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Temples, Timber, and Negotiations: Buddhist-Lay Relations in Early Modern Japan through the Prism of Conflicts over Mountain Resources

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Specialists in Tokugawa history are well aware of institutional Buddhism's support for warrior-mandated policies against heterodox religious groups, and the clergy's socio-religious authority over the laity. However, Yoshida Nobuyuki, Tsukada Takashi, and other scholars' recent research on Edo-period society brings into question the degree of Buddhist dominance over other status communities including the peasantry, especially in the context of non-religious economic activities and village level social practices. This paper examines Buddhist-lay relations through the prisms of status discourse and social practices by studying the tree plantation operations of Yakuōin, a Shingon temple on Mt. Takao to the west of Edo. Aside from being a training center and popular pilgrimage site, Yakuōin managed a tract of mountain land granted by the Tokugawa house. The clerics made money on sales of timber harvested from this holding, but they often came into conflict with peasants residing on nearby Tokugawa lands who wanted to exploit Mt. Takao's natural resources. Despite the clergy's prominent place in Edo society, Yakuōin's records indicate peasants could win viable settlements by manipulating early modern legal practices and social structures to their advantage. The archives also provide examples of clerics and peasants who worked in unison to resolve conflicts on Mt. Takao. This paper will combine these accounts and advances in Edo historiography to present a model of cleric-lay social dynamics that juxtaposes modes of Buddhist dominance with the more evenly negotiated aspects of this relationship. It also considers the nature of Buddhist temple integration into early modern village communities.

Keywords: Tokugawa, Buddhism, Yakuōin, Mt. Takao, timber, silviculture, mediation, status, peasants, refuge

In recent years, prominent Buddhist temples have extended their spring and fall viewing hours to offer special evening "light-up" displays of seasonal foliage. For institutions with such advantageous natural resources (many of which have required decades of financial and labor investment), the great influx of evening viewers brings in added revenue. The local

tourist industry also benefits. This combination of modern lighting technology and tree viewing constitutes a novel means for attracting public attention and funding, but the Buddhist clergy's economic reliance upon trees within their precincts is not a new phenomenon. Judging from documents held by regional headquarter temples (*chūbonji* 中本寺 or *inaka bonji* 田舎本寺) and village authorities in early modern Japan (1600–1868), most Buddhist institutions in the Kantō 関東 region possessed negligible holdings of arable land, yet many had trees within their precincts.¹ Temple records further show the clergy and nearby lay communities shared an intense interest in the development and disposition of these resources for construction projects, or as a means for raising money in early modern Japan's vibrant timber markets.²

Given their potential as long-term commercial investments, trees also became objects of litigation as communities fought over the right to harvest even small stands of cedars (*sugi* 杉) or Japanese cypress (*hinoki* 檜). In this article I explore the relationship between temples, timber, and social conflict in early modern Japan through a case study of one temple's efforts to gain economic benefits from silviculture (timber farming) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.³ The site in question is Yakuōin 薬王院, a Shingi Shingon 新義真言 temple located on Mt. Takao 高尾山 in the city of Hachioji 八王子市.⁴ Situated due west of



Figure 1. Yakuōin

1 Hur 2007, pp. 8–9.

2 Totman 1995, especially pp. 19–46, surveys Edo period lumber markets.

3 See Totman 1998 for a survey of early modern silvicultural history.

4 Hōsei Daigaku Tamagawa Toshokan Chihō Shiryōshitsu Iinkai 法政大学多摩川図書館地方資料室委員会 has printed numerous Yakuōin records in its three-volume series *Takaosan Yakuōin monjo* 高尾山薬王院文書 (TSM 1989–1992, below), as well as a catalogue of the temple's entire collection of documents (Hōsei Daigaku Tamagawa Toshokan Chihō Shiryōshitsu Iinkai 1987). For this paper, I will cite the transcribed materials by providing the TSM volume, page number, and document number. At present there is one major scholarly anthology devoted to Yakuōin's early modern history (Murakami 1997), and Helen Hardacre discusses it in her recent work on nineteenth gazetteer records (Hardacre 2002). Toyama 2011 and 2013 are the most recent studies of the temple.

