his 1859 journey). Within the span of a few months, therefore, Tsugunosuke had the opportunity to visit two of the most cosmopolitan cities in the country, Yokohama and Nagasaki. He was not the first traveler to do so, of course. Others before him had traveled to Nagasaki, leaving detailed accounts of their experiences: Mito official Nagakubo Sekisui visited the city in 1767 and wrote *Nagasaki kōeki nikki* (*Diary of Official Travels to Nagasaki*),¹⁵ Furukawa Koshōken (1726–1807) followed suit in 1783 with his *Saiyū zakki* (*Miscellaneous Records of Travels to the West*),¹⁶ in 1788 it was the turn of Shiba Kōkan, author of *Kōkan saiyū nikki*, or *Kōkan's Diary of a Journey to the West*. In 1802 the Nagoya merchant Hishiya Heishichi (n.d.) also recorded his firsthand experience of Nagasaki's foreignness in *Tsukushi kikō* (*Record of a Journey to Kyushu*),¹⁷ ten years later Nagasaki welcomed the itinerant nun Kikushani (1753–1826), author of *Taorigiku* (*Plucked Chrysanthemum*).¹⁸ What makes

Tsugunosuke's experience especially meaningful is not so much the destination as the timing of his journey, which took place the year after the ratification of the Ansei Treaties, signed in the summer and fall of 1858, and within weeks—days, in the case of Yokohama—of the official transformation of the two cities into open treaty ports (July 1859).¹⁹

To better understand the significance of Tsugunosuke's journey, it would be useful here to contextualize it against the frame of Japan's own dealings with foreign countries. Conrad Totman identifies three main phases in the late-Tokugawa debate on foreign policy.²⁰ The first one, spurred by the arrival of Commodore Perry in 1853 and lasting through the signing of the Ansei Treaties in 1858, was mostly defined by fear of the unknown and by "a pervasive sense of Japanese vulnerability." Accepting the foreign (meaning, in this case, the West) "would damage bakufu prestige, undermine public morale, and expose society to all sorts of dangers."²¹ Ten years later, following the attacks on Chōshū and Satsuma and the failed restoration attempt of 1863, the realization that the Tokugawa order could not be salvaged, much less restored, eventually set in; with that, a sense of acceptance and a quest for engagement ensued. This is the third and last phase (1864–1868) identified by Tot-

¹⁵ For a detailed analysis see Marcia Yonemoto, *Mapping Early Modern Japan: Space, Place, and Culture in the Tokugawa Period, 1603–1868* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 70–81 and Herbert E. Plutschow, *A Reader in Edo Period Travel* (Folkestone, Kent, UK: Global Oriental, 2006), pp. 46–53.

¹⁶ Yonemoto, *Mapping Early Modern Japan*, pp. 81–90; Plutschow, *A Reader in Edo Period Travel*, pp. 89–101; Harold Bolitho, "Travelers' Tales: Three Eighteenth-Century Travel Journals," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 50, n. 2 (December 1990): 485–504.

¹⁷ Plutschow, *A Reader in Edo Period Travel*, pp. 247–260.

¹⁸ Kikusha-ni, "Taorigiku," in Katsumine Shinpū ed., *Keishū haika zenshū* (Tokyo: Shūeikaku, 1922), pp. 315–433. Given the amount of

existing scholarship on most of these travelers, citing their texts here would be repetitive. More importantly, there would be no chronological consistency, as their journeys occurred well before the ratification of the Ansei Treaties.

¹⁹ Yokohama officially opened as a treaty port on 1859/6/5 (July 4, 1859). Michael R. Auslin follows the development of Yokohama from fishing village to foreign port in *Negotiating with Imperialism*, pp. 34–60. For a study of Nagasaki's evolution as a treaty port see Lane Earns, "The Foreign Settlement in Nagasaki, 1859–1869," *The Historian*, 57:4 (Summer 1995): 483–501.

²⁰ Conrad Totman, "From *Sakoku* to *Kaikoku*: The Transformation of Foreign-Policy Attitudes, 1853–1868," *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Spring 1980): 1–19.

²¹ Totman, "From *Sakoku* to *Kaikoku*", p. 8.

man.²² But between rejection and acceptance, between stage one and stage three, there was a critical and turbulent moment—phase two (1858–1864). This is when Tsugunosuke set out on his journey. When he traveled, in other words, Japan was at a “beginning, but only a beginning, of transvaluation,” moving away from fear and rejection toward what Totman has characterized as “grudging accommodation.”²³ In the long run, Japan accepted the West (Totman’s third stage), but the transition did not occur without conflict: loud criticism and acts of violence (including, more prominently, the assassinations of Ii Naosuke in 1860 and Henry Heusken in 1861) also characterized the second stage, which was marred by “frustration, bitterness, and distrust” that “repeatedly stopped short of open civil war.”²⁴

Table 1. Chronology of Tsugunosuke’s 1859 Journey

Lunar calendar	Gregorian calendar	Stages of Tsugunosuke’s Journey
Ansei 5	1858	
12/27	30 January 1859	Tsugunosuke leaves Nagaoka to resume his studies in Edo
Ansei 6	1859	
1/6	8 February	Tsugunosuke reaches Edo
1/15	17 Feb.	Tsugunosuke re-enters the academy of Koga Sakei
6/4	3 July	Tsugunosuke leaves Koga’s academy to study under Yamada Hōkoku
6/7	6 July	visit to Yokohama
6/9	8 July	Kamakura, Enoshima
6/11	10 July	Hakone
6/14	13 July	Mt. Kunō
6/25	24 July	Ise
7/4 to 7/9	2–7 August	Fushimi, Uji, Osaka
7/16	14 August	arrival to Matsuyama

²² Totman, “From *Sakoku* to *Kaikoku*,” p. 14

²³ Totman, “From *Sakoku* to *Kaikoku*,” p. 12.

²⁴ Totman, “From *Sakoku* to *Kaikoku*,” p. 12.

