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Courtier and Confucian in Seventeenth-Century Japan: A Dialogue on the *Tale of Genji* between Nakanoin Michishige and Kumazawa Banzan

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This article focuses on the joint commentarial project on the *Tale of Genji* by two prominent intellectuals of early Tokugawa Japan, the imperial court noble Nakanoin Michishige and the samurai Confucian Kumazawa Banzan. It analyses emendations on the extant manuscripts to show how these two men held different views on the readership of their commentary, the question of esoteric transmissions, the designation of the emperorship, and the comparison of the novel with the contemporary world. Michishige was concerned with the unique role and status of the emperor and with the novel as representing an unsullied court culture. Banzan was a universalist, concerned to interpret the novel in terms that transcended its historical origins and were relevant to his present. The article approaches this subject first through a sketch of Kyoto society at the time, concentrating on the bakufu-imperial court relationship and the position of Confucian scholars and teachers such as Itō Jinsai. It then proceeds to a summary of the procedures used in the joint project and identifies the main areas of differing opinions between Banzan and Michishige.

Keywords: TOKUGAWA HISTORY, KYOTO, IMPERIAL COURT, BAKUFU, IMPERIAL LINEAGE, KUGE, *JUSHA*, NAKANAIN MICHISHIGE, KUMAZAWA BANZAN, COMMENTARY ON THE *TALE OF GENJI*

Introduction

In seventeenth-century Japan a remarkable intellectual collaboration took place between two men of very different backgrounds. Their project concerned the interpretation of the great eleventh-century novel *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (Tale of Genji). The collaborators were a prominent representative of court culture, Nakanoin Michishige 中院通茂 (1631–1710; his given name is sometimes read as Michimo), and the eminent samurai Confucian scholar Kumazawa Banzan 熊沢蕃山 (1619–1691). Michishige was an imperial

court aristocrat whose family had long been associated with studies of *Genji monogatari*; Banzan was at the time an unemployed samurai or rōnin who had embraced Confucianism as a solution to what he perceived as his country's difficulties. Such a collaboration was unusual at this time. There were deeply rooted historical reasons for tension between court nobles and warriors. Politically, the warriors had long displaced the court as the chief wielders of power; culturally, the court jealously preserved much of the ancient culture of the Heian period, and tended to regard the warriors as "barbarians." The Tokugawa settlement stabilized this situation, but the tensions persisted. The court nonetheless retained prestige and a sense of independence, entertained claims to sovereignty, and preserved the latent capability to command the loyalty of Japanese at all levels of society.

A glance at the complex and ambivalent mutual relationship between the imperial court and the Tokugawa warrior regime will reveal something of the problems that these two men faced in working together. This relationship was not only political; it also involved questions of cultural and moral value. To understand the uniqueness of the collaboration between Michishige and Banzan, it is also useful to have some knowledge of how other Confucians acted and were perceived in seventeenth-century Kyoto. A selective exploration of these topics will set the stage for describing the collaboration. It will help explain what was distinctive in the approaches to the *Genji* of the two men and why they disagreed over certain issues of its interpretation.

The Tokugawa shoguns attempted to maintain both physical and institutional distance from the Kyoto court aristocracy. After disposing of the Toyotomi threat in the Osaka Winter and Summer Campaigns of 1614–1615, they attempted through the *Kinchū narabi ni kuge shohatto* 禁中並公家諸法度 (Regulations for the Emperor and Nobility) of 1615 to isolate the court institutionally by separating the civil and the military ranking systems and to depoliticize it by identifying a marginal, essentially cultural, role for its members. The very first article of the "Regulations" specified, "With regard to the various arts [practiced by] the Son of Heaven: 'The first is scholarship. . . . Since the time of Emperor Kōkō 光孝 [830–887; r. 884–887], waka have not died out. Although they constitute specious words, they are the custom of our country and must not be abandoned,' as the *Kinpishō* 禁秘抄 (A Selection of Palace Secrets) says. It is of the greatest importance that [the emperor] practice and study [waka]."¹

Having thus identified a largely cultural rather than political role for the emperor, the Tokugawa evidently felt sufficient assurance to accord the imperial court public recognition and to provide it with material sufficiency. At the same time, they exploited its prestige, for instance, by marrying Masako 和子 (known as Tōfukumon'in 東福門院; 1607–1678), the daughter of the second shogun, Hidetada 秀忠 (1597–1632; ruled 1605–1623) to Emperor Go-Mizunoo 後水尾 (1596–1680; r. 1611–1629) in 1620. Great shogunal progresses to Kyoto in 1626 and 1634 seemed to set the seal on this disposition. Outwardly and at least in the short and medium terms, this policy appears to have achieved its political aims.²

Tensions between Court and Bakufu

The early seventeenth century emperors were, however, not weak or lacking in ambition. Go-Yōzei 後陽成 (1571–1617; r. 1586–1611) is said to have considered the institutions of the *Engishiki* 延喜式 (Procedures of the Engi Period [927]), a set of ancient protocols which

emphasized the ritual importance of the emperor, as ideal prescriptions for his role in the polity and to have regarded Emperor Daigo 醍醐 (885–930; r. 897–930) as his model.³ Neither the irascible Go-Yōzei nor his successor Go-Mizunoo gave in easily. Cases such as the “Purple Robe Incident” of 1627, in which the shogunate invalidated certain high-ranking Buddhist ecclesiastical appointments made by the imperial court, and Go-Mizunoo’s sudden abdication without notice to the shogunate in 1629 suggest that the shogunate’s practical solution to its Kyoto problem did not lead immediately to a deeper social or psychological reconciliation. Yet the emperors were unable to resist the political pressure from their military masters. The court settled to an attitude of pliancy to the demands of the shogunate. Outwardly, it appeared to be reconciled to discharging a purely cultural role.⁴ In the words of Lee Butler, the historian of the *sengoku* 戦国 and early Tokugawa imperial court, as far as the outside world was concerned, “court-bakufu relations [became] benignly unimportant.”⁵

Nonetheless, tension persisted at certain levels. There were profound reasons for this, ranging from the historical to the cultural and psychological. Historiographically, most attention has, of course, focussed on the rival claims to legitimate sovereignty of each side. But there were also broader issues. Despite the shogunate’s attempts to depoliticize it, court culture symbolized and embodied values and traditions that were not always innocent politically; it could not be accommodated without tension into the Tokugawa settlement. Beyond the immediate political problems that had confronted Ieyasu and Hidetada, there remained the latent but unsettling image of the imperial court as a “quasi-aesthetic token of a moral ideal.”⁶ The civil, humanist values on which court culture was historically based might be seen to conflict with the martial values that were an essential part of the self-image of the warrior class. However formalized, inward looking and private it had become by the seventeenth century, court culture stemmed ultimately from the ancient civil bureaucratic state that, in its turn, had been inspired by Chinese political theory and in particular, by Confucian ideas on public political morality. This culture conflicted with warrior assumptions not only in the obvious, narrow political sense that it predated the ascendancy of the samurai and thus, in a tradition in which antiquity tended to confer dignity and legitimacy, implicitly challenged the warrior monopoly on power by reminding men of a historical alternative. It also suggested norms for the exercise of political authority that differed from the military command system of the samurai. In its ideal form, the imperial court was perceived as civil, bureaucratic, and meritocratic,⁷ whereas the shogunate was in essence military, feudalistic, and authoritarian.

True, at first sight much or most court culture as it had been transmitted to the seventeenth century might indeed seem to be apolitical. Japanese poetry, together with scholarship explicitly identified by the shogunate as a pursuit to be exemplified by the court, was a tradition which, as it had developed in the ancient period, was private, lyrical, based on an expressive theory of literary creation, and endowed with little social protest. If anything, this cultural pursuit could be said to encourage acquiescence with the status quo. Writing about the premodern Japanese value system, Robert Bellah comments: “In spite of how completely the individual is merged in group life there is one place where he can be relatively independent: the realm of personal expressiveness including art, mysticism, recreation, skill. But this sphere does not legitimize failure to fulfill group expectations. It actually helps reconcile the individual to group demands.”⁸ Waka poetry was part of this sphere. Nor could such courtly pastimes as kickball (*kemari* 蹴鞠) or incense burning easily be interpreted as overtly political. But there were other, less marginal elements in the court’s cultural heritage. Insofar as

it was emperor-centered and concerned with the history of the sovereign's governing body and retinue, the antiquarian tradition of learning concerning ancient ceremonial usages and courtly culture (*yūsoku kojitsu* 有職故実) was potentially less innocent. Most importantly in the present context, the *Tale of Genji* contained a compelling record of a brilliant society based, or so it might be argued, on a court that was at the time still politically empowered, and on a civil ethos and a morality at variance from those publicly accepted by samurai.