Tokyo, the temple is now surrounded by the Meiji no Mori Takao Quasi-National Park 明治の森高尾国定公園, but it controlled much of the mountain and its natural resources during the Edo period. Visitors approaching Yakuōin's main entrance now find the path lined with numerous plaques announcing donations of cedar saplings (*nae* 苗) from the temple's lay supporters (Figure 1). No trees actually changed hands, and the present practice is a legerdemain for indicating cash donations of ¥10,000 or more from individuals, companies and other groups. As such, the rows of plaques offer a striking display of Yakuōin's continuing popularity in modern Japan.⁵

This device of “tree donations” reflects the important role of tree management in the temple's history. Although not immediately apparent to modern visitors, the plaques also hint at Yakuōin's struggles to protect its early modern rights over Mt. Takao's resources from local peasants. Studies of timber practices and related disputes have given us valuable insights into Edo period economic systems and land management methods. They have also provided windows on social and legal mechanisms for conflict resolution that were employed by early modern communities.⁶ Research on early modern religious organizations has largely ignored the role of temples as land managers.⁷ However, approaching early modern temple histories from this angle constitutes a method for stepping outside a longstanding analytic framework that has focused on warrior subordination of Buddhism's medieval-era political and economic independence, and the subsequent growth of the *danka* 檀家 (“patron family”) system, in which the Tokugawa bakufu mandated the registration of households with local temples as a means for eradicating Christians.⁸ Furthermore, this scholarly model has stressed the clergy's economic abuse of its patrons, and the laity's inability to resist such aggression.⁹ Edo period accounts of temple-*danka* relationships depict the inequalities created by such politico-religious policies, but when we shift our attention to different records pertaining to land management and access to natural resources—spheres of activity where the laity had their own rights—we have an opportunity to reevaluate the nature of clerical-lay relationships under conditions of more evenly balanced levels of authority and power.

Recent advances in related areas of research have prompted this need to re-envision the clergy's place in Edo society. In the field of religious studies, Duncan Williams' study of medicine sales at Sōtō Zen temples, Nam-lin Hur's discussion of Sensōji's 浅草寺 role as an

5 The Yakuōin website that describes the modern donation system has the following address: <http://www.takaosan.or.jp/ogoma.html> (accessed March 6, 2015).

6 Totman 1998, pp. 50–115 surveys problems with deforestation and administrative efforts to regulate timber harvesting. His 1985 work looks at these issues in relation to the forests of modern Akita prefecture. Brown 2011 is a study of paddy and dry field management practices in northern Japan, but his discussion of attitudes regarding commonly held lands (*iriaichi* 入会地) applies to forest regions; see pp. 2–7 for an overview. Also, on p. 191 he notes that the bakufu and domains were not able to impose a single form of land possession, and there were many regional variations that were often set at the local level.

7 In contrast, there is more research on the relationship between Buddhist doctrines and environmental consciousness. For studies of Buddhist Japanese Tendai and Shingon discourses on vegetal soteriology, see Rambelli 2001, and Rambelli 2007, esp. Chap. 1, pp. 11–57. Buddhist doctrines have also influenced the modern ecology/environmental movement. For representative examples, see Kaza and Kraft 2002, Badiner 1990, and Tucker and Williams 1997.

8 Hur 2007 offers the most recent discussion of this scholarship. The registration policy was also used to suppress certain Nichiren Buddhists and other groups that resisted Tokugawa religious policies.

9 Klautau 2008 surveys the impact of Tsuji Zennosuke's multi-volume *Nihon bukkyōshi* on this interpretation of early modern Buddhist social history.

entertainment center, and Timon Screech's work on Gohyakurakanji 五百羅漢寺 illustrate the vibrant and multifaceted religious activities that existed outside the temple-*danka* system.¹⁰ Of particular note to this paper is Barbara Ambros' illuminating analysis of the Ōyama 大山 temple/shrine multiplex in Sagami province 相模国 (modern Kanagawa 神奈川県). Utilizing Foucault's notion of "heterotopia," she maps the historical shifts and contestations associated with a multi-dimensional socio-religious geography that included Kogi Shingon 古義真言 priests, *yamabushi* 山伏 (mountain ascetics), former ascetics turned innkeepers (*oshi* 御師), and pilgrims.¹¹ By doing so, Ambros shows how a supposedly unified temple-shrine mountain complex actually consisted of many communities that strove to protect their respective spheres of interests.

Along similar lines, the social historian Yoshida Nobuyuki 吉田伸之 combines a "segmented society=spatial structure" analysis of Asakusa's Sensōji precinct with a discussion of *shoyū* 所有, or the right to utilize specific modes of ownership in the production of wealth, to argue that the precinct encompassed multiple physical and social spaces. In these areas, the clergy, lay residents and occupational stakeholders negotiated their places through the control of specific activities.¹² Yoshida illustrates this point with a micro-study of water carriers. The clergy owned the wells on temple lands, but a select group of townsmen held a monopoly over the distribution of water drawn from those wells to shops within the temple's precinct. As a result, the clergy and the laity exerted different yet imbricated sets of rights over resources within the boundaries of Sensōji. The temple-*danka* relationship was thus one of several modes of clergy-lay interaction in Asakusa, and under certain circumstances townspeople could exercise unique prerogatives that counterbalanced Buddhist clergy's authority.