9/18	13 October	Tsugunosuke leaves Matsuyama to go to Kyushu
9/20	15 Oct.	Konpira (Shikoku)
9/24	19 Oct.	Hiroshima
9/30	25 Oct.	Tsugunosuke crosses into Kyushu
10/5	30 Oct.	arrival to Nagasaki
(10/10)	(4 November)	visit to the Chinese residence [date unclear]
10/15	9 Nov.	visit to Dutch factory
10/18	12 Nov.	departure from Nagasaki
10/22	16 Nov.	Kumamoto
10/27	21 Nov.	Shimonoseki
11/3	26 Nov..	return to Matsuyama
Man’en 1	1860	
3rd month	late March, early April	Completion of training and departure from Matsuyama

It is against this historical background that we must read Tsugunosuke’s travel journal, the unconventionally titled *Spittoon (Chiritsubo)*. As he informs us, the purpose of the diary was simply “to record the things I intend to tell my parents some day.”²⁵ Other than that, he never meant for his jottings to circulate and much less to be taken as a serious literary effort; hence, rather than using words such as *nikki* (diary), *kikō* (travel notes), or *zakki* (jottings, miscellaneous notes)—common choices for many a Tokugawa period travelogue title—he chose the self-deprecating image of the spittoon to emphasize the literary worthlessness of his random notes. What he dismissed as “foolish ramblings” (*guchigoto*) and “a mess” (*funran*)²⁶ are in fact valuable commentaries on the mid-nineteenth-century encounter of Japan with the West and with the foreign in general. Tsugunosuke’s positive engagement with the foreign is all the more valuable precisely because it occurred at a time of “frustration, bitterness, and distrust,” a time of insecurity and transition, a time when acceptance

²⁵ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 431.

²⁶ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” pp. 401 (entry for 6/14) and 431.

of the foreign began to seem inevitable but, to many, still felt like an unwelcome imposition.

Tsugunosuke in Yokohama

Yokohama had been a site of little to no political, strategic, or economic relevance until 1858, when the Ansei Treaties selected it as one of Japan's open ports (indeed, Yokohama was selected precisely because of its marginal value, in hopes of keeping westerners away from more strategically sensitive areas). Within a couple of years, a large and vibrant foreign community developed—as testified by the colorful “Yokohama prints” produced since the early 1860s by Utagawa Yoshitora (active 1850s–1880s), Sadahide (1807–ca. 1878), and Yoshikazu (active 1848–1863) among others.²⁷ Tsugunosuke, however, visited Yokohama on 1859/6/7 (July 6, 1859), only two days after the official opening of the port and before the area fully blossomed as a foreign entrepôt. Three fellow Nagaoka samurai, Hanawa Keinoshin, Mitsuma Ichinoshin, and Udonō Shunpū (Danjirō), saw him off there, and they all took advantage of this opportunity to “investigate the trade.”²⁸

En route to Yokohama two warships anchored at Shinagawa caught Tsugunosuke's attention and enticed his admiration. An avid collector of weapons, he was especially fascinated by foreign firearms, at least since his training under Sakuma Shōzan. Later in his life, as he prepared to face off enemy forces in the showdown between the Tokugawa and imperial loyalists, Tsugunosuke would return to Yokohama and trade with a foreign dealer in order to acquire hundreds of Minie rifles for his domain, as well as two of the only three Gatling guns existing in Japan at the time.²⁹ However, nine years earlier,

as he set out to explore the still-developing port of Yokohama, Tsugunosuke could not have anticipated any of this. On that quiet day in 1859 the war machines he saw were silent, and they were beautiful: “There were two foreign ships in Shinagawa. Each one was [as big] as a castle. One had nine cannons; it was a thing of beauty.”

In Yokohama Tsugunosuke took notice of the developing commercial area: “Various shops in newly constructed buildings are spread out [all over the place]. Among them, the lacquerware stores caught my eye.” At the time of his visit, however, Tsugunosuke could not really “investigate the trade,” for there was not much trade to speak of. He wrote, “The construction [of the new buildings] has not yet been completed and the value of silver currency has yet to be determined, therefore trade is not very active.” He predicted, however, that “once everything is completed, no doubt it will be splendid.”³⁰

His description of Yokohama is brief not only because the port had little to showcase only two days after its official opening, but also because it was distinctive of Tsugunosuke to write in an unembellished prose.³¹ He does occasionally lace his descriptions with on-the-side comments and personal impressions, but for the most part he chronicles his experiences as a dispassionate and relatively unbiased observer. In Yokohama (as in Nagasaki) he did not produce cartoon-like vignettes of foreigners the way another samurai, Sakai Hanshirō from Wakayama domain (Kii province), would do one year later. While visiting the port in 1860, Hanshirō pointed out that the foreigners he encountered “truly [looked] as they do in the illustrations” (*makoto ezu no tōri nite sōrō*) and that “the expression in their eyes resembled that of salted fish” (*meiro sakana no*

²⁷ Ann Yonemura, *Yokohama: Prints from Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Washington, D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 1990).

²⁸ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 399.

²⁹ Andō Hideo, “Kawai Tsugunosuke: sono hito to kiseki,” in Andō Hideo ed., *Kawai Tsugunosuke no subete* (Tokyo: Shin Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1997), p. 25. Tokoro Sōkichi, “Nagaoka-han no gunsei to sōbi,” in Andō Hideo ed., *Kawai Tsugunosuke no subete*, pp. 107–108. Andō Hideo, “Gattoringu kikanhō—Nagaoka

han no shinheiki,” in Andō Hideo ed., *Kawai Tsugunosuke no subete*, p. 113. The third Gatling gun ended up in Tosa.

³⁰ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 399.

³¹ Ōta Osamu also emphasizes how *Chiritsubo* “is a record (*kiroku*) more than a travel diary, what we may call reportage (*ruporutaaju*), unique for its time.” Ōta Osamu, *Kawai Tsugunosuke to Meiji ishin*, p. 49.

shiomono no me no gotoshi).³² No such appeal to visual metaphors embellishes Tsugunosuke's account. His only observation upon seeing a foreign woman was that "the color of her eyes was different, but overall she was beautiful" (*bijin nari*).³³ Later, while visiting the Dutch compound in Nagasaki, Tsugunosuke would also strip his characterization of a male member of the foreign entourage of any flair, simply describing him as "a good looking young man" (*binan [no] ko nari*).³⁴ Mocking the foreign Other, and wasting words doing so, did not interest him. He expressed his opinions and hinted at likes and dislikes, for sure, but he did not let flamboyant rhetoric get in the way of his down-to-earth investigation. What piqued Tsugunosuke's curiosity was the foreign in its concrete manifestations, namely technology (the gunboats in Shinagawa) and business (the trade in Yokohama)—the practical implications of Japan's encounter with the world.