Despite the apparent success of the shogunate's management of its "Kyoto problem," the imperial court and the military establishment, therefore, still had cause to regard each other with mutual resentment during the seventeenth century. On their part, the courtiers possessed a retentive collective memory and a strong sense of their historical distinctiveness. They were schooled by such texts as *Jinnō shōtōki* 神皇正統記 (Chronicle of the Direct Descent of Divine Sovereigns [1339–1343]) and *Taiheiki* 太平記 (Chronicle of the Great Peace [1371]) to contrast the ancient, court-centered civil order, whose leading members were their genealogical ancestors, with the warrior administrations that had replaced it. Inevitably, the courtiers came to regard the latter and their contemporary successors with antipathy and frustration. *Kuge* were conscious of their proud and ancient lineages. They claimed cultural superiority and ritual precedence. But they were humiliated under the early-modern settlement. They felt demeaned by their political and economic inferiority. They suffered from an "inferiority complex" towards their military masters, according to one historian.⁹

Nonetheless, through the Muromachi and early Tokugawa periods they retained widespread respect for their cultural authority and elegance. This reputation they exploited as teachers of cultural skills. Aristocratic families eager to monopolize expertise in a particular courtly pastime passed on their esoteric knowledge by inheritance. In this, they had had the backing of warrior authority during the period of unification.¹⁰ "Houses" (*ie* 家) of aristocratic cultural specialists developed. Their most treasured knowledge, however, they often reserved exclusively for those of the highest social rank, thereby hoping no doubt both to protect its purity and add to their own luster. Nothing typifies this proprietorial approach to traditional culture better than the *Kokin denju* 古今伝授, a set of interpretations of the classical tenth-century verse anthology *Kokin wakashū* 古今和歌集. This esoteric transmission, made up, to borrow Donald Keene's phrase, of "stupefyingly inconsequential bits of lore," had by the seventeenth century become a truly exclusive preserve. Initiation into it was a jealously guarded privilege of the high nobility.¹¹

On the side of the military estate, the samurai, attitudes toward the court and its culture remained tense, conflicting, and ambiguous. Nor was this attitude a recent development. Since the rise of the warrior class, the court had been regarded with an ambivalent fascination by samurai. Warrior leaders, it is true, had used culture as a political tool, though they had tended to favor the tea ceremony and Chinese arts over the classical Japanese inheritance from the Heian period. Some medieval warlords, however, such as Shiba Yoshimasa 斯波義将 (1350–1410), the shogunal deputy (*kanrei* 管領) of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu 足利義満 (1358–1408; r. 1364–94), promoted court culture and emulated a courtly style themselves. In discoursing on accomplishments proper to the samurai, a treatise attributed to Yoshimasa encourages, among other things, the study of the *Genji monogatari*.¹² Other daimyo, such as Toyotomi Hideyoshi's famous vassal Katō Kiyomasa 加藤清正 (1562–1611), prohibited all forms of poetic composition, a cultural activity traditionally associated with Kyoto and the court, as feminizing and inimical to the professional ethos of those "born into warrior fami-

lies.”¹³ This ambivalence was perpetuated in the Tokugawa period. It was expressed, for instance, in the contradictory behavior of Ikeda Mitsumasa 池田光政 (1609–1682), the martially inclined daimyo of Bizen 備前. Mitsumasa professed a dislike of imperial courtiers.¹⁴ In homilies to his housemen, he cited indulgence in “courtly occupations” (*kuge no waza* 公家ノわざ), along with “idle pastimes” (*yusan* 遊山) and “townspeople’s occupations” (*chōnin no waza* 町人ノわざ), as incompatible with the satisfactory exercise of military leadership in time of war.¹⁵ Yet he married his second daughter into the courtly lineage of the Ichijō 一条 in 1649, presumably for reasons of prestige, as with the Tokugawa family’s intermarriage with the imperial house, and he visited the Ichijō residence in Kyoto when traveling between Bizen and Edo on his obligatory journeys to the shogunal capital.¹⁶ Kumazawa Banzan, at the time a vassal of Mitsumasa, would have been directly familiar with these circumstances.

Confucians in Kyoto

Court nobles and warriors, however, did not face each other alone in seventeenth-century Kyoto. There were other elements of society that had the potential to mediate between them, socially, culturally, and ideologically. In addition to the *kuge* and representatives of the *buke*, not to speak of the common townspeople themselves, seventeenth-century Kyoto was host to Buddhist monks and Shinto priests, artists and *littérateurs*, physicians and Confucian scholars. Among these, the Confucians were relative newcomers, for the rise of Confucianism as an independent school of learning dated only from the beginning of the century.¹⁷ Their significance and potential impact were probably not anticipated by high warrior authority in the early years of the Tokugawa shogunate. Indeed, their tradition was based on assumptions concerning the nature of political control and attitudes regarding the role and expectations of the individual that were at variance with those on which the Tokugawa order was founded. Confucianism had the potential to awaken a sense of political awareness in its students and even to stimulate protest.

Yet as purveyors of a fresh and vigorous tradition of scholarship, the Confucians were visible and influential. It is clear, also, that though most were of relatively humble origins in terms of the Tokugawa status system, non-aristocratic or commoner¹⁸—Fujiwara Seika 藤原惺窩 (1561–1619) and his remote kinsman Matsunaga Sekigo 松永尺五 (1592–1657) are exceptional in having *kuge* ancestry¹⁹—they were not denied access to high levels of courtly or of warrior society.

Here the city of Kyoto itself, the least feudal or militarized of all large cities in Japan of the period, may have facilitated something of a leveling, for it offered a social environment in which status hierarchy could be blurred, or count for less than elsewhere. To a certain extent, indeed, Kyoto was a society open to talent, one that was more achievement-oriented²⁰ in some respects than provincial feudal society, or than Edo itself. In this, the imperial family could be said to have led the way. Thus in the Kan’ei 寛永 period (1624–1645), the craze for flower-arranging that flourished under the patronage of Go-Mizunoo had inspired a “salon” culture in which courtiers, warriors, and the upper bourgeoisie enjoyed each other’s company.²¹ The physical ambiance of the city itself no doubt made it easier to downplay hierarchical distinctions. The mismatch between wealth and formal status, the practice of excursions to famous sights where social mixing might take place, the availability and use of rented premises²²—all these created a milieu where traditional social distinctions might fade and

the boundaries of the status system be transcended or at least suspended. Thus, for instance, when the shogunate's Kyoto deputy (*shoshidai* 所司代) saw the Confucian scholar Itō Jinsai 伊藤仁斎 (1627–1705), a townsman, in the street, he is said according to a contemporary anecdote to have mistaken him for a prince or daimyo and dismounted.²³

Confucian scholars were conspicuous on the Kyoto cultural scene. Some indeed wore Chinese Confucian dress.²⁴ For all that, the nature of their influence in seventeenth-century Kyoto culture has not been studied extensively. More particularly, their role in the relationship between kuge and buke still is little understood. This is not altogether surprising, for by the seventeenth century Confucianism itself had become a highly complex tradition. It contained many different, sometimes mutually contradictory elements which could appeal to both sides of the civil-military divide or legitimate the cause of either. As pursued in seventeenth-century Japan, Confucianism varied from a primarily philological, academically conservative, and apolitical study of canonical Confucian texts to the more venturesome inquiry into the intuitionism of the Wang Yangming 王陽明 school, which high authority perceived as subversive. Indeed, men associated with the shogunate represented Wang's doctrines as one of the causes of the collapse of the Ming dynasty in China, as resembling Christianity, and as encouraging insubordination.²⁵ But for some, Confucianism was above all associated with Chinese culture, aesthetic values, and elegance—particularly important at a time when Japanese were catching up with Chinese letters and thought after the long years of turmoil during the *sengoku* 戦国 period.

Certainly, Confucianism contained much that might appeal to the kuge interest. Confucians were students of history and could appreciate and interpret the dignity and historical importance of the ancient court lineages. Historically, as already remarked, Confucianism had been associated in Japan with the ancient, prefeudal, civil, and bureaucratic state. This link, which went back to the eighth-century founding of the court college, Daigakuryō 大学寮, had been preserved into the seventeenth century—in however symbolic and attenuated a form—in the court tradition of antiquarian learning and as an esoteric transmission among the Kiyohara 清原 lineage of courtiers, hereditary specialists in the reading of Confucian texts.²⁶ But Confucianism had inherent powers of attraction quite apart from this historical association. The civil emphasis of the Confucian tradition and its concern with ritual and culture could easily incline imperial courtiers to be sympathetic to it. Confucianism, moreover, underwrote direct imperial rule and, while advocating a meritocratic political order, also allowed a place in the polity for noble lineages. The great follower of Confucius, Mencius himself, had recognized the role of great hereditary families around the throne.²⁷ Rather more unsettlingly, in its revived, Neo-Confucian form, Confucianism offered an attractive soteriology, one that was particularly appealing in an age when some men sought an alternative to the world-denying orientation of Buddhism. The end stage of the Neo-Confucian path was sagehood, in which the individual, ideally, was politically active in the interests of the well-being of the whole realm. Here was a tradition that could potentially confer a new *raison d'être* on a social group that must have felt frustrated by the restrictions imposed on it under the Tokugawa settlement.

Confucianism also offered much to the buke. The tradition endorsed hierarchy, respect, and order; it sanctioned the division of society into occupational groups dominated by officers called *shi* 士, who could easily be identified with the samurai of feudal Japan; and it

sanctioned changing the self rather than society. These elements of Confucianism could appeal to the new warrior regime and to those who sought to legitimate that regime, ensure its stability, and secure its permanence. Less congruent with the world view of the samurai were the generally anti-militaristic position of Confucianism, the primacy it attached to kin rather than the social group, its belief in certain forms of protest, its support of a contingent rather than an absolute political loyalty, and its universalistic belief in a relative degree of autonomy for the individual practitioner of the Confucian Way, a position difficult to accommodate in an order founded on feudal, militaristic discipline and subordination. These were aspects of the tradition that could, potentially, form the basis for criticism of the Tokugawa regime.

There were also aspects of Confucianism that commended it to both courtiers and warriors, and it is not surprising to find the newly independent Confucian scholars of seventeenth-century Kyoto courted by both. Confucian scholars were associated with a general technical expertise in Chinese language and culture, always at a premium in traditional Japan, and especially so in an era of peace and stability. Some of them preserved good relations with both sides, the buke and the kuge. Early in the century, for instance, Miyake Kisai 三宅寄齋 (1580–1649), a rōnin by origin, was not only close to the daimyo Tōdō Takatora 藤堂高虎 (1556–1630) and Hosokawa Tadaoki 細川忠興 (1563–1645) but also enjoyed “deep contacts” with the court and with imperial nobles.²⁸ Asayama Irin’an 朝山意林庵 (1589–1664) was employed by the Hosokawa daimyo house and remained under its patronage; in 1653, however, he also lectured in the imperial palace.²⁹ Another example, from later in the period, is Kaibara Ekiken 貝原益軒 (1630–1714), the domain physician of the Kuroda 黒田 daimyo house in Kyushu. Ekiken’s own account of his audiences in 1692 with Konoe Motohisa 近衛元久 (1648–1722) and Ichijō Kaneteru 一条兼輝 (1652–1705)—members of the most exalted court families, those of regency (*sekkon* 撰関) lineage—and with other court aristocrats suggests that it was for the breadth of his erudition, particularly in music, that he was lionized in Kyoto.³⁰ He himself was a man of emollient character. He does not appear to have been regarded as an exemplifier of high Confucian principle or of an unsettling ideology by his kuge patrons.