New research on the status system (*mibun seido* 身分制度) of Edo Japan further reconfigures our understanding of the Edo-era Buddhist community. In theory, the system sought to identify every member of society with a specific status group, each of which was charged with duties for supporting the military authority of the warrior houses. These identities evolved from pre-1600 social practices, and so the Tokugawa did not create "status" per se. Bakufu policies tried, however, to define rigidly the parameters of status by limiting community members to certain occupations. While perhaps not an intended outcome, research by Tsukada Takashi 塚田孝 and David Howell suggests this systemization led to the formation of a compound/complex society with many groups maintaining warrior-recognized status-based rights over specific activities. The Buddhist clergy, for one, exercised almost complete control over mortuary rituals and the temple registration process, but peasants charged with paying taxes to warrior regimes could use their obligations to claim

10 Williams 2005; Hur 2000; and Screech 1993. Also see Gina Cogan's new study, *The Princess Nun* (2014); the social history of rural temples by Hōzawa Naohide 朴澤直秀 (2004); work on Mt. Takao by Toyama Tōru 外山徹 (1996, 1998a, 1998b, 2011, 2013); and examinations by Takano Toshihiko 高埜利彦 in 1989 and 2014 of the imperial court's influence on religious communities.

11 Ambros 2008.

12 Yoshida 2007b, pp. 214–21. This article summarizes research presented in Yoshida 2000, pp. 287–314. His model divides Sensōji into five spatial groupings: the administrative buildings; the area around the main hall, including shops along the Nakamise 仲見世; Sensōji's thirty-four sub-temple precincts; fire break lands (*hiyokechi* 火除地); and the temple's farm lands (domain) to the north of Asakusa. He further defines three social spaces at Sensōji: the areas within the temples for the clerics; the larger precincts that included shop renters and others of townsmen status; and the temple's peasants. Yoshida 2007a discusses various forms of ownership connected with status identities.

control over fields and other resources.¹³ Furthermore, these studies show how an individual could maintain a normative status identity but in reality pursue non-recognized work to earn a livelihood. When applied to the Buddhist clergy, this insight means we need to consider areas of Buddhist clerical activity not related to ritual performances and temple registrations.¹⁴

Status provided a substructure for social integration, but status groups were never free of internal fractures and tension, a point driven home by Herman Ooms in his extended analysis of rural life entitled *Tokugawa Village Practice*.¹⁵ Drawing upon village records, he shows how the internal integrity of status communities could be rent both by economic pressures and contending claims to social authority that existed among peasant families. In addition, while the Tokugawa state legally defined the nature of early modern social relationships, in fact it left many aspects of daily governance to local status group leaders. As a result, village conflicts revolved around intra-status power relations among peasants, or inter-status frictions between villagers and other communities like the clergy, each of which argued from the strength of their specific status rights.¹⁶ Where possible, contestants resolved such issues among themselves, but when a solution eluded them, peasants and clerics then had to request adjudication from bakufu and domain officials (all of whom had warrior status).

Few Kantō area temples could match Yakuōin’s mountain holdings and its extensive silviculture program. Therefore, its abbots had to deal with specific administrative issues that differed from challenges facing other temples in the region. Nonetheless, Yakuōin’s extensive records provide a means for examining modes of clerical-lay interaction that would have been present in all early modern communities. Drawing upon the methods and insights found in Ooms, Yoshida, Tsukada, and Howell, I will assess the impact of status, ownership, and legal rights dynamics on four socio-spatial matrices that informed the

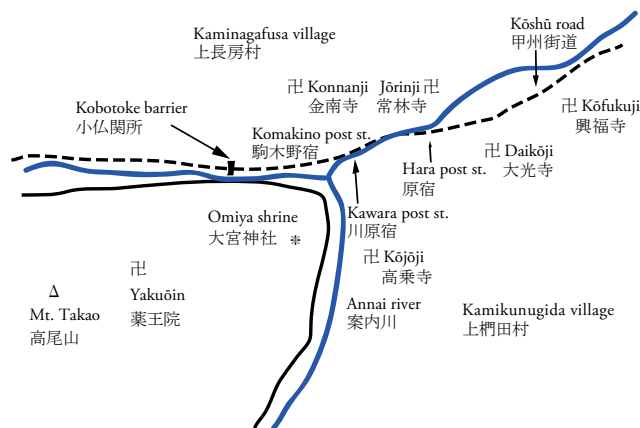


Figure 2. The Yakuōin Area

13 Certain Shinto shrines and Yamabushi temples performed funeral rituals for their respective clerics.

14 Howell 2005. Tsukada summarizes his status model in Tsukada 1997, pp. 5–39, but much of his research since his first book in 1987 has focused on this topic.