Tsugunosuke on the Road

After wrapping up his visit to Yokohama, Tsugunosuke spent the night at the Tamagawaya in Kanagawa. To reach Matsuyama he first traveled along the Tōkaidō highway, which ran parallel to the Pacific Ocean coast (see Map 1). In the summer, the main artery of Japan was heavily traveled because a number of domain lords were on their way to Edo in compliance with the requirements of the alternate attendance system.³⁵ Tsugunosuke had to put up with crowded roads, jammed river crossings, and chaotic inns.

He visited Kanazawa (Musashi province), Kamakura and Enoshima (Sagami), and then crossed Hakone Pass into Mishima. He was drawn to sites of historical interest along the way,

especially those linked to samurai history. In Kamakura he took time to visit the city's "spectacular historic ruins, many of which made quite an impression."³⁶ A few days later, on 6/14 (July 13), he climbed Mt. Kunō, where shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616) was first interred before being transferred to Nikkō.



Map 1: Tsugunosuke's 1859 Journey³⁷

On 6/16 (July 15) he crossed Sayo no Nakayama, a famous site of poetic renown. The majority of Tokugawa period travelers found it appropriate, upon passing through Sayo no Nakayama, to recall the verses that twelfth-century poet Saigyō had composed on location.³⁸ Not Tsugunosuke, the pragmatist. He simply acknowledged that "these sites are [featured] in the maps of famous places (*meishozu*), so I do not have to describe them."³⁹ Past Nagoya he made a brief detour to Matsusaka, which impressed him for its wealth and for being the native home of the Mitsui family of merchants; he then reached Ise, where he visited the Outer and Inner Shrines, Ainoyama, Futaminoura, and the lively quarter of Furuichi before reconnecting to the Tōkaidō. Early in the seventh month he was in Kyoto, Uji, and Fushimi, and from there went on to Osaka. After a visit to Arima hot springs, he stopped at

³² In Aoki Naomi, *Kakyū bushi no shoku nikki: Bakumatsu tanshin funin* (Tokyo: NHK Shuppan, 2005), p. 160.

³³ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 399.

³⁴ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 418 (entry for 10/15).

³⁵ Tsugunosuke comments on the heavy traffic of daimyo at various points: in his entry for 6/27 (p. 403), for example, and then again on 10/22 (p. 426), though this last entry does not refer to the Tōkaidō highway specifically.

³⁶ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 399 (entry for 6/9).

³⁷ Adapted from Andō Hideo and Yokomura Katsuhiko, eds., *Kawai Tsugunosuke shashinshū* (Tokyo: Shin Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1986), frontispiece.

³⁸ See *Shinkokinshū*, poem n. 987.

³⁹ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 402 (entry for 6/16).

the graves of warriors Taira no Kiyomori, Taira no Atsumori, and Taira no Tadanori, at Suma Temple, Ichinotani, and Akashi. He finally reached Matsuyama on 7/16 (August 14) and began his training under Yamada Hōkoku.

It is clear from his account that Tsugunosuke, in line with his predilection for the “investigation of things,” was a curious observer of people and places. He loved to sightsee, he loved to sample local delicacies, and he was intrigued by the encounters he made while on the road. Places of poetic beauty (such as Mount Fuji) captured his attention as much as sites of lesser repute (the red-light district of Hakata, to name one). He would occasionally indulge in poetry-writing; in Harima, for example, he jotted down verses on the pain of separation that comes with long-distance travel.⁴⁰ His interludes with poetry, however, are few and far between. It is a keen eye for detail and a penchant for observation that define his account. There is a camera-like quality to many of his descriptions; the snapshots he captured and the conversations he recorded enable us to join him along the same roads he traveled. We stare with him at the main hall of Mishima jinja and inspect the damage caused by an earthquake, we eavesdrop on the talks of pack-horse drivers, we smell the intense scent of sandalwood, and we partake of his meals, from the delicacies he enjoyed in Enoshima to the “absolutely awful” concoctions he was served in Konpira.⁴¹ Tsugunosuke, ever the avid observer, collected notes on the good, the bad, and the ugly, not failing to report on the dire poverty of Okayama farmers (“That’s because the [local] lord and his retainers are selfish and bad”) and on the

cholera epidemic that had been afflicting Japan since the previous year.⁴² A proclivity for “no-fuss” observation, in other words, characterized Tsugunosuke’s way of engaging with people and places. This was true for people and places of Japan as much as for the foreign. Tsugunosuke’s eyes and ears were as open as his mind.

Tsugunosuke in Nagasaki

In the fall of 1859, while Tsugunosuke was still in residence in Matsuyama, Yamada Hōkoku was temporarily summoned to Edo by order of his domain lord.⁴³ During his absence, Tsugunosuke embarked on a lengthy trip that included visits to Shikoku and Kyushu (Table 1). Nagasaki, where he spent two weeks,⁴⁴ features prominently in his account. Why did Tsugunosuke decide to travel to Kyushu? He does not tell us exactly, but Ōta Osamu hints at three likely reasons. First, being the pragmatist that he was, Tsugunosuke must have seen Hōkoku’s temporary absence as an opportunity—a journey of discovery was certainly more tantalizing to him than sitting idly in Matsuyama while waiting for his tutor’s return. Second, as a samurai, an intellectual, and an administrator, Tsugunosuke may have wanted to investigate the southwestern domains, simmering as they were in *sonnō jōi* ideology. And last but not least, Tsugunosuke was interested in international trade, as his brief excursion through the Yokohama settlement had already demonstrated. It was only natural for him to wish to see firsthand the historic center of Ja-

⁴⁰ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 405 (entry for 7/13).

<i>Furusato no</i>	Harima mountains.
<i>koshiji wa tōshi</i>	Far is my home
<i>Harimayama</i>	on the road to the north,
<i>sumeru tsuki koso</i>	and yet the bright moon
<i>kawarazarikeri</i>	remains the same.

Koshiji is an old name for the Hokurikudō.

⁴¹ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” pp. 400 (entries for 6/11 and 6/12), 418 (n.d.), and 417. For Enoshima, see pp. 399 (entry for 6/9); for the “absolutely awful meals” (*makanai wa itatte warushiki*) at Konpira, 411 (entry for 6/20).

⁴² Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 406 (entry for 7/15).

⁴³ In the second month (March) of 1859, as part of the Ansei purges, Ii Naosuke had stripped Itakura Katsukiyo, the lord of Matsuyama domain, of his title of Temple and Shrine Magistrate (*jisha bugyō*). Andō Tetsuya suggests that Katsukiyo invited Hōkoku to Edo to discuss the situation and to have him report on the reactions to this incident in the domain. Andō Tetsuya, *Ri ni ikita otoko Kawai Tsugunosuke*, pp. 115–116.