Other Confucian scholars, men with origins in the imperial capital, turned their backs on their Kyoto heritage and seemed to identify exclusively with the warriors. The most conspicuous of these was Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583–1657), who moved to Edo and became a Confucian spokesman for the shogunate. Razan apparently rejected much of traditional court culture. In the view of men such as he, the *Tale of Genji* provided evidence that the court society of the Heian period had been morally depraved and dominated by people who were insubordinate and arrogant, thus implicitly unfit to govern. “Proof that the courtiers and palace women devoted themselves to licentious behavior is to be derived from reading the *Genji monogatari*,” asserts a work attributed to Razan, which maintains that the Tale accurately reflected the character of the times even if it was after all a work of fiction—it made it clear that “the cause of the ultimate appropriation of power by military subjects and of the decadence of the court derives from the arrogance of [Fujiwara no] Michinaga 藤原道長.”³¹

Razan’s type of collaboration with the military regime was the dominant trend, as many early-modern daimyo sought to employ Confucian scholars to dignify their administrations. Some Confucians, however, refused to take employment with the feudal conglomerate of the Tokugawa, among them Fujiwara Seika himself, usually regarded as the founder of the Neo-

Confucian movement in Japan. Seika, a man of distinguished courtly ancestry, was possibly the first to experience the complex tensions that active commitment to Neo-Confucian ideals and practice in a feudal, militarized society could precipitate. He seems to have found it difficult to resolve these tensions. Significantly, he never accepted invitations from military men to enter their service. Another example was Asami Keisai 浅見綱齋 (1652–1711), a member of the large and influential Kimon 崎門 group, the school of orthodox (that is, Zhu Xi 朱熹) Neo-Confucianism founded by Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇齋 (1618–1682). Paradoxically, Keisai's refusal to take service in a warrior house did not signify a rejection of military values; rather, he was an admirer of Japan's martial tradition.³² Indeed, he bore a sword and practiced horsemanship.³³ A less-known figure to whom anti-shogunate views have been ascribed is Akazuka Un'an 赤塚芸庵 (b. 1613), Confucian teacher to Go-Mizunoo and to Emperor Go-Kōmyō 後光明 (1633–1654; r. 1643–1654).³⁴ Yet another is Miyake Kisai's adopted son, Miyake Dōitsu 三宅道乙 (1614?–1675), a Confucian scholar popular in court circles in the 1660s and 1670s.

The precise ideological position of such men as Un'an and Dōitsu is difficult to establish. What inspired their apparent rejection of the world of the samurai? Was it simply an atavistic or parochial belief that only the imperial house could be the legitimate rulers of Japan? Or was it a profounder sense that Confucian values could only be realized in a civil polity? Or were they what contemporaries sometimes contemptuously referred to as vulgar Confucians (*zokuju* 俗儒), mere technicians in Chinese texts, concerned with purveying certain cultural skills but not with the wider moral, social, or political implications of the tradition that they expounded? Unfortunately, these questions cannot be answered on the basis of information currently available.

A better-understood case of a Confucian who chose to remain outside feudal society is that of Itō Jinsai, a Kyoto townsman by origin. Jinsai, well known as the founder of the School of Ancient Learning (*Kogigaku* 古義学), created a reformulation of Confucianism that stressed its humanist, Mencian, and universalistic aspects. For him, the Confucian Way was not so much a grand political vision as a set of “small pathways that human beings journeyed over in daily life, with compassion, fairness, humility, and truthfulness.”³⁵ Jinsai paid little attention to the political aspects of the Confucian tradition. He is said, for instance, to have had little inclination to discuss the ruler-subject relationship.³⁶ His extensive following was preeminently urban and bourgeois—physicians, specialists in the arts, and *nouveaux riches*, some of whom lent money to daimyo. It is, however, not surprising that his teaching should have appealed also to imperial nobles. From the Enpō 延宝 period (1673–1680), there is evidence that he had contacts with the aristocratic Imadegawa 今出川, Kadenokōji 勘解由小路, Fusehara 伏原, and Kazan'in 花山院 families. From the early 1680s, the list of his kuge associations becomes extensive. It includes, in addition to the above-mentioned, members of the following courtier lineages: Tominokōji 富小路, Kujō 九条, Saionji 西園寺, Shichijō 七条, Seikanji 清閑寺, Aburanokōji 油小路, Nakamikado 中御門, Funahashi 船橋, Higashizono 東園, Nakanoin 中院, Yanagihara 柳原, Chigusa 千種, Hironiwa 広庭, and Nonomiya 野々宮. Others, including imperial princes ordained and given abbacies (*monzeki* 門跡) were to join the list later.³⁷

Jinsai would visit the mansions of these men and lecture on the Confucian classics or on Neo-Confucian texts, or he would participate in study groups. These occasions gave him the opportunity to promote his own understanding of the tradition. That understand-

ing, however, remained largely depoliticized. As his biographer Ishida Ichirō 石田一良 puts it, Jinsai “passed preexisting feudal Confucianism through the filter of his social experience in the salons of Genroku 元禄-period (1688–1704) Kyoto, abstracted from Confucianism its feudal and political quality, and gave it a rich humanity . . . and sociability.” Jinsai was “inspired by the non-feudal human relationships” characteristic of that period’s Kyoto, a city to which Ishida attributes a “deeply non-feudal spirit.” In particular, that spirit manifested itself in the “salons composed of court nobles, cultural specialists, and the newly rich.” Jinsai’s thought “accurately reflected the unrealistic abstractness that was the property of those salons and their members, together with their apolitical dedication to culture.” Indeed, in Ishida’s assessment, Jinsai denied politics, and so ended up losing touch with reality.”³⁸ But it was surely this apolitical yet humanist character of Itō Jinsai’s teaching that constituted its appeal to a group of men who were themselves depoliticized by high authority and, it would seem, increasingly also by personal inclination.

Nakanoin Michishige and Kumazawa Banzan

The social interplay and cultural affinities of courtiers and intellectuals deserve further study. The relationship between the imperial aristocrat Nakanoin Michishige and the samurai Confucian scholar Kumazawa Banzan provides an unusually well-documented case. Both men were prominent, articulate figures on the historical stage of the 1670s and 1680s. Both were interesting in their own right, and both left ample evidence for an appreciation of their views. Most important, they worked together on an unusual joint exegetical project, a commentary on the *Tale of Genji*, which required them to attempt to merge their perspectives. Since they were living separately, Banzan in Akashi 明石 and Michishige in Kyoto, the project was conducted by correspondence. Much of the material on which they worked survives in both draft and fair copy, and successive revisions and notes preserved in the manuscripts can be analyzed to demonstrate their differing views on a number of topics, including their attitudes toward the court, its historical significance, and its role in the contemporary world.

Kumazawa Banzan was perhaps the most complex and elusive of seventeenth-century Japanese Confucians.³⁹ Unlike some of his more sedentary contemporaries, he lived a life marked by dramatic changes of direction and *voltes-faces*. It is possible to see his career as a series of attempts in different social settings to test the practicality of Confucianism as a way of life in Japan. He was born in 1619 in Kyoto, the son of a rōnin. As a youth, he served Ikeda Mitsumasa, the conscientious and able daimyo of Bizen. In 1638, however, he left Mitsumasa’s service under circumstances that are as yet unclear, possibly for some disciplinary offense. Retiring to his maternal grandparents’ home in Ōmi 近江 Province, he was introduced in 1641 to the Confucian teacher Nakae Tōju 中江藤樹 (1608–1648). Tōju’s teachings stressed the conscience of the individual practitioner of the Confucian Way as a guide to moral practice. This was a doctrine that reinforced Banzan’s tendency to decisive, independent, and sometimes provocative action.

Banzan reentered Mitsumasa’s service in 1645 and received dramatic promotion. One of his roles in Bizen seems to have been to instruct samurai in Confucianism, presumably to render them morally qualified for service in that domain. He seems to have attracted outsiders—“Easterners (Azumamono 東者) in large numbers” and “many rōnin”⁴⁰—into a training group that he organized there, and these men were subsequently incorporated into the

samurai brigade over which he held command. Many were later given low-level responsibility in the domain administration. It is possible to view Banzan's activities in Bizen as an effort to implement the Confucian principle that moral achievement entitled one to exercise political authority. The experiment, however, was at best partially successful. Banzan's rapid promotion aroused the resentment of the established hierarchy of Mitsumasa's domain. Furthermore, his style of Confucianism came under suspicion and attack from the shogunal authorities. Troubled by ill health as well, in 1657 he resigned his position in the Bizen domain.

His attempt to realize the Way in the context of feudal society had been frustrated, but Banzan did not abandon his concern with implanting Confucian values in his countrymen. Around the year 1660 he took up residence in Kyoto, where he seems to have attracted a group of courtiers who became his disciples in Neo-Confucian learning and self-cultivation. Like Jinsai, he played a leading role in a salon which included not only imperial courtiers but samurai, physicians, townsmen, and at least one Buddhist monk, the well-known poet, Gensei 元政 of Fukakusa 深草 (1623–1668).⁴¹ Among the courtier families with which Banzan is said to have had connections were the Ichijō 一条, Ogura 小倉, Yabu 藪, Koga 久我, Nakanoin, Aburanokōji, Nakamikado, Shimizudani 清水谷, Oshikōji 押小路, Non-omiya, Fusehara, and Kuze 久世.⁴² Perhaps they, like the rōnin whom he had earlier attracted to Bizen (also marginalized by the shogunate and its feudatories, the *bakuhan* 幕藩 system that defined the early modern polity), sensed in him a teacher who could confer meaning on their lives.