15 Ooms 1996.

16 Ooms refers to this structure as the “Tokugawa juridical field,” a world in which the law and juridical practices were not autonomous from the warrior regime’s socio-political system.

temple's early modern identity and activities.¹⁷ The first is the physical geography of the area and the flora that grew within it. With an altitude of 600m, Mt. Takao is one peak in the mountain range that abuts the western edge of the Kantō Plain (see Figure 2). Its northern flank falls steeply into the Kobotoke 小仏 river valley, while the eastern and southern sides are the water shed for the smaller Annai 案内 river.¹⁸ The land to the north of the Kobotoke river rises again to form another range of peaks. This was the location of Kaminagafusa 上長房 village.¹⁹ To the east another rural community—Kamikunugida 上欄田—was situated in a series of lower foothills.²⁰ The generally mountainous geography limited the acreage of arable lands, and so residents were more dependent upon woodland products for their livelihood than other villagers in the Hachiōji region. The nineteenth century bakufu gazetteer *Shinpen Musashi fudoki kō* 新編武蔵風土記稿 describes the mountain as being covered with numerous tree species, including pine (*matsu* 松), fir (*momi* 樅), Japanese cypress (*hinoki* 檜), and oak (*kashi* 榿). The soil was particularly good for cedars (*sugi* 杉).²¹

This economic reliance upon timber resources was not free of potential difficulties. Due to the long growing time needed to produce quality wood, any decision to harvest came with a high opportunity cost: once an area was cut, it would not yield new benefits for several generations. Furthermore, studies of early modern ownership patterns reveal the access rights and the managerial obligations associated with mountain areas were communal in nature, and often multi-layered in organization.²² Not surprisingly, conflicts were common. They might occur among peasants who obtained fuel, fodder, and fertilizer from village common lands (*iriaichi* 入会地). In other instances, tensions emerged between warriors who claimed exclusive control over large tracts of militarily and economically strategic forests, and the peasants who actually managed them. Regardless of the Buddhist clergy's monopoly over certain religious activities, the following case study will evaluate the relationship between Mt. Takao's geography and natural resources, and Yakuōin's managerial strategies. This will allow us to examine the temple's reactions to the problems associated with timber bearing lands that occurred throughout the early modern period.

The juxtaposition of the geographic elements that set Mt. Takao and Yakuōin apart was overlaid by a second matrix of sacred and secular relationships. Much of the temple's pre-1550 history has been lost due to fire and economic decline.²³ But records from the early 1600s state that worship halls for Yakushi Nyorai 薬師如来 and other buddhas and kami dotted Yakuōin's precincts, with the most important being the shrine dedicated to the mountain deity Iizuna Gongen 飯縄権現 (Avatar of Iizuna). As the shrine's administrators (*bettō* 别当), the Buddhist priests of Yakuōin controlled all religious and economic activities on Mt. Takao. During the mid- to late-Edo period, they also strove to "project" the mountain's sacred identity beyond the immediate area by expanding the temple's base of lay believers in Edo through a system of pilgrimage leaders who would guide believers to the

17 My usage of such documents echoes Philip Brown's emphasis on the value of local histories as a means for re-thinking national narratives (Brown 2000, pp. 38–49, especially p. 44).

18 The Kobotoke river is now named the Minamiya 南浅 river.

19 Ashida and Nemoto 1996, pp. 229–35.

20 Ashida and Nemoto 1996, pp. 189–90.

21 The bakufu's survey of Mt. Takao and Yakuōin was recorded in 1826. This data now appears in volume 5 of the 1996 edition. See Ashida and Nemoto 1996, pp. 190–200.