⁴⁴ From 10/5 to 10/18, or October 30 to November 12.

pan's exchanges with the world.⁴⁵ I would add that, to a man of culture and erudition like Tsugunosuke, the journey to Nagasaki was a natural extension of his trip to Matsuyama, another chapter in his intellectual growth. He went to Nagasaki specifically to examine the foreign and learn from it, to the point that he dismissed the Dutch botanical garden as a place "with nothing special to see" (*kakubetsu ni miru shina mo nashi*) because it only featured Japanese (i.e. commonplace, ordinary) plants.⁴⁶

A traveler to nineteenth-century Nagasaki would not have had to look too hard before he or she came across something that spoke, in one way or the other, of the foreign: foreign vessels were anchored in the bay, and a few unmistakably foreign-looking buildings or spaces otherwise associated with foreignness gave an "international" flavor to the cityscape. These included four Chinese temples (erected in the seventeenth century), the *Tōjin yashiki* (Chinese residence, built in 1689),⁴⁷ and the artificial island of Dejima, home of the Dutch. By the time Tsugunosuke visited in 1859, a foreign settlement was also developing by the shore in Ōura; inhabited, as he points out, by "westerners" (*yōjin*), it was also a prime spot to see "blacks" (*kokujin*) and Indians (*indojin*). In the fall of 1859 French and British gunboats were also present in the bay, and there was even a British church (or, as Tsugunosuke calls it, a British "temple," *Igirisu tera*) atop a nearby hill.⁴⁸ Moreover, as Tsugunosuke adds, "Chinese and westerners walk[ed] about in the city" and there were "countless shops selling Chinese goods and things western."⁴⁹ The city was so

famous for its cosmopolitan ambience that it was common practice among visitors to collect, as souvenirs, woodblock prints depicting the Chinese and Dutch residents or their ships. Other visitors bought maps of the city which, not unlike the "celebrity homes" maps sold in Hollywood today, pinpointed accurately the location of the Chinese residence, of the island of Dejima, and of Nagasaki's four Chinese temples.⁵⁰

Of course, most Japanese visitors to Nagasaki were not allowed to enter the foreign compounds, and could only observe them from the outside. At the same time, the Dutch and Chinese residences did not exist and operate in a complete social vacuum, and admission, while restricted, was in fact possible, particularly through personal connections and with the mediation of the interpreters.⁵¹ It was precisely through the intervention of a well-connected friend, Akizuki Teijirō, and with the help of an interpreter that Tsugunosuke was able to enter parts of the Dutch factory (which he refers to as Rankan).⁵² Akizuki and a *Kara tsūshi*, or Chinese interpreter, also facilitated Tsugunosuke's visit to the Chinese residence (which he calls Tōkan), even though, as Tsugunosuke admitted, "it is not an easy place to go see" for there were numerous checkpoints (*bansho*) to clear before gaining access.⁵³

As soon as he arrived to Nagasaki, Tsugunosuke began investigating the foreign. He immediately noticed a difference in the manner in

⁴⁵ Ōta Osamu, *Kawai Tsugunosuke to Meiji ishin*, p. 51.

⁴⁶ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 418.

⁴⁷ Marius Jansen, *China in the Tokugawa World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 10.

⁴⁸ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," pp. 420 and 419. He adds that he visited Ōura several times; he also went all the way up the hill to visit the church, but then decided not to enter "out of restraint."

⁴⁹ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," pp. 417 and 420.

⁵⁰ Hosono Masanobu, *Nagasaki Prints and Early Copperplates*, trans. Lloyd R. Craighill (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1978), p. 35.

⁵¹ See Timon Screech, *The Lens Within the Heart: The Western Scientific Gaze and Popular Imagery in Later Edo Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002), p. 17. On the importance of interpreters as intermediaries see p. 15.

⁵² Tsugunosuke first met Akizuki, a samurai from Aizu domain, in Matsuyama (7/28). On 8/1 Akizuki had left Matsuyama, but the two met again in Nagasaki, at the Yamanoshitaya, where they both lodged. Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," pp. 416 and 418 (entry for 10/15).

⁵³ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 417.

which Chinese and western residents were seen. He wrote, “The Chinese are gentle-mannered (*odayaka*), and for this reason the locals love them; they call them *a-cha-san*. They seem, [however] to dislike the westerners. Aside from appearance, westerners and Chinese differ profoundly in the way they behave.”⁵⁴ The unpleasant character of the western guests transpired from their unruly (*kikai*, “outrageous”) behavior: they underpaid for sake, broke bottles, instigated fights, tottered while intoxicated, and bothered the women on the streets. Far from being a setback, however, Nagasaki’s peculiar street scene could not but stimulate Tsugunosuke’s curiosity. And so, while everyone else steered clear of an especially obnoxious drunken foreigner, Tsugunosuke, ever the inquisitive intellect, followed him around “just to observe his state” (*tada sono yōsu o miru tame*).⁵⁵

The lively street scene of Nagasaki was as noteworthy to Tsugunosuke as the much quieter space of the Chinese residence. In their own ways, they were both subjects of observation and occasions to learn. During his visit to the *Tōjin yashiki* Tsugunosuke was accompanied by the interpreter Ishizaki, by Akizuki Teijirō, and by a certain Toyota.⁵⁶

Once inside the residence, the “otherness” of China did not wait long to manifest itself. As he made his way inside, Tsugunosuke noticed pork meat hung to dry (“They call it *rankan*,” he wrote).⁵⁷ While fish was a traditional staple of the Japanese diet, red meat and the meat of four-legged animals were rarely eaten before the introduction of beef delicacies in the Meiji period (1868–1912).⁵⁸ The Chinese diet, on the other hand, included a variety of meat dishes. Such

peculiar difference between Chinese and Japanese eating habits was not lost on the authors and publishers of travel manuals: an 1820 guide to Nagasaki’s famous places, for example, included images of Chinese banquets and even of pigs roaming freely inside the Chinese residence.⁵⁹ By the same token, a humorous poem (*senryū*) proclaimed:

<i>Utsukushii</i>	With such a lovely face
<i>kao de Yōkihi</i>	Yang Guifei
<i>buta o kui</i>	gobbles down that pork. ⁶⁰

By playing on the juxtaposition of two contrasting images, the beautiful Tang dynasty concubine Yang Guifei and a sloppy pork eater, the *senryū* underscored, humorously, the grotesque bizarreness of meat-eaters, in this case the Chinese. While, as Tsukamoto Manabu points out, in certain regions the stigma against meat-eating was not as strong as in others, and some religious complexes showed various degrees of leniency toward meat-eating and the slaughtering of animals,⁶¹ it is undeniable that, in the eyes of most, the consumption of meat dishes equaled barbarism.⁶² One Japanese castaway who witnessed the slaughtering of a cow in Hawai’i in 1838, for example, called the process “a wretched, brutal method.”⁶³

⁵⁴ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 417.