Banzan's views were indeed such as to assuage any inferiority complex that his kuge friends might have had. The strong and enduring role that he identified for the court in effect elevated its members above the military class in national life; indeed, according to Banzan the Japanese imperial institution stood historically and symbolically for the universal Confucian Way.⁴³ The court's educational and civilizing mission had been particularly important since the rise of the military houses, Banzan believed. Ever since the warlord Taira no Kiyomori 平清盛 (1118–1181) took power, control of the country had been usurped by military men. As the peace established by these boorish men continued, they "gradually became courtly, conceited, and soft." They were in turn displaced by other, tougher boors:⁴⁴

In this way, the country's ruler was not so different from a peasant. Were it not for the imperial court, after numbers of these changes, the rulers of the country would, within two or three centuries, degenerate into rough savages no different from those of India and South Barbary. But because of the presence of the court, after peace had been brought to the land, the shogunal house always paid a visit there. The daimyo all gathered, observed ritual usages and ceremonial apparel, and became aware for the first time that there existed a standard for men. Listening to the sound of palace music, with the richness of its wind and string instruments, they yearned for peace for the first time. Introspecting from various angles, they [became conscious that they] were real barbarians. They realized that if they were thus depraved, they could not govern the realm.

Thus the imperial court performed the vital role of taming and civilizing the military class, turning its leaders into responsible peacetime rulers, and restoring a proper balance between the civil and military.

This did not mean, however, that political power should immediately be returned to the court. Already in the time of Go-Daigo 後醍醐 (1288–1339; r. 1318–1339), the emperor and his retinue had become too alienated from the people to govern effectively.⁴⁵ The court's role, rather, was primarily educational and cultural. Banzan even suggested that a “morally inspired ruler” would assign fiefs for the support of sacred music and dance (*kagura* 神楽), court festivals (*sechie* 節会), palace music (*gyoyū* 御遊), and so on. Above all, the survival of the court itself was essential for national life: “If the divine lineage were to die out, Japan would no longer deserve the name of divine land (*shinkoku* 神国).” Where, then, would the military rulers, newly risen after civil wars, search for moral instruction? “Without the rites and music for human morality, society would verge on the bestial, and there would be no end to the battles. Even if there were a temporary peace, as long as there was no morality and men's minds [remained] darkened, would not the land ultimately be taken by the Christians?”⁴⁶ The court was thus both symbol and bearer of Confucian values in Japan. It perpetuated the universal moral order originally transmitted from China, without which the nation would lapse into barbarism, its very survival jeopardized.

Kumazawa Banzan's collaborator Nakanoin Michishige was a member of a high-ranking court lineage that had attained (or re-attained) distinction from the end of the sixteenth century. His great-grandfather Michikatsu 通勝 (1556–1610) was the father of one of the court ladies implicated in the Inokuma 猪熊 scandal of 1609.⁴⁷ A poet and recipient of the coveted *Kokin denju*, Michikatsu was also a scholar and the author of the voluminous *Mingō nisso* 岷江入楚 (The River Min Enters Chu [1598]), a compendium of medieval scholarship on the *Tale of Genji*.⁴⁸ His son, Michimura 通村 (1588–1653), Michishige's grandfather, was also a prominent figure in the early years of the Tokugawa regime. During the summer of 1615, Michimura lectured on the *Genji* to Ieyasu himself. The following year, he did so to Emperor Go-Mizunoo,⁴⁹ a man to whom he was especially close. Michimura supported Go-Mizunoo in the tense anti-shogunate atmosphere surrounding the abdication crisis of 1629. At the time, he occupied the position of the court's emissary to the shogunate (*buke tensō* 武家伝奏).⁵⁰ He forcefully explained the reasons for the emperor's abdication to the *shoshidai* 所司代, the Kyoto agent of the military regime, and in so doing exceeded the passive role expected of his office. After the abdication, he was dismissed, presumably for not warning the shogunate of Go-Mizunoo's intentions well enough in advance.⁵¹ Michimura is said to have declared his loyalty to the emperor unequivocally: “I am the subject of the Son of Heaven; I am not a subject of the Kantō.”⁵²

In 1635, Michimura and his son Michizumi 通純 were detained in Edo for an offense the nature of which is not clear.⁵³ According to one report, Michimura was urged by the shogunal advisor Tenkai 天海 (1536–1643) to offer the *Kokin denju*—the “secrets” of the Japanese poetic tradition⁵⁴—to Shogun Iemitsu in return for his freedom, but refused on the grounds that Iemitsu lacked the necessary qualifications.⁵⁵ Moved by Michimura's integrity, however, the shogun permitted him to return to Kyoto. Whether true or not, this story reflects the persistent kuge attitude of jealous proprietorship over their cultural heritage and the tenacious importance of esoteric transmissions at the highest level of court society.

The Nakanoin as a lineage thus had direct experience of the tensions and subtleties of court-shogunate relationships as they had developed during the seventeenth century. Like his forebears, Michishige was an expert in the *Genji monogatari*, and the novel was an important

part of his life. During the years when he and Banzan were engaged on their joint commentary, Michishige was involved in at least two other extended *Genji* projects, a series of lectures given in the imperial palace and a full transcription of the text. Indeed, he was so familiar with the work that one of his poetry disciples remarked that he knew it “mostly by heart.”⁵⁶ Michishige was also a prominent waka poet, and in 1664 he was singled out by Go-Mizunoo for the immensely prestigious initiation into the *Kokin denju*. During the years 1671–1675, Michishige occupied the office of *buke tensō*, as his grandfather had before him. His prominent court position gave him access to a wide circle. Among high-ranking samurai, he knew Itakura Shigenori 板倉種矩 (1617–1673; *shoshidai* 1668–1670) and the daimyo of Mito, Ieyasu’s grandson Tokugawa Mitsukuni 徳川光圀 (1628–1700). Michishige seems to have been open-minded, particularly towards Confucian learning, as evidenced by his attendance at lectures by Miyake Dōitsu at Shigenori’s Kyoto mansion. Michishige showed such enthusiasm for Confucian studies that he drew the displeasure of Go-Mizunoo, who reprimanded him for neglecting the poetry that was the proper literary pursuit of kuge.⁵⁷

Nakanoin Michishige was almost certainly among the courtiers whom Banzan met in his sojourn in Kyoto between the years 1660 and 1667. The opportunity for the two to develop a friendship was disrupted in the spring of 1667, however, when Banzan was obliged to leave the imperial capital. Thereafter, he was to lead a life of semi-exile and ultimately of imprisonment. After leaving Kyoto, he settled first at Akashi 明石, and it is there that he seems to have embarked on the joint *Genji monogatari* project with Michishige. Akashi was, of course, associated with the exile of the novel’s hero, Genji himself, and it is possible that Banzan requested permission to live there precisely because of this association. From 1679, he resided at Kōriyama 郡山, near Nara, but in 1687, he was summoned to the Kantō, where he died in 1691.

Various causes of Banzan’s departure from the capital in 1667 have been suggested. A major reason seems to relate to the shogunate’s continued sensitivity to Kyoto and the court as a potential focus of dissidence. High authority already associated Banzan with the heterodox Wang Yangming school of Neo-Confucianism. His evident popularity among his courtier friends and disciples seems to have aroused the suspicion of the shogunate’s representatives in Kyoto. With his resignation from feudal service in Bizen, Banzan had become a rōnin. The Tokugawa regime regarded such “masterless” samurai as potentially subversive; indeed, the shogunate considered them so suspect as such that it expelled them en masse from Kyoto.⁵⁸ Consulted by the shogunate about Banzan’s position, Ikeda Mitsumasa underlined that Kumazawa was “at present not a vassal” of his house; he noted that the authorities had prohibited the township where his erstwhile employee had resided from “keeping rōnin” and had thereby forced Banzan to leave Kyoto.⁵⁹ Discussing Banzan’s exile some two and a half decades after the event, the eclectic scholar Tani Jinzan 谷秦山 (1663–1718) reported that a court noble had denounced Banzan to the Kyoto *shoshidai* as a subversive—“Kumazawa sets up unheard-of learning arts and damages the customs and manners of the kuge. Banish him!”—and that the *shoshidai* was quick to oblige the informer.⁶⁰ Indeed, underlying Banzan’s expulsion may well have been the suspicion that, once more, he was implicitly challenging the Tokugawa order by appealing to a group, in this case the imperial courtiers, which had been deliberately and systematically marginalized and depoliticized. For, as suggested already, Banzan identified a historical role for the courtiers that, psychologically at least, went beyond

the passive, apolitical, and purely cultural role prescribed by the Tokugawa authorities.

Collaboration on a *Genji* Commentary

Through intermediaries, Banzan maintained contact with his aristocratic friends after his departure from the capital city. The main links seem to have been the diarist and minor courtier Kitakōji Toshimitsu 北小路俊光 (1642–1718) and Banzan's disciple Nakane Gōemon 中根郷右衛門 (Ryūken 流謙). The latter was a senior vassal of the daimyo of Akashi, Matsudaira Nobuyuki 松平信之 (1621–1686), under whose protection Banzan was living.⁶¹ Thus it was through the mediation of colleagues that Banzan began collaborating with Michishige on their joint *Genji* commentary, probably in early 1673. The project was a protracted one, extending over several years and perhaps for as long as a decade or more. For the first few of those years at least, the two men seem to have worked in secret. Michishige, subject to what he later called “fear of the outside,”⁶² was sensitive over his relations with Banzan, apparently anxious lest his continued association with a man in disfavor with the authorities be viewed with suspicion.