22 Watanabe 2002, pp. 249–54; Brown 2011, pp. 18–24.

23 Toyama 2011, pp. 5–15.

temple's halls.²⁴ Eventually, Yakuōin gained enough prominence to become a prayer temple (*kitōji* 祈祷寺) for the Kii 紀伊 branch of the Tokugawa house.²⁵ Generations of abbots also projected their influence via Yakuōin's network of affiliated "branch" temples (*matsuji* 末寺) situated within local peasant communities, and through its control of the Ōmiya Daimyōjin 大宮大明神 shrine near the entrance to Mt. Takao's lands and the Annai river. Villagers at the base of the mountain managed their own protective shrines (*chinju* 鎮守), and some were *danka* registrants of temples outside Yakuōin's network, but diaries of the Ishikawa family 石川家 in Kamikunugida record many instances of village leaders climbing Mt. Takao to ask Iizuna Gongen for relief from drought and other natural problems.²⁶ Yakuōin and the mountain that rose above the villagers thus occupied a prominent place in their religious world-view, while Yakuōin's branch system created sacred spaces through the placement of mortuary temples and resident abbots within their villages.

The Tokugawa status matrix discussed above amplified these geographic and religious differences. As members of the Shingi Shingon school, Yakuōin's clerics had a higher standing in the overall status order than the peasants living in the valleys. They were thus empowered to administer the temple and its holdings without villager interference. In the case of Yakuōin, the abbots enhanced the luster of their temple's politically defined status identity by developing associations with the elite like the Kii Tokugawa house, and the Shingon *monzeki* 門跡 temple of Daikakuji 大覚寺 in Kyoto.²⁷ The village residents had no counter to such prestige, but the balance of status power was not entirely against them. As the suppliers of taxes and corvée labor to the bakufu, peasants maintained their own forms of status-based rights. Their authority did not negate the clergy's prerogatives, but if deftly wielded by savvy peasant leaders, it could offset the clergy's formal status advantages.

The last matrix to be considered here is the Tokugawa governing system (Figure 3). The early modern political geography in the Kantō was a complex welter of jurisdictions. The bakufu relied upon the *jisha bugyō* 寺社奉行 (or temple and shrine magistracy) to oversee religious organizations and their practices. This office was filled by vassal *fudai* 譜代 daimyo of the Tokugawa

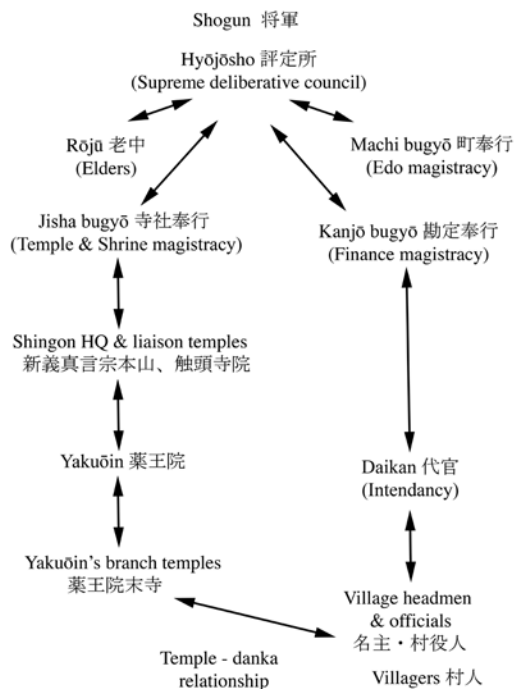


Figure 3. Tokugawa Governing Structure

24 Toyama 2011, pp. 78–87.

25 Yasuda 1998, pp. 245–68.

26 Toyama 1996, pp. 533–42. The Ishikawa were hereditary village headmen.

27 See Iwahashi 1998 for a detailed discussion of the Daikakuji-Yakuōin relationship. *Monzeki* were temples with abbots who came from the imperial household and aristocratic families.

house who rotated in and out of the position as they rose in the bakufu's administrative hierarchy.²⁸ During their tenure, the daimyo operated out of their own residences, and their retainers became temporary magistracy officials. Their duties included the promulgation of bakufu codes dealing with religious matters, and the adjudication of disputes involving clerics and temples. Under the *jisha bugyō*, the Buddhist schools managed their internal affairs through headquarter institutions (*honzan* 本山), and Kantō-based liaison temples (*furegashira* 触頭).²⁹ Yakuōin was a branch of Kyoto's Daigoji 醍醐寺,³⁰ while at the local level it functioned as a regional head temple (*chihō honji* 地方本寺 or *inaka honji*) that administered seventeen subordinate branches and their resident clerics.³¹