⁵⁵ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 417.

⁵⁶ Toyota had been a fellow student at the Koga academy, and now worked for the government (*kōgi [no] hito nari*). Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 419.

⁵⁷ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 417.

⁵⁸ For more on the consumption of meat in the Tokugawa period see Susan B. Hanley, *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan: The Hidden Legacy of Material Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 65–67.

⁵⁹ “Nagasaki meishō zue,” in Asakura Haruhiko and Ikeda Yasaburō eds., *Nihon meisho fūzoku zue*, vol. 15, *Kyūshū no maki* (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1983), pp. 115–116.

⁶⁰ In Tsukamoto Manabu, *Kinsei saikō: chihō no shiten kara* (Tokyo: Nihon Editaa Skūru Shuppanbu, 1986), p. 106.

⁶¹ Tsukamoto cites the example of Tokugawa Ieyasu, who was allegedly bewildered upon finding out that, following the birth of his son, the head of a deer had been offered before the gods at Suwa shrine in Shinano, whereas no such ritual would have been allowed at Asama/Sengen shrine in Sunpu. Ieyasu even contacted a resident of the shrine in Sunpu to ask whether such offering was acceptable. Tsukamoto, pp. 110–111.

⁶² Tsukamoto, pp. 106–117.

⁶³ Tsukamoto, pp. 108 and 113.

Tsugunosuke and his companions were given a tour of the facility, after which they went back to “the small room” and were served a variety of foods. The banquet featured pork stew (*inoko no kakuni*), the aforementioned *rankan*, and other dishes the names of which Tsugunosuke failed to memorize. Unlike the merchant Hishiya Heishichi, who had traveled to Nagasaki in 1802 and had remarked that the closer he came to his destination, the more bizarre the food appeared due to the “proximity to other countries,”⁶⁴ Tsugunosuke did not exoticize the gastronomic scene of the city port. Of the foods he was served, he studied the ingredients, the shape, the taste, and left it at that.⁶⁵ In fact, at times he was positively unimpressed: “the Chinese sake,” he wrote, “was a bit vinegary; I did not think it was all that good” (later he would make the same comment about the wine, *budōshu*, he was offered while visiting the Dutch factory); Chinese tea also lost out to Japanese tea on grounds of being “plain” (*tanpaku naru*).⁶⁶ In light of the general propensity to exoticize, dismiss as barbaric, and/or mock the eating habits of the Chinese (and of the Dutch, of course), Tsugunosuke’s description of the culinary scene within the Chinese residence is refreshingly non-judgmental, almost “scientific” in its matter-of-factness.

On the day he visited the Chinese compound, Tsugunosuke was offered not only food, but also opium. Once again, his intellectual curiosity kicked in. What interested him, more than trying it, was observing the ways in which the paste

was prepared and smoked: “place the paste at the end of a stick, then temper it on the flame of an oil lamp, place on a pipe head, and inhale; . . . lay down on [your] side, rest [your head] on a pillow, and inhale.” He characterized its scent as “fragrant” (*kōbashiku, yoi nioi*).⁶⁷ As with Chinese food, it is once again the absence of judgment that strikes us as remarkable. Although Tsugunosuke was keenly aware of the role opium had played in the humiliation of China at the hands of the British, he did not make any mention of it.⁶⁸ What troubled him, if anything, was not so much the historical role of opium, as the cost of the addiction. Upon hearing that some people could smoke up to twenty, thirty *monme* worth of opium a day, Tsugunosuke commented that, for that kind of money, one could hire a group of entertainers instead.⁶⁹

Tsugunosuke missed out on the opportunity to bring out the connection between opium and defeat on yet another occasion, during a visit to the house of Ishizaki, the interpreter. There, Tsugunosuke and Akizuki enjoyed not only a magnificent view of Nagasaki from atop a hill but also a seemingly endless series of Chinese paintings, scrolls, books, and inscriptions. Ishizaki’s collection was so extensive that Tsugunosuke looked at paintings and scrolls “from the fourth hour of the morning until sunset, and I did not [even] see all of them.”⁷⁰ Among the art pieces were works by Emperor Qianlong (1711–1799) and by Lin Zexu (Commissioner Lin, 1785–1850). Indeed, of all the works he was shown that day, Tsugunosuke admitted “the one I really coveted was the inscription by Emperor Qianlong. I also liked the Lin Zexu.”⁷¹ Emperor Qianlong had met, in 1792, with British envoy

⁶⁴ *Nagasaki ni chikazukitareba ryōri no sama mo ikoku ni chikashi ya to iyō naru koto*. Hishiya Heishichi, “Tsukushi kikō,” in Haraguchi Torao, Takeuchi Toshimi, and Miyamoto Tsuneichi eds., *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryō shūsei*, vol. 20 (Tokyo: San’ichi Shobō, 1972), p. 204.

⁶⁵ Of some Chinese cakes he wrote, “they were sweet. Some looked like rice-cake cubes, others—the name escapes me—appeared to be a mixture of *gyūhi* and sesame.” Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 418. *Gyūhi* is made by mixing steamed rice flour, white sugar, and rice syrup.

⁶⁶ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” pp. 417 and 418.

⁶⁷ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 417.

⁶⁸ We know he was familiar with the Opium War because elsewhere in the diary he describes a Chinese guest discussing “the war” in Canton. See below.

⁶⁹ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 417.

⁷⁰ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 421.

⁷¹ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 421. Tsugunosuke also mentions works by Emperor Song Huizong (1082–1135), seventh-century poet Chen Zieng, and painter Wen Zhengming (1470–1559).