The elaborate and changing procedures adopted for this exegetical project can be reconstructed from surviving manuscript material. Michishige sent Banzan drafts of his own commentary, volume by volume, one for each book of the novel, as they were completed every five months or so, at least in the beginning. Banzan added his own observations or commented on Michishige's work, chiefly by the insertion of *oshigami* 押紙 (interfoliated leaves). These fresh comments, together with Michishige's host text, were then subjected to a further process of often quite extensive revision. This process was uneven, but was relatively more intense for the early volumes, where the text was revised in up to three stages, including the fair copies. Banzan was sent those fair copies and can be shown to have made further revisions.⁶³

Study of the evolution of the joint project and particularly of the revisions made by the two collaborators sheds interesting light on their respective attitudes to a variety of questions. In particular, it shows that Banzan and Michishige held divergent views over a number of matters and their differences needed to be negotiated before the joint commentary could be completed. Of particular relevance here are those topics that reflect their different intellectual and social backgrounds.⁶⁴ Michishige appeared open to new ideas; in the short term, at least, he was suggestible. He was, however, not an original scholar. His own style was inherited from the medieval commentarial tradition through the particular medium of his great-grandfather's work *Mingō nisso*. Banzan's method, on the other hand, was highly original. In contrast to the eclectic, philological, and antiquarian approach that had been an aspect of the medieval tradition, his was a radically Confucian, moral, and political reading of the classical novel. He viewed it not so much as a work of literature as a resource for his own times. If properly interpreted, he believed, the *Tale of Genji* had universal relevance for what it revealed of human nature, for the historical lessons that it embodied, and for its potential impact on contemporary society. It depicted Japan at the end of the “kingly age” (*ōdai* 王代) before the country had become characterized by the social division consequent on the development of a separate military class and by high levels of economic consumption. Banzan was particularly impressed by the place of ritual and music in the world of the novel, the frugality of the lifestyle that it depicted, and by the humanity and creative altruism demonstrated above all by its hero, Genji himself.

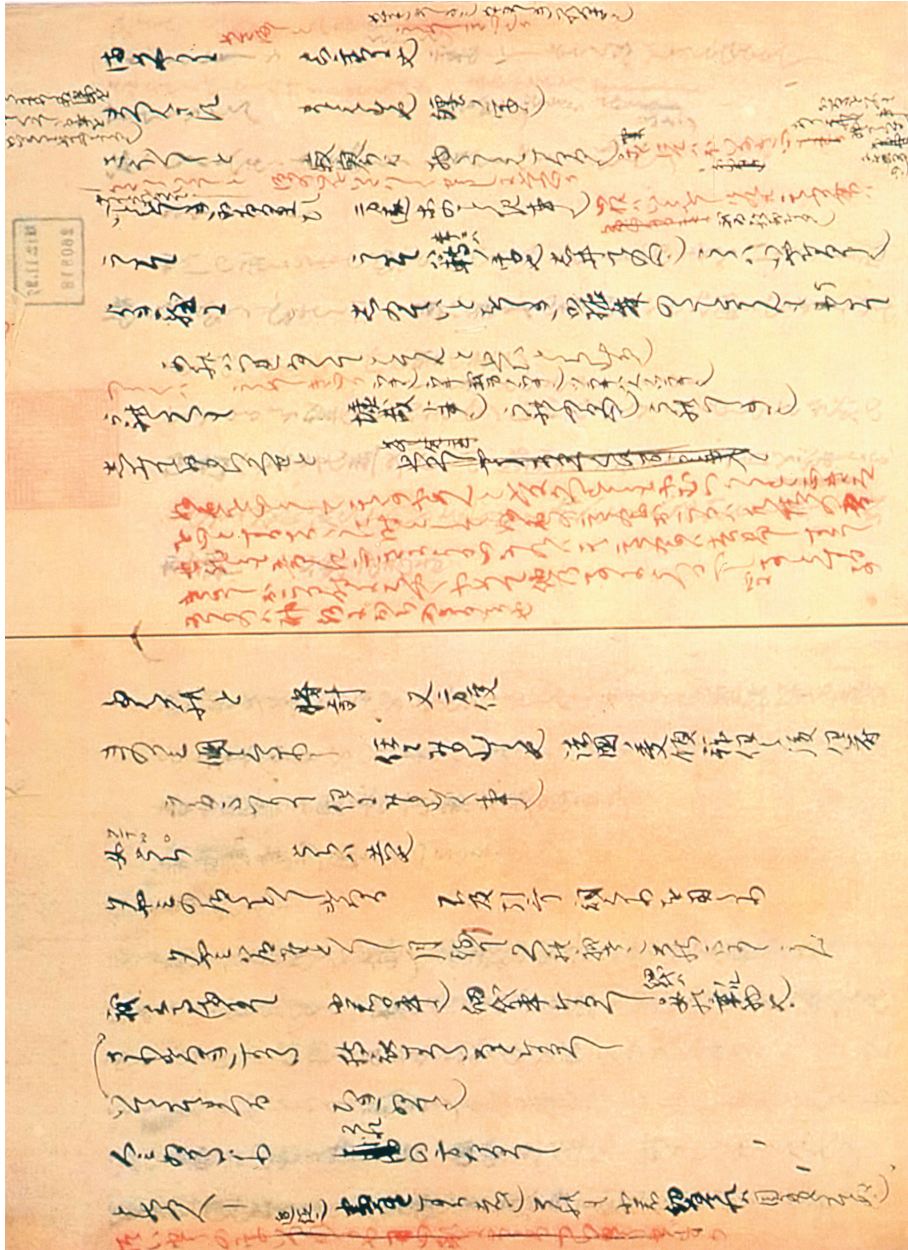


Fig. 1. The collaborative commentary on *Genji monogatari* between Nakanoin Michishige and Kumazawa Banzan: early experimentation on the draft commentary on the “Utsusemi” book. Banzan’s comments and questions have been inserted into Michishige’s text in red ink; Michishige has revised them in black (See McMullen 1991, pp. 18–19; 25; 34–36; 43). Photograph courtesy of Kyoto University Library.

Banzan's almost evangelical approach to the novel led him to stress different aspects of its interpretation from those promoted by the culturally conservative and more academic Michishige. The differences between the two men can be reconstructed from the revisions that each contributed to the text of their joint project. Sometimes subtle, apparently trivial at other times, often little more than hints, those revisions cumulatively shed light on two very different personalities. They illustrate divergent orientations to the novel itself, to the task of commentary, to Confucianism, to the Kyoto court, and to the contemporary world.

Differences of Interpretation

One of the more striking differences between Banzan and Michishige concerns the intended readership of their project, as is suggested by an interfoliation in the fair copy at "Kiritsubo" 桐壺 22.⁶⁵ Here, Banzan appears to have become dissatisfied with the lack of detail in a comment describing the structure and procedure of court administration. To rectify matters, he amplified the text by listing the chief executive officers of state in a red-ink interlinear insertion on Michishige's fair copy. The result became messy and difficult to read, and Banzan himself seems to have transcribed the emended passage onto a fresh sheet in his characteristic bold hand. This sheet, which was then interfoliated into Michishige's fair copy, probably by Michishige himself, concludes with an important epistolary note addressed by Banzan to Michishige: "This is how I would like it to be. As a version for you to show to court nobles, [the text as it stands] is quite all right, but it will not be intelligible to military men unless these words are included. Please, still further, correct the prose."⁶⁶ Banzan's concern that the comment should contain sufficient information for the warriors to understand the institutional background to the novel suggests where his intended readership lay. It is not fanciful, further, to see implicit in it a suggestion that Michishige, in Banzan's view, had failed to grasp the needs of a readership wider than his own class, to bridge the gap between two different subcultures. At least, it would seem that Michishige was not as enthusiastic as Banzan himself about making a connection between the world of the novel and its historical successor, the imperial court of his own day. Or perhaps he even felt some repugnance over the novel's being read and appreciated beyond the court circles in which he habitually moved.

A similar expression of an imperial courtier's point of view is to be seen in what can be identified as Michishige's, rather than Banzan's, deletions on the fair copy of the "Kiritsubo" volume of commentary. One example is a passage of the prefatory "Exposition" (*Kōgi* 講義) which touches on the kuge practice of esoteric transmission of cultural skills in "houses" (*ie* 家). In this passage, Banzan criticizes that practice, which he considers "an error of recent origin. Because the pastimes of the courtly lapsed into vulgarity and became degraded, those who pursued them dwindled to a few. Thus they were felt to be like performers, and from then 'houses' began. This can easily be discerned from reading the *Genji*."⁶⁷ The critique reflects Banzan's own Confucian universalism and his desire to make court culture widely accessible. On the manuscript, however, this passage is marked by a combination of Michishige's lateral dotting (*misekechi* 見消, used to indicate omission) and outright deletion, suggesting that Michishige worried at it on more than one occasion.