The peasants residing on Tokugawa lands on the other hand were governed by the bakufu's *kanjō bugyō* 勘定奉行 (finance magistracy). These functionaries were selected from the Tokugawa house's own *hatamoto* 旗本 (bannermen) retainers, hence they were ranked beneath the *jisha bugyō* in the warrior status hierarchy.³² Nevertheless, the *kanjō bugyō* bore heavy responsibility for maintaining the economic and socio-legal integrity of the Tokugawa shogun's lands. The day-to-day oversight of these interests rested with their subordinate intendants known as *daikan* 代官.³³ Those with Kantō-area jurisdictions resided in Edo, but some *daikan* maintained second offices elsewhere. For example, the Egawa, who originally hailed from Nirayama 萼山 in Suruga 駿河, had a residence/office there in addition to their Edo mansion. *Daikan* duties ranged from tax collection and land management to inspection details and village policing. Each one managed a support staff of lower-ranking warriors, and they worked through village headmen (*nanushi* 名主) to oversee peasant affairs.³⁴

The proximity of the Kōshū road 甲州街道 that ran by the Kobotoke river added further complexity to the local juridical geography. This was a strategically important highway between Edo and Kai 甲斐 province to the west, and the bakufu monitored travelers at the Kobotoke barrier located near the base of Mt. Takao. Furthermore, the bakufu's *sukegō* 助郷 ("supporting villages") system required the peasants of Kamikunugida and Kaminagafusa to maintain horses (*sukema* 助馬) for the Komakino 駒木野 and Kawara 川原 post-stations. They were also expected to provide material support for the barrier guard.³⁵ The villagers needed access to large quantities of grass and other kinds of fodder to fulfill these obligations, and this increased their reliance upon resources extracted from the surrounding mountains.

28 Detailed discussions of this office are in Hiramatsu 1960, pp. 311–66; Ozawa 1983; and Vesey 2003, pp. 55–62.

29 Every school had at least one liaison temple. These institutions transmitted bakufu laws and announcements to their respective clerical organizations, and they presented clerical petitions and other administrative documents to Tokugawa officials.

30 Like Daikakuji noted above, Daigoji was affiliated with the imperial house, but Yakuōin's relationships with these temples differed in form: whereas the Daikakuji connection was based upon personal links between abbots, the Daigoji association formally placed Yakuōin within a specific institutional hierarchy of temples.

31 Yoshioka 1998 analyzes the Yakuōin branch temple system.

32 The *hatamoto* in the *kanjō bugyō* usually had their own domains with a value of 2,000–9,000 *koku* 石. One *koku* was roughly equivalent of 278 liters, the purported amount of rice consumed by one person in a year.

33 For descriptions of the *daikan*, see Murakami 1997, pp. 3–10; and Nakata 2005, pp. 1–33.

34 The Egawa, for example, usually had twenty or more officials under their command (Nakata 2005, pp. 44–45).

35 Vaporis 1994, p. 107. For an account of the barriers, see pp. 100–128; for a detailed analysis of the road system, and the role played by the peasants charged with supporting it, see pp. 57–82. The bakufu also exacted portage labor from the peasants of *sukegō* villages, but that aspect was not a factor in the temple-village incidents examined here.

Finally, in difficult or important cases where the issues and litigants crossed status boundaries, the Hyōjōsho 評定所 (Supreme Judicial Council) rendered final judgments. Its membership consisted of the *fudai* daimyo who served as *rōjū* 老中 (elder advisors), the *jisha bugyō*, the *kanjō bugyō*, the Edo *machi bugyō* 町奉行 (city magistrates), and a member of the Ōmetsuke 大目付 (great inspectorate).

These four matrices were brought into juxtaposition in 1648 when the Tokugawa gave Yakuōin a land grant with exclusive rights to the timber tracts on Mt. Takao. Figuratively speaking, one might say that the trees “pegged” the natural, religious, social, and political geographies of the area into a theoretically cohesive structure of relationships defined and regulated by the Tokugawa. But what would happen to the structure if these pegs were broken by one of the communities in the area? The following analysis examines the slippages, fractures, and negotiations that occurred when struggles over timber disrupted the relationships between the matrices found on Mt. Takao. In so doing it exposes facets of early modern Buddhism not evident in studies of the clergy’s religious activities, and thereby offers new perspectives on Buddhism’s place within Edo society.