Lord Macartney, while Commissioner Lin was the official who had confiscated and destroyed the supplies of British opium in 1839, setting in motion the events that led to the Opium War (1839–1842) and the defeat of China. Despite their obvious connections to China's encounter with the West, neither one prompted Tsugunosuke to discuss such chapters of Chinese history. It was another guest, a Cantonese visitor, who brought up the issue more or less directly when he lamented, "There aren't any beautiful artifacts like these [paintings and inscriptions] in Canton these days. During the war, everyone took them away. [...] Some ended up as far away as Nanking."⁷² In the eyes of Tsugunosuke, however, Qianlong and Commissioner Lin failed to transmit images of conflict or defeat—they were, if anything, admirable examples of China's artistic achievements.

This reluctance to cry foul, to dwell on the role of opium as a metaphor for western aggression and imperialism, is especially indicative of Tsugunosuke's composure before the foreign. By 1859 most Japanese intellectuals would have agreed that China had lost its face following the humiliation of the Opium War. Knowledge of the war was by no means the preserve of government officials: accounts, some more fictitious than others, were printed from woodblocks and circulated widely despite the government's ban on literature that dealt with recent or contemporary events. Works in the league of Mineta Fūkō's *Kaigai shinwa* (1849) stigmatized opium as the foremost of all evils associated with foreign (western) aggression.⁷³ Moreover, in 1858, in the attempt to secure the ratification of the Ansei Treaties, Consul Townsend Harris had specifically lectured the *rōjū* Hotta Masayoshi on the risks associated with the opium trade; the transcripts of his speech had eventually reached the hands of many a daimyo.⁷⁴ From the high spheres of power down to the buzz on the street, then, opium conveyed images of humiliation and

loss at the hands of the West. While Tsugunosuke did acknowledge some of opium's negative aspects, calling the paste strong and toxic, he did so briefly and without hinting at its larger social, political, and cultural implications. Such oversight could hardly be blamed on ignorance; likely, it was a manifestation of his pragmatic approach to the foreign and of his penchant for observation.⁷⁵ While to most opium reeked of aggression and defeat, Tsugunosuke stripped it of its connotations and simply studied it as he would have any other topic.

Whereas detached observation was the name of the game when it came to China, Tsugunosuke's initial reaction before the foreign objects of Dejima was one of undeniable surprise and manifest awe. He visited the Dutch factory on 10/15 (November 9) in the company of Ishizaki, Akizuki, a certain Muta, and a Dutch interpreter. Tsugunosuke's familiarity with Chinese culture may have prepared him for the relative otherness of the *Tōjin yashiki*. He was, however, slightly less prepared for the absolute foreignness of the Dutch residence, a place that, as he admitted, felt like "a different world" (*betsu [no] sekai*) and where "there were many objects I had never seen before."⁷⁶

In Tsugunosuke's report of the visit to the Dutch residence, glass (*biidoro*, from the Portuguese *vidro*) plays the same role that pork had played in the case of the Chinese compound: it marks the transition into a foreign space. Tsugunosuke's gaze zoomed in on bottles and flasks, glass pictures, windows that looked like "glass sliding doors" (*biidoro shōji*), and mirrors. He noticed how the mirrors placed around a certain room created an optical illusion whereby "one room looked like many." Still, he was more intrigued than confused: "One does not see a place like this even in paintings," he remarked. Further inspection of three or four other rooms fostered his admiration: "They were all beauti-

⁷² Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p.421.

⁷³ Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, "Opium, Expulsion, Sovereignty: China's Lessons for Bakumatsu Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Spring 1992): 1–25.

⁷⁴ Wakabayashi, p. 18.

⁷⁵ As Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi observes, "Bakumatsu anti-foreignism was not monolithic in nature; a particular thinker's position on the opium issue revealed the precise character of his anti-foreign thought." Wakabayashi, p. 24.

⁷⁶ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 418 (entry for 10/15).

ful” (*mina kirei nari*).⁷⁷

Tsugunosuke’s fascination with Dutch glass objects is indicative of his curious nature and of his pragmatism. As a case study, glass is featured prominently in scholarship that looks at the place of material culture in the encounter between Japan and the West. Martha Chaiklin, for example, has shown how Dutch bottles, thermometers, and mirrors were popular “exotica” for many Tokugawa period Japanese; she also uses glass as an example of successful technological cross-fertilization, arguing that awareness of Dutch techniques inspired the Japanese to better their own glassmaking methods.⁷⁸ Timon Screech adds that glass (in the form of mirrors, lenses, seeing-glasses, microscopes, bottles, and windows) “was integral to the notion of seeing in the manner of *Ran*” and played a relevant role in sustaining “scientific” approaches to the study of the West, as well as a general curiosity for things Dutch (“Hollandomania,” or *Ranpeki*).⁷⁹ It is not surprising, then, that Tsugunosuke would also focus on this prominent symbol of western technology. Without exoticizing it, however, he simply investigated it in an effort to quench his thirst for knowledge. In a business-like manner he observed that, in Dejima, “objects like bottles are more refined (*jōhin*) than the ones that make their way to Japan. [...] In each country the objects [people] use for themselves are more pleasant than the ones they send out to other countries.”⁸⁰

While high-quality glass items may have not made their way to the Japanese markets, Tsugunosuke did in fact observe some of the potential results and practical, powerful manifestations of cross-cultural exchanges and internationalism. This occurred on two different occasions: his inspection of the *Kankōmaru* and his evening with the Cantonese Feng Jingru (Feng

Shuang). The *Kankōmaru* was the bakufu’s first steamboat; a gift the Dutch had presented the Tokugawa in 1854. While Tsugunosuke was in Nagasaki, the *Kankōmaru* made a brief appearance, carrying on board Naval Minister (*funa taishō*) Yatabori Kō.⁸¹ Tsugunosuke had seen Perry’s steamboats from afar six years prior in Uruga, and from afar he had admired the two warships anchored off the coast of Shinagawa at the onset of his 1859 trip; this time, however, he was invited on board.⁸² As one would expect, he inspected the weaponry (cannons, gunpowder storage, pistols), the various components of the ship (mast, padding wheel, ropes, ladders, etcetera), as well as the clocks and the pumps used to draw water from the ocean and put out fires. Many of the instruments, he acknowledged, were the same as the ones he had seen at the Dutch factory, but there were also things he could not make out (*wakari mo senu*), especially because some of the tools on board were “not at all like the ones one sees in the illustrations of the [encyclopedia] *World Geography with Maps*.”⁸³ The tour of the *Kankōmaru* is another example of Tsugunosuke’s interest in foreign technology and in the practical advantages of accepting the West. One may even argue that, to a pragmatist like Tsugunosuke, the realization that the images he had seen in the illustrated encyclopedia *World Geography with Maps* were inaccurate may have

⁸¹ Also present in Nagasaki bay at the time was the much more famous *Kanrinmaru*, which a few months later, in the first month of 1860, would depart from Shinagawa and carry the members of the bakufu’s first embassy to the United States.