Esoteric transmissions and the "houses" that controlled them were important for the kuge, economically and culturally. The radical particularism on which they were based, however, offended the universalism of Confucians such as Banzan, who maintained that it was

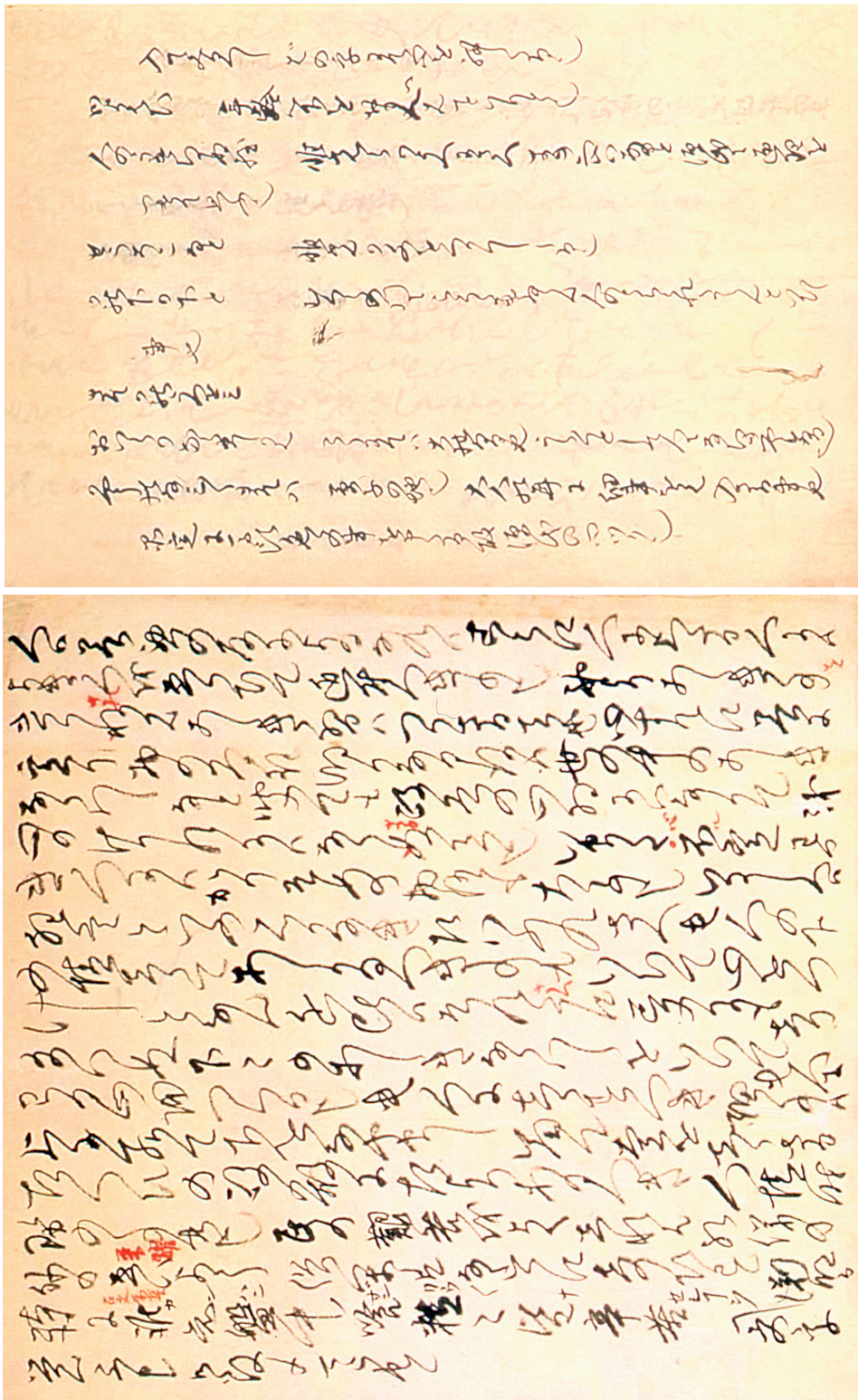


Fig. 2. The collaborative commentary: a passage from the draft for the 'Yūgo' book. Michishige's commentary is on the right; on the left is an interfoliated leaf in Banzan's hand, with his own extended comment, which ends with a request to Michishige to check the characters of the concluding couplet of Chinese verse. Michishige has lightly emended Banzan's text in red (See McMullen 1991, pp. 25; 39; 44). Photographs courtesy of Kyoto University Library.

misguided of courtiers to be jealous of a wider diffusion of their cultural skills. For someone to begrudge transmitting an art such as string and wind music to ordinary people, Banzan wrote, “is to act in a totally misguided way. It is precisely from its universal dissemination that people will ever become aware of the distinctiveness of the kuge and that they will conceive the spirit of faith and veneration.”⁶⁸ It is not difficult to see either why Banzan, like other non-courtier intellectuals of his time, should have wished to open such skills to a wider public, or why Michishige should have wanted to remove an attack on them from his commentary. Here again was an evident difference of perspective between the two collaborators.

The choice of terms to designate the Japanese imperial lineage is another instance of differences between the two.⁶⁹ The first sentence of the joint commentary reads: “The reason that the kings of Japan have lasted perpetually is because, never forsaking rites, music, or the written word, they have not lapsed into vulgarity, and they possess the style of superior men.”⁷⁰ Banzan’s designation of the Japanese imperial lineage as “kings” (*ōsha* 王者; literally, since the character *wang* 王 is read in the fourth tone as a verb, as “one who acts as king”) is significant. The expression has a normative feel. It occurs in the *Analects* of Confucius, and is typical also of Mencius with his contingent, functional conception of kingship.⁷¹ It carries the nuance of “one who fulfills the norms of conduct of a proper king.” *Ōsha*, furthermore, is lower in the register of deference than the term *tennō* 天皇 (heavenly sovereign), which was specific to the Japanese sovereign or several other alternative terms by which the occupant of the Japanese throne was called in Banzan’s day, including *mikado* 帝 and *tenshi* 天子. Putting the Japanese emperor in the category of “kings” places him in an ordinary, universal class of sovereigns, rather than according him the particularistic, transcendent status conveyed by *tennō*. Thus *ōsha* also carries the nuance that Japan was part of the universal Confucian order—as was, indeed, one of Banzan’s basic assumptions. Michishige, however, revised *ōsha* to read *kōtō* 皇統, sovereign lineage or succession. Almost certainly this represents the intrusion of a point of view fostered at court. Although the provenance of the term *kōtō*, too, ultimately is Chinese, it had been used in imperial loyalist Japanese texts such as the fourteenth-century *Jinnō shōtōki* and *Taiheiki*, works that expressed the particularistic Japanese ideal of rule by an unbroken succession of sovereigns directly descended from the Shinto deities who had created the land.⁷² Michishige’s preference for this term reflects his identification with that loyalist tradition; he was, after all, a member of an ancient court lineage himself. To be sure, Banzan would not have wished to deny the continuity of the imperial lineage. As already seen, it symbolized for him Japan’s participation in the universal Confucian moral order. Nevertheless, his original choice was a wording with broader, more universalistic overtones.

Finally, it was part of Banzan’s exegetical style to draw direct comparisons between the world of the *Genji* and his own feudal world. This procedure was, no doubt, partly intended to make the novel more familiar and intelligible to warrior readers with their very different social background, for Banzan was conscious that the society of the novel was remote from their world. But Banzan’s intentions went beyond considerations of clarity. He also believed that the novel embodied universal historical and moral truths. This was so not simply on account of the insights into human nature that could be gleaned from it, but also because it depicted broader social and economic phenomena.

The world of the novel was for Banzan not an ideal world, but rather a compromised semi-arcadia. In the final phase of the “kingly age”—which, he believed, formed the historical setting of the *Genji monogatari*—decline from the high moral society achieved in Japan in the

remote past had already set in. This transitional nature of the society of the *Genji* gave Banzan freedom to identify features in it that were both normative and cautionary. He constantly sought to point to ways in which the world of the novel was related to his own times—how, indeed, features of the society depicted in the novel either contrasted with the developments of more recent and contemporary times (as in the case of the absence of a separate military class) or were causally connected with them (as in the case of the genesis of esoteric transmissions). The following passage illustrates how Banzan both drew explanatory comparisons and used the novel as a point of departure for denouncing the social and fiscal system of his own time. At “Suetsumuhana” 末摘花 3, commenting on the modest breakfast that Genji had before departing for court, Banzan wrote:⁷³

In a subsequent book as well, when Genji stays at Saga 嵯峨, the text refers simply to “his fruit and *kowaii*” 強飯 [steamed rice]. This is the pure, simple style. At this time, there would not have been many personages of greater estate than Genji, Tō no Chūjō 頭中將, and the like. They would not have been inferior even to today’s elite Lords of Provinces. If it were today, some sort of feast would have been involved. Congee and *kowaii* are not used now, even while hawking. Because frugality like this used to prevail in the past, the populace was affluent, and the age of court nobles continued for seventeen or eighteen hundred years without a tremor. The taxation of the people was the Chinese *kung-fa* 貢法 system, involving the payment of one tenth [of the total product]. . . . At that time, soldiers were drawn from among the peasantry. This was because [under that system] mobilization and taking to the field were speedy and involved no extravagance; thus neither civil nor military performance was neglected. With the rise of the military houses, however, [regimes] do not last even as long as three hundred years. That within merely a little over five hundred years there have been successive changes through [the regimes of] Kiyomori, Yoritomo 頼朝 the Hōjō 北条, the Ashikaga 足利, Nobunaga 信長, and Hideyoshi, and that periods of good government have been short is because the pure, simple style has been replaced by excessive fineness, the farmer-soldier and *kung-fa* systems have been destroyed, high and low are indolent, and the people suffer.

This passage illustrates Banzan’s commentarial style at its most discursive, radical, and polemical. It was, essentially, little less than a critique of the socio-political structure of the Tokugawa regime. Apparently it offended Michishige’s sensibilities, for it was dropped from the transcription that he made for his draft volume of commentary on “Suetsumuhana” and from the fair copy of the joint commentary. It is preserved only because the compiler of the independent commentary (probably, as it happens, Michishige himself) conscientiously restored it when abstracting Banzan’s original contribution to the joint work with the intention of reconstructing an exegesis in Banzan’s name. But it remains one of the examples, albeit the most extensive, of the rejection by Michishige of material provided by Banzan that compared and related the novel to the post-Heian, feudal world.