Yakuōin’s Timber Stands and Communal Contention

Prior to start of Tokugawa rule in 1590, Yakuōin benefited from a combined 150 *koku* grant from the Hōjō 北条 house that included mountain lands, and parts of the neighboring Kunugida 櫛田 village.³⁶ The Hōjō actively protected the temple’s timber and bamboo resources, a policy the subsequent Tokugawa regime initially maintained with a 1591 code that prohibited unapproved harvesting by villagers outside the temple’s lands.³⁷ The bakufu later reversed this stance by appropriating the timberlands for its own use, but in response to a series of Yakuōin petitions, Tokugawa officials partially recompensed the temple with a 75 *koku* “vermillion seal” (*shuinchi* 朱印地) land grant in 1648.³⁸ The *Shinpen Musashi fudoki kō* notes Yakuōin’s holdings measured over fifty *chō* 町 east to west, and over thirty-five *chō* north to south.³⁹ The Tokugawa also exempted the temple from future warrior requisitions of timber and bamboo.⁴⁰ In effect, the Tokugawa recognized Yakuōin as the sole proprietor of the granted mountain tract and its forest resources. The temple also had approximately 600 m² of taxable farmland that yielded a revenue of 1609 copper *mon* 文 coins. These fields were divided into small strips at the foot of the mountain, and farmed by nineteen peasants from the temple’s domain and a few residents of outside villages. These areas do not figure in the border disputes that I discuss later.⁴¹

Temple records from the Meiji period state it had always relied on timber to support its fiscal base, but there is little documentation of how Yakuōin used these resources during the early decades of the early modern era. Fortunately, an 1877 ledger sheds light on the scale of temple’s silviculture program during the last decades of the Edo period.

36 Nishizawa 1998, p. 227. The *Shinpen Musashi fudoki kō* listed Mt. Takao and Yakuōin under the heading for Kamikunugida; this was a late Edo period reflection of the long standing links between the mountain and the village.

37 TSM, vol. 1, no. 189, p. 295.

38 Nishizawa 1998, pp. 229–32.

39 Ashida and Nemoto 1996, p. 192. The tract was approximately 20 km².

40 TSM, vol. 1, no. 197, p. 300.

41 Toyama 2011, pp. 182–83. The source data is from TSM, vol. 3, no. 677, pp. 400–406.

Chart 1. Yakuōin Timber Plantation Costs⁴²

Date	Place	Activities or reasons for costs	Costs
1845	Konpira 金比羅 shrine, areas behind the shrine; near the Fuji road 富士道; Amashiba 天柴	Payment for 2,500 cedar seedlings, planting, weeding	2 <i>ryō</i> 兩 2 <i>bu</i> 分 ⁴³ 12 <i>kan</i> 貫 790 <i>mon</i> 文
1851	Maesawa 前沢	Weeding	1 <i>bu</i> 2 <i>shu</i> 540 <i>mon</i>
1852	Maesawa	Weeding	2 <i>bu</i> 2 <i>shu</i>
1853	Areas above Hebitaki 蛇瀧, and around the Konpira shrine	Labor for planting 200 cedar seedlings, weeding	3 <i>bu</i>
1854	Area above Ōsugi road 大杉道, and below the Konpira shrine	Oak seedlings, planting labor, weeding	700 <i>mon</i> 2 <i>shō</i> 升 white rice
1855	Behind the Oku no In 奥ノ院, and below Konpira shrine	1,800 oak seedlings, weeding	1 <i>ryō</i> 3 <i>bu</i>
1856	Maesawa; east of the main shrine (the Iizuna Gongen shrine), and below the Konpira shrine	3,000 cedar seedlings, 1,000 oak seedlings, 200 other various seedlings, costs for transportation of cedar seedlings from Mii village, cedar planting labor, weeding	8 <i>ryō</i> 1 <i>bu</i> 2 <i>shu</i> 6 <i>kan</i> 584 <i>mon</i>
1857	Above the Ōsugi road, Maesawa, Ushirozawa 後沢, Kōnoki 香之木	1,900 oak seedlings, 6,500 cedar seedlings, weeding, sake	16 <i>ryō</i> 3 <i>bu</i> 6 <i>monme</i> 匁 364 <i>mon</i>
1858	Maesawa river path, and elsewhere	Cedar and oak seedlings, planting labor, weeding	7 <i>ryō</i> 8 <i>kan</i> 600 <i>mon</i>
1859	Maesawa, Kōnoki, Sawako 沢子	Cedar and oak seedlings, planting labor, weeding	9 <i>ryō</i> 2 <i>bu</i> 3 <i>shu</i> 6 <i>kan</i> 919 <i>mon</i>
1860	Maesawa, Ozawa 小沢, Kōnoki	Cedar seedlings, cedar planting labor, weeding	4 <i>ryō</i> 2 <i>shu</i> 3 <i>monme</i> 9 <i>kan</i> 811 <i>mon</i>
1861	Maesawa, the crossroads, ⁴⁴ Kōnoki	Weeding	4 <i>ryō</i> 2 <i>bu</i> 334 <i>mon</i>
1863	Idosawa 井戸沢, Konpira shrine, Furutaki 古瀧, Maesawa	6,200 cedar seedlings, planting labor, transportation, weeding	11 <i>ryō</i> 18 <i>kan</i> 476 <i>mon</i>

42 Chart 1 summarizes data found in TSM, vol. 3, no. 562, pp. 97–105. This information was compiled for the Meiji government.