⁸² The invitation came as a result of Akizuki’s personal connection to Yatabori Kō.

⁸³ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 420. *World Geography with Maps* (Jp: *Kaikoku zushi*; Ch.: *Haiguo tuzhi*) was a sixty-volume collection by Chinese author Wei Yuan (1794–1857). Printed in China in the mid-nineteenth century as a translation of Hugh Murray’s *Encyclopedia of Geography* (1834), it was brought to Japan in 1854 and was widely read by anyone who had an interest in the West. See Masao Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them: The First Japanese Embassy to the United States (1860)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 80.

⁷⁷ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 418.

⁷⁸ Martha Chaiklin, *Cultural Commerce and Dutch Commercial Culture: The Influence of European Material Culture on Japan, 1700–1850* (Leiden: CNWS, 2003), Ch. 7.

⁷⁹ Screech, *The Lens Within the Heart*, pp. 133 and 10.

⁸⁰ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 418 (10/15).

reinforced the notion that there is no substitute for direct experience.

If the Kankōmaru symbolized the successful encounter of Japan with the world from a *technological* standpoint, the Cantonese guest Feng Shuang epitomized the *cultural* benefits of internationalism. Tsugunosuke was especially impressed by the man's determination to learn Japanese customs ("he wants to practice the ways of Japan")—squatting Japanese-style, serving sake according to Japanese etiquette, and even making a sincere effort to learn the language.⁸⁴ Seamlessly transitioning from Chinese to Japanese customs, and yet never losing his refinement and elegance, Feng Shuang prompted Tsugunosuke to acknowledge that "if one meets with all other countries, one's spirit will spontaneously expand."⁸⁵ The journey to Nagasaki, in short, encouraged Tsugunosuke's already strong interest for the world beyond Japan. And while the practical aspects of cross-cultural encounters—trade and technology—remained the center of his attention, people like Feng Shuang offered him real-life examples of the more spiritual benefits of opening up to different cultures.

Tsugunosuke and the world beyond Japan

The 1859 encounter with the foreign, as we know, was not Tsugunosuke's first. The arrival of Commodore Perry's black ships at Uraga in 1853 had already exposed him to the West and had arguably piqued his interest in the debate over foreign encroachment. Even then Tsugunosuke had reacted with a remarkable degree of aplomb. The memorial he wrote for his domain lord at that time drew on Chinese historical precedent to examine Japan's current situation. When the Song dynasty was attacked by the Jurchens, General Li Zhongding had addressed Emperor Huizong (1082–1135) encouraging him to do away with his life of luxury, cut on all extravagances, focus on politics, and replenish the treasury, for this was the only way to fight back the invader. Tsugunosuke believed that Li's words rang true for Japan's case as well; it was his position that each domain should strengthen its finances and its armies in order to be able to

measure up to the foreigners.⁸⁶ This process of self-strengthening, however, was not possible without an open mind. The 1859 trip to Yokohama and Nagasaki confirmed what Tsugunosuke already suspected: that knowledge was the antidote against fear. First-hand interaction with members of the foreign community arguably inspired him to fully articulate his budding ideas about the advantages of accepting other cultures and enabled him to further expand his horizons.⁸⁷

Tsugunosuke's openness toward the world made him, and those who shared his beliefs, likely targets in the increasingly violent clashes between opposing factions. In the early 1860s the supporters of the "revere the Emperor, expel the barbarians" (*sonnō jōi*) movement carried out attacks not only against foreigners but also against those whom they believed had not done enough to block the encroachment of the West. In 1860 a group of loyalists assassinated Prime Minister Ii Naosuke (1815–1860), the architect of the 1858 treaties. On 1864/7/11 (August 12, 1864), in Kyoto, *sonnō jōi* activists murdered Tsugunosuke's former tutor, Sakuma Shōzan. In a letter to his brother-in-law written on 1864/9/4 (October 4, 1864), two months after the death of Shōzan and five years after his Nagasaki trip, Tsugunosuke sternly criticized blind and senseless xenophobia. He wrote:

[The rumors] that these *rōnin* who call for the expulsion of the barbarians and revering the emperor (*jōi sonnō*) circulate are the utmost absurdities (*ugu*). [...] And what kind of notion is that of "expelling the barbari-

⁸⁶ Ishihara Kazuaki, *Ryōchi no hito Kawai Tsugunosuke*, pp. 56–58. In this respect he may also have been influenced by the pragmatic approach of Sakuma Shōzan, who tried to find a compromise between "eastern ethics and western science."

⁸⁷ Andō Hideo, "Kawai Tsugunosuke: sono hito to kiseki," p. 18. A list of texts Tsugunosuke either read or acquired after the Nagasaki trip indeed reveals a growing interest for the outside world, for it includes the "America" section of *World Geography with Maps*. Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 432.

⁸⁴ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 422.

⁸⁵ Kawai Tsugunosuke, "Chiritsubo," p. 422.

ans”? If, when the western ships arrive, we raise our discipline, strengthen the army, and enrich the country, there is no reason to be afraid (*osoreru ni tarazu koto ni sōrō*). But to shout “expel the barbarians, expel the barbarians” without having made any preparations, that is the nonsense of cowards (*okubyōmono no tawagoto*), and that is what we should worry about. If we prepare, we will be able to pave the way for commercial relations, take advantage of the circumstances, and promote the wealth of the country. As for rumors of these *rōnin* without an income, is it not reckless behavior? It cannot but be deplored. I cannot help but worry that, in the end, this [behavior] will lead our country to war (*tenka no ran*), which is deplorable.⁸⁸

This was not Tsugunosuke’s first proclamation against the narrow-mindedness of the loyalist movement. In an earlier letter to his brother-in-law dated 1860/3/7 (March 28, 1860)—written, therefore, only four days after the assassination of Ii Naosuke—he had condemned the machinations of Satsuma and Chōshū while trying to dispel any sense of fear about the outside world, and the West in particular. On that occasion Tsugunosuke had written:

Item: We can no longer avoid great changes for our country. That means the influence of foreign countries is drawing near, and political measures advocating the expulsion of foreigners (*jōi*) are just foolish (*gumō*).