Conclusion

Individually, these examples of revision may seem trivial. Taken together, Michishige's alterations of Banzan's text form a coherent pattern. They suggest that the two collaborators, in a quiet, mutually respectful way, were contesting the interpretation and relevance of the *Genji* to their own times. For the courtier, the novel was a major capital resource inherited from the past. Mastery of the text and its background constituted not only his claim to social and cultural distinction, but also a valuable means of economic support, since he was frequently called upon to lecture on or to transcribe the novel. It was important for him that the tradition of commentary that he had inherited from his great-grandfather not be diluted but preserved in its pristine purity and authority. Michishige may also have perceived his emendations to Banzan's wordings as an exercise of taste. If so, then did not his collaborator's comparisons of the Heian courtly world with later, less refined societies appear to be coarse? Surely, Michishige disliked the intrusion of what was for him a post-canonical and debased age into the novel's purely aristocratic world. Such aesthetic considerations would have reinforced a disinclination in a temperamentally conservative man to accept a view of the novel that implicitly challenged the assumptions of the Tokugawa settlement. Michishige demonstrated no willingness to take risks. He seems to have been content to play the passive cultural role assigned to the Kyoto aristocracy by the Edo shogunate. He may have felt inhibited from being associated with views ostensibly critical of warrior regimes. Whatever his precise grounds may have been, plainly he was uncomfortable with aspects of Banzan's vigorous, radical, practical, and didactic interpretation of the *Genji*, and he was wary of Banzan's attempt to make the novel more accessible. To be sure, in terms of the courtiers' interests, Michishige was probably right to draw back from Banzan's universalizing approach—for if the ancient court culture were made too widely accessible, the monopoly of authority enjoyed by his own class as bearers of that courtly tradition would be threatened.

Banzan's attitude was different. For him, too, the *Genji* was a resource inherited from a past in many ways superior to the present, a cultural repository with merits that deserved to be widely and unstintingly recognized and a relevance that had to be made apparent to a contemporary readership. It was a monument to the past greatness of Japanese society and contained, in *Genji* himself, a portrait of a largely exemplary individual. The novel was not to be the inert object of academic, literary study or purely aesthetic appreciation, but a dynamic text that transformed its readers, directing their aspirations beyond the commonplace world in which they lived. "This tale," Banzan stated in his introduction to the commentary, "is written throughout with the basic aim of transforming" society.⁷⁴ There is an evangelical quality about his enthusiasm for the novel. It is thus possible to see Banzan as a particularly vigorous participant in a long process that had begun at least as early as the Kan'ei period: the loosening of the medieval tradition of "secret transmissions" and the dissemination of court culture outwards from the aristocratic society in which it had originated. Through this movement, the ancient cultural traditions and skills of the Kyoto court were to be made accessible to ever widening strata of society, part of a longer process that, arguably, has continued into the post-Restoration period.⁷⁵

In the end, Tokugawa high authority concluded that Banzan, with his tendency to appeal to marginalized social groups, his uninhibited willingness to criticize aspects of contemporary government, and perhaps his evangelical, Confucianized and idealized *Genji*, had

exceeded acceptable bounds. He had become an irritant to the body politic. By 1687, the regime had finally had enough of him. In the autumn of that year, he was ordered to the Kantō and placed in domiciliary confinement in the castle at Koga 古河. There he died four years later, as a political prisoner.

By contrast, in striving to domesticate Banzan's unsettling vision of the *Genji*, Michishige implicitly acquiesced in the role assigned to imperial courtiers by the warrior regime, that of purveyors of essentially apolitical cultural skills. He received his reward. In 1703, the shogunate raised his income by 200 koku 石 for his mastery of waka, his proper, public function. According to the *Tokugawa jikki* 徳川實紀 (Veritable Record of the Tokugawa Regime), Michishige "was reported to have gained face exceedingly."⁷⁶ It was recognized that he posed no threat to the shogunate. It can be conceded that his is but a single example of a kuge response to Confucianism, and more evidence would be required before it could properly be claimed as representative. His accommodation does, however, illustrate how a prominent member of a lineage that earlier in the century had had an honorable tradition of standing up to pressures from the military rulers of Japan preferred to preserve caution when faced with a challenge. If Michishige had ever had a will to resist publicly, it had been broken.

By the end of the seventeenth century, kuge protest seems to have become at best private, passive, and psychological. This attitude was shown not only by Michishige himself, but also in the next generation of the Nakanoin kindred. His second son Nonomiya Sadamoto 野々宮定基 (1669–1711), a specialist in court ceremonial, traveled from the imperial capital to the warriors' Eastern citadel in 1696 to attend the rites for the seventeenth anniversary of the death of the fourth shogun Ietsuna 家綱 (1641–1680; r. 1651–1680). While on this mission, he refused to keep a diary on the grounds that to set foot in the Kantō was to enter uncivilized territory.⁷⁷ If Sadamoto's intention was to express defiance, however, its nature was private and internal.⁷⁸ Such spirit of resistance to feudal authority as survived among imperial courtiers from the early Tokugawa period seems similarly to have remained largely passive.⁷⁹ It then sprang to life publicly in the very different historical circumstances of the waning days of the Tokugawa regime.

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field, and I have endeavored to acknowledge points where it impinges on the theme of this article.

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Abbreviations

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- CC *The Chinese Classics*, trans. James Legge. 5 vols. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960 (reprint of Hong Kong and Oxford eds. 1865–1893).
- NKBT Takagi Ichinosuke 高木市之助 et al., comp. *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 日本古典文学大系. 102 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1958–1987.
- NST Ienaga Saburō 家永三郎 et al. comp., *Nihon shisō taikei* 日本思想体系, 67 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1970–1982.

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NOTES

- 1 Ishii 1979, pp. 12–14. For a complete translation of the 1615 regulations, see Butler 2002, pp. 205–209. Emperor Kōkō 光孝 (830–887) reigned from 884 to 887. The first article of the “Regulations for the Emperor and Nobility” is borrowed, with minor changes, from *Kinpihō*, pp. 1048–49.
- 2 The spectacle of the shogunal visit to the imperial capital in 1626 contains a scene that shows one of the subtler devices used by the Tokugawa to establish their primacy. As Go-Mizunoo was about to make a progress to Nijō 二条 castle on this occasion, Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu (1604–1651; ruled 1623–1651) first went from the castle, his Kyoto residence, to the imperial palace to meet the emperor, showing ritual deference to him. Iemitsu’s father, the retired shogun Hidetada, however, awaited the emperor’s attendance within the Middle Gate of the castle, thus asserting his claim to ritual seniority. After Iemitsu returned from his mission to greet Go-Mizunoo at the palace, he rejoined his father Hidetada on the north side of the Middle Gate of Nijō Castle. Father and son waited there until the imperial palanquin (*hōren* 鳳輦) had passed through the outer gate called Shisokumon 四足門 and reached the Middle Gate before they made obeisance (*keisetsu* 磬折) to the emperor; *Tokugawa jikki*, vol. 2, pp. 377–87, entry for Kan’ei 寛永 3 [1626].9.6; esp. pp. 379, 383, and on the historical precedents considered, 386.
- 3 Kumakura 1982, p. 30; for further comment, Butler 2002, p. 194.
- 4 This account is drawn in part from Asao 1975, pp. 214–20.
- 5 Butler 2002, p. 235.
- 6 Webb 1968, p. 9.
- 7 The idealization of ancient Japan as “meritocratic” is found in the *Honchō monzui* 本朝文粹 and is mentioned in the widely read *Jinnō shōtōki*. “In early times, when people were selected for offices, virtuous conduct was the first criterion applied. If the candidates were alike in this regard, then they were judged by ability. . . . It is said in the [supplementary provisions *kyaku* 格] that ‘Although a menial in the morning, one can become a minister of state in the evening.’” *Jinnō shōtōki*, pp. 180–81; H. Paul Varley (tr.). *A Chronicle of Gods and Sovereigns*, pp. 255–56.
- 8 Bellah 1962, p. 33.
- 9 Tsuji 1974, p. 391.
- 10 Butler 2002, pp. 212–17.
- 11 See Keene 1976, pp. 24–29, and cf. Webb 1968, pp. 94–96. For a more general discussion of the culture of secret transmissions, see Nosco 1990, pp. 29–31. See also Cook 2000, cited in Klein 2002, p. 7, note 9.
- 12 *Chikuba shō*, 165–166. The authorship and dating of this text to Shiba Yoshimasa’s lifetime has been questioned on the basis of internal evidence; see *Nihon koten bungaku daijiten* IV, p. 227, s.v. “Chikuba shō.”
- 13 *Katō Kiyomasa okitegaki*, p. 251.
- 14 “Oboe”, p. 1146.
- 15 *Ikeda Mitsumasa nikki*, p. 446; entry for Manji 2 [1659].3.8.
- 16 See, for example, *ibid.*, p. 148, entry for Keian 慶安 4 [1651].3.8; and *ibid.*, p. 159, entry for Keian 5 [1652].5.21.
- 17 On this theme, see Boot 1992, *passim*.
- 18 “Non-aristocratic or commoner” distinguishes such Confucian scholars from the hereditary court Confucianist lineages (*Myōgyōke* 明経家) such as the Kiyohara 清原 or Nakahara 中原. See Boot 1992, esp. pp. 61–114.
- 19 Seika was the eleventh (or, according to another calculation twelfth) generation descendant of Fujiwara Teika 藤原定家 (Inoguchi 1982, pp. 9–10). One of Matsunaga Sekigo’s paternal great grandmothers was also descended from Teika (Matano 1982, p. 279).
- 20 Using the term “achievement” in its sociological sense as the antonym of “ascription.”
- 21 Kumakura 1982, p. 151; Kurachi Katsunao 1985, p. 308.
- 22 An instance where rented rooms (*kashizashiki* 貸座敷) were used for a meeting of men from different social backgrounds is noted in Kitakōji Toshimitsu’s diary entry for Jōkyō 貞享 2 [1685].10.6; see “Kitakōji Toshimitsu nikki shō”, BZ vol. 7, p. 184.
- 23 Kamigaito 1989, p. 24. The author does not cite a source for this anecdote. Its reliability, however,

is less important than its currency as an anecdote, which implies that such confusions of status were imaginable in the Kyoto of the time.