Item: Coastal defense is our priority. However, it is much more important for our country to entertain relations with our neighboring countries. At this point, an error on our part would jeopardize the safety of the entire country.

Item: The relations between the Kyoto court and the Edo government are a matter of utmost concern. It is regrettable that Satsuma

and Chōshū have come between them, plotting to tear them apart. [...]

Item: Intercourse with foreign countries is necessary. If they come to this realization, both court nobles and shogunate officials without distinction will reform the way of politics, the government and the people will be in agreement, and our priority will be to work hard toward [the creation of] a rich country and a strong army (*fukoku kyōhei*). [...]

Item: [...] It is possible that our customs and our institutions will be westernized. In the course of its history, Japan has already assimilated and absorbed the manners and institutions of China. And yet, even foreigners have their own way of humanity and justice (*jingi no michi*), therefore, from an equal standpoint, we need not fear the coming of western customs and systems.⁸⁹

Having been exposed to the foreign and having assessed its usefulness, Tsugunosuke was not afraid of what came from beyond Japan’s borders. Both his missives insist on this point (“we need not fear,” “there is no reason to be afraid”) and at the same time decry the stupidity (*gumō, ugu*) of blind anti-foreignism. Bravery, to Tsugunosuke, meant encountering the world face to face rather than hiding in the shadow to carry out sneak-attacks. The only existing photograph we have of him radiates just such confidence.⁹⁰ It was taken in 1859, during his visit to Nagasaki—while the circumstances behind its production are unclear, one may speculate that the photograph was meant to be a reminder of the encounter between the warrior and the foreign. Posing before a camera for the first time in his life, Tsugunosuke must have been fascinated. Nevertheless, in the photograph the young samurai does not look uncomfortable, confused, or stiff, nor is he posing in a way that could be conceived of as artificial.

⁸⁹ In Ōta Osamu, *Kawai Tsugunosuke to Meiji ishin*, pp. 83–84.

⁹⁰ The photo is included in the following texts: Andō Hideo, *Teihon Kawai Tsugunosuke*; Andō Hideo and Yokomura Katsuhiko eds., *Kawai Tsugunosuke shashinshū*; Ōta Osamu, *Kawai Tsugunosuke to Meiji ishin*.

⁸⁸ Inagawa Akio, “Hokuetsu no fūunji Kawai Tsugunosuke,” pp. 9–10. See also Andō Hideo, “Kawai Tsugunosuke: sono hito to kiseki,” pp. 20–21.

His posture relaxed, Tsugunosuke looks confident and at ease; he stares intently into the lens with the poise of a man who has met the foreign and has accepted it, a “man with a vision” and “with a keen eye, who saw right through things.”⁹¹

Epilogue

In the spring of 1860 Kawai Tsugunosuke completed his training under Hōkoku, left Matsuyama, and returned to Nagaoka. Two years later he was appointed *Kyōtozume* (Kyoto Official) and sent to the imperial capital. In 1864 he was transferred to Edo, only to return to Nagaoka as *tozama ginmi* the following year. Between 1865 and 1868 Tsugunosuke served his domain in various capacities: as district magistrate, city magistrate, Edo Official, *toshiyori*, and eventually *karō*, all the while implementing a series of fiscal and military reforms inspired by the notion of “rich country and strong army” (*fukoku kyōhei*).

Unlike many of the warriors of Tokugawa Japan, Tsugunosuke actually experienced battle. His concern that, some day, the clash between pro- and anti-Tokugawa forces would result in a war—a concern he had expressed in the 1864 letter to his brother-in-law—eventually became a reality, and when the Echigo Campaign began in the fifth month (late June) of 1868, he was thrust into action. Even in preparing for war he showed his openness to foreign ideas and technology when he chose to arm his samurai with efficient rear-loading Minie rifles in lieu of the less effective front-loading firearms that were common among warriors. After collecting these state-of-the-art weapons in Yokohama in 1868, he loaded them onto the steamship of his friend General Schnell and transported them to Niigata.⁹² Tsugunosuke’s interest for the foreign, which was born out of his studies, had blossomed with the 1859 trip, and had grown stronger in reaction to the rampant xenophobia of the early 1860s, lasted though the end.

Tsugunosuke fought on the side of the Tokugawa in the 1868 Echigo War and died later that year,⁹³ at age forty-two, as a consequence of wounds he sustained on the battlefield. We will never know whether, before dying, he was reminded of the words he had jotted down while passing through Akō, the hometown of the famous forty-seven *rōnin*, on his way to Matsuyama in 1859—words that rang poetic as much as ironic: “Just an ounce of loyalty and bravery crushes iron and stone.”⁹⁴ At the twilight of an era that had witnessed the domestication of the samurai, this curious intellect and admirer of things foreign died, in the end, the death of a warrior.

* * *

Tsugunosuke was by no means the only tolerant thinker in late Tokugawa Japan. While it is undeniable that a good degree of anti-foreign sentiment was present, it is also true that even among those who advocated a general policy of resistance against foreign encroachment there were individuals who envisioned a compromise between western technology and “eastern” ethics. As recent studies have pointed out, even the voices coming from within the Nativist circles were far from univocal.⁹⁵ Tsugunosuke’s case, then, should not be overstated as a brave reaction against a dominant, pervasive, and monolithic anti-foreign discourse, but rather as an especially poignant example of a trend toward compromise, a trend inspired by intellectual curiosity as much as by the desire to steer Japan away from a collision course with the West like the one experienced by China. In the case of Tsugunosuke, encountering the world meant observing, learning, and reporting without mocking or exoticizing, without feeling uncomfortable, and without drawing immediate and irrational conclusions based on fear.

⁹¹ Inagawa Akio, “Hokuetsu no fūunji Kawai Tsugunosuke,” p. 11.

⁹² Andō Hideo, “Gattoringu kikanhō—Nagaoka han no shinheiki,” p. 112; Tokoro Sōkichi, “Nagaoka-han no gunsei to sōbi,” p. 108.

⁹³ Tsugunosuke died on 1868/8/16 (October 1, 1868).

⁹⁴ Kawai Tsugunosuke, “Chiritsubo,” p. 405.

⁹⁵ Mark Teeuwen “Kokugaku vs. Nativism,” *Monumenta Nipponica*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Summer 2006): 227–242.