24 E.g., Fujiwara Seika (Matano 1982, p. 231).

25 See, for instance, the censorious opinion of one of the early shogunate's chief political pillars, Matsudaira Nobutsuna 松平信綱 (1596–1662; senior councillor [*rōjū* 老中] 1633–1662); cited in *Jigo keishiroku*, p. 85. The shogunate's advisers in Confucian matters, the Hayashi 林 family, were censorious of Wang Yangming and his followers; see the preface to Hayashi Razan's lost work *Yōmei sanbi* 陽明攢眉 by his son Gahō 鷺峰 (1618–80), dated in the middle of the Sixth Month, Keian 5 [1652], in *Gahō-sensei Rin gakushi zenshū*, 1689, fasc. 48, f. 18r. Gahō argued that Wang's doctrines were like Christianity and should be proscribed with all speed.

26 Boot 1992, pp. 61–82.

27 *Mencius*, IVA, 6; VB, 9; VIB, 15; CC vol, 2, pp. 295–296, 392–393, and 447 respectively.

28 Kumakura 1980, p. 305.

29 Kumakura 1982, pp. 169–173.

30 *Shokan*, pp. 181–184: letter No. 19, from Ekiken to unspecified addressee, dated Genroku 5 [1692].12.24.

31 *Baison saihitsu* 梅村載筆, p. 21. The attribution of this work to Hayashi Razan is subject to question. On internal evidence, it seems possible that it is a compilation of the teachings of Razan and his circle by someone familiar with Kyoto elite society.

32 *Seiken igen kōgi*, p. 179.

33 Ōkubo 1938, p. 29, quoting Inaba Mokusai 稻葉默齋. *Sendatsu iji* 先達遺事 (1767).

34 Kumakura 1982, pp. 190–191.

35 Najita 1991, p. 603.

36 Watanabe 1979, p. 280.

37 Ishida 1960, pp. 87–88.

38 *Ibid.*, pp. 144–145.

39 For a good biographical summary, see Gotō 1971.

40 *Nagatada jihitsu oboegaki*, p. 1458.

41 See Miyazaki 1990, pp. 341–345. The work of Gensei is the subject of a translation and introduction by Burton Watson (Watson 1983).

42 *Kumazawa-sensei gyōjō*, p. 154; cf. Miyazaki 1990, p. 343.

43 Banzan was to accept the theory that the Japanese imperial house was founded by the Chinese sage Tai Bo 泰伯 (the so-called *Taihaku torai setsu* 泰伯渡來說). See his *Taihaku den* 泰伯伝, text restored from wartime censorship, in *Zōtei Banzan zenshū*, vol. 6, Corrigenda, pp. 2–5; cf. Bitō 1961, pp. 221–223.

44 Kumazawa Banzan, *Shūgi washo*, NST vol. 30, p. 151; cf. the censored text, BZ vol. 1, pp. 202–203.

45 *Ibid.*, NST vol. 30, p. 153; cf. BZ vol. 1, pp. 205–206.

46 *Ibid.*, NST vol. 30, pp. 154–155; cf. BZ vol. 1, pp. 207–208.

47 For a vivid account and analysis of this incident, see Butler 2002, pp. 170–90. The life of Nakanoin Nakako 中院仲子 (?1590–1671) is the subject of a forthcoming study in English by Gaye Rowley, Waseda University.

48 *Mingō nisso* ed. Nakada Takeshi is an accessible modern edition.

49 Michimura's lectures to Ieyasu are noted in the entries for Genna 元和 1 [1615].7.20, 7.29, and 8.2 in *Tokugawa jikki*, vol. 2, pp. 59, 64, and 69. On his lectures to the emperor, see *Nihon koten bungaku daijiten* 日本古典文学大事典, 516, s.v. "Nakanoin Michimura."

50 For this office, see Butler 2002, pp. 239–40.

51 See Kumakura 1982, pp. 98, 102, and 113.

52 *Nihon koten bungaku daijiten*, p. 516.

53 Kumakura 1982, p. 197.

54 See Butler 2002, pp. 251–52.

55 Tsuji 1974, pp. 385–386.

56 *Keiun mondō*, p. 316; the comment was made toward the end of Michishige's life.

57 *Itakura Shigenori Kō jōkōki*, p. 204.

- 58 Kurita Mototsugu 1925, pp. 725–27.
- 59 *Ikedo Mitsumasa nikki*, p. 580; entry for Kanbun 7 [1667].6.4.
- 60 Tani Jinzan 谷秦山, *Shinro menmei* 新蘆面命 (1704), relevant passage quoted in Inoue 1902, p. 131. Also known as Ōmiwa Shigetō 大神種遠, Tani, whose wide-ranging interests crossed the borders between Confucianism and Shinto, was a disciple of Asami Keisai and Yamazaki Ansai, and was also influenced by the Shinto scholar and astronomer Shibusawa Shinro (Shibusawa Shunkai 渋沢春海; 1639–1715), whom he visited in Edo in 1704. *Shinro menmei* is a record of that visit, and the allegation regarding the informant (identified in Inoue 1902, p. 132, as Sanjōnishi Sanenori 三條西実教 [1619–1701]) is attributable to Shibusawa. Makino Chikashige 牧野親成 (1607–1677) was *shoshidai* in Kyoto from 1655 to 1668.
- 61 See “Kitakōji Toshimitsu nikki shō,” p. 260, entry for Shōtoku 正徳 2 [1711].4.9. Toshimitsu notes on parting from his friend Nakane after 43 years: “When [Ryū]ken lived in Akashi and Kōriyama, I relied on him for everything in communicating with Sokuyū 息游 [Banzan]. It was I alone who handled the communications and good offices with the Kyoto kuge.”
- 62 *Ibid.*, entry for Jōkyō 貞享 1 [1684].1.5, p. 175.
- 63 For a fuller discussion of the procedures followed in this collaborative project, see McMullen 1991.
- 64 Michishige also systematically toned down the anti-Buddhist asperity of Banzan’s text. Their different attitude to Buddhism is not, however, readily attributable to the difference in social background of the two collaborators. See McMullen 1991, p. 51.
- 65 The numbering of passages of comment follows that of “Nakanoin Michishige *Genji kikigaki shobonchū* no Kumazawa Banzan chūshaku to ihon *Genji gaiden* to no taishōhyō 中院通茂『源氏聞』書(『源氏聞書』) 諸本中の熊沢蕃山注釈と異本『源氏外伝』との対照表.” In Makkumaren 1991, pp. 7–44.
- 66 Makkumaren 1991, p. 139.
- 67 *Ibid.*, p. 144.
- 68 *Gengo gaiden* 源語外伝 [another title for *Genji gaiden*]; BZ vol. 2, p. 470.
- 69 On the subject of the designation of the Japanese emperor in pre-Restoration Japan, see Roberts 2007, *passim* but esp. pp. 225–30.
- 70 Makkumaren 1991, p. 142.
- 71 See *Analects*, XIII, 12; CC vol. 1, p. 232.
- 72 *Jinnō shōtōki*, p. 90; and *Taiheiki* 太平記 vol. 1, p. 161. In China, the term goes back at least to *Hou Han shu*, p. 613.
- 73 Makkumaren 1991, p. 155; BZ vol. 2, p. 464. For the “modest breakfast” scene, see *Genji monogatari* vol. 1, p. 251. The reference to Genji’s fruit and *kowaii* is from *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 226. On the *kung-fa* system, see *Mencius*, IIIA, 3; CC vol 2, pp. 240–242. For other examples, see McMullen 1991, p. 56 and pp. 64–65.
- 74 *Gengo gaiden*, p. 421.
- 75 Banzan’s project may have had a practical outcome in his old domain. Certain of his policies remained influential even after his departure. In 1669, the domain summoned musicians from Kyoto: and “had the Shinto priests throughout the province learn music in order to apply it to their *matsuri*; they stayed for more than 20 days and afterwards frequently came and, on the side, as they helped [with the Tōshōgū 東照宮] ceremonies, they were made to give lessons [in music]” (*Nihon kyōikushi shiryō*, p. 586).
- 76 *Tokugawa jikki*, vol. 6, p. 743; entry for “around” the Second Month of Genroku 14 [1701]; also see Kurachi, p. 311.
- 77 Nonomiya Sadamoto 野々宮定基, *Shōreki* 松暦, quoted in Shiba 1908, p. 167; see also Butler 2002, p. 300.
- 78 Cf. Koschmann 1978, pp. 20–22.
- 79 The Hōreki 宝暦 Incident of 1759 in which Takenouchi Shikibu 武内式部 (1712–1767), a Confucian scholar, lectured to low ranking court nobles in anti-bakufu terms, together with the Meiwa 明和 Incident of 1767 can perhaps be seen as early stirrings of anti-bakufu feeling within the court. See Najita 1971.

要旨

十七世紀日本に於ける公家と儒者
—『源氏物語』に関する中院通茂と熊沢蕃山との対話—

ジェームス・マックマレン

本稿は、徳川初期の二人の傑出した知識人、公家の中院通茂と武家の儒学者熊沢蕃山の共同作業によってなされた『源氏物語』の注釈書に焦点をおく。両者は注釈書の読者層、秘伝の扱い、皇統の称呼、武家社会との比較に対する相容れない意見を持っていた。通茂は、天皇あるいは「皇統」の唯一無比の役割や地位、汚れない宮廷文化を顕現する物語世界にこだわっていた。蕃山は、普遍主義的な傾向が強いただけあって、『源氏物語』をその歴史的起原を超越した立場から解釈し、当時の武家社会と関連づけ相対化しようとした。本稿はこれらのテーマを論ずるに際し、先ず当時の京都社会を概観し、特に朝幕関係、（伊藤仁斎のような）儒学者の社会的位置やその活躍に注目する。さらに、現存写本の訂正、見せ消ちなどを通じて、注釈書の共作の方法を分析し、蕃山と通茂の主要な意見の相違点を確認する。