43 The Tokugawa monetary system primarily consisted of currency minted from gold, silver, and copper. The theoretical equivalencies between currencies was: one *ryō* 兩 (gold) = sixty *monme* 匁 (silver) = 1,000 *mon* 文 (copper). One *ryō* could be divided into four *bu* 分 or sixteen *shu* 朱, and a string of 1,000 *mon* was called a *kan* 貫. These ratios changed over time, and by the nineteenth century, one *ryō* was worth several thousand copper *mon*. (Various domains also circulated paper notes, but Yakuōin's administrators did not use them.)

44 The original document merely has *jūmonji* 十文字.

Date	Place	Activities or reasons for costs	Costs
1864	Ōyama road 大山道, elsewhere	Cedar seedlings, planting labor, weeding	6 <i>ryō</i> 3 <i>bu</i> 7 <i>kan</i> 41 <i>mon</i>
1865	Furutaki, elsewhere	Cedar planting labor, weeding	1 <i>ryō</i> 3 <i>bu</i> 2 <i>shu</i>
1866	Maesawa	Weeding	4 <i>ryō</i> 2 <i>bu</i> 1 <i>shu</i> 215 <i>mon</i>
1867	Maesawa	Weeding	1 <i>ryō</i> 2 <i>bu</i> 4 <i>kan</i> 372 <i>mon</i>
1868	Below Miharashimichi 見晴道	Oak seedlings, weeding	5 <i>ryō</i> 3 <i>bu</i> 2 <i>shu</i>

During the twenty-four years covered here, Yakuōin invested a total of 91 *ryō* 2 *bu* in gold and 76 *kan* 730 *mon* in copper into its timber stands. The temple administration worked with a number of sapling sellers, the primary supplier being one Bun'emon 文右衛門 from Mii 三井 village (Tsukui 津久井 district, Sagami 相模) during the peak planting years in the 1850s. Of total expenditure, the temple spent 52 *ryō* 3 *shu* and 8 *kan* 795 *mon* on seedlings, with the remainder going towards labor costs. Judging from the listings, Bun'emon and other sellers sometimes brought laborers from their villages to help with the planting, but the temple often hired nearby peasants from the foot of Mt. Takao to weed.⁴⁵ Occasionally lay believers bolstered these efforts by donating seedlings (a forerunner of the modern practice seen in Figure 1), but on the whole Yakuōin bore the investment costs itself.⁴⁶

These capital outlays were significant, and potential losses from disease, insect infestation and weather related disasters were a constant threat during the decades needed for timber stand maturation. Nonetheless, the following receipts from 1846 to 1856 indicate revenue from the plantation offset the costs and the risks. Timber sales between 1854 and 1856 alone recovered the nearly one 100 *ryō* expended on plantation activities, and the temple thereby made profits from the other transactions.

Chart 2. Yakuōin Timber Sales⁴⁷

Date (year, month)	Site of cutting	Species/tree count	Sale price	Buyer
1846. 7	Amashiba	Cedar/200	33 <i>ryō</i>	Yagobei 弥五兵衛, Kamikunugida
1854. 12	Kōnoki	Misc. trees	3 <i>ryō</i>	Shōzō 庄蔵, Kamikunugida

⁴⁵ The temple also relied upon locals for repair work and other manual labor. A list for the 1799–1803 period shows over 100 villagers entered Yakuōin's domain to perform such work. See TSM, vol. 3, no. 593, pp. 223–65.

⁴⁶ For an example of a layperson's gift of seedlings, see TSM, vol. 2, no. 511, p. 358. In the third month of 1840, one Nakajima Tomoemon 中島友右衛門 and his son Kamekichi 亀吉 from the Hachiōji post-station offered 1,000 cedar seedlings for planting on the Konpira shrine grounds.

⁴⁷ TSM, vol. 3, no. 564, p. 108; no. 569, p. 115; no. 570, p. 116; no. 573, p. 119.

Date (year, month)	Site of cutting	Species/tree count	Sale price	Buyer
1854. 12	Ikusawa 幾沢 (伊久沢)	White fir/6 Cedar/47 Pine/35	5 <i>ryō</i> 10 <i>ryō</i> 12 <i>ryō</i>	Isematsu 伊勢松, Yawatajuku 八幡宿 in Hachiōji
1856. 11	Nakahashi- Furutaki 中橋古滝	Cedar, sawara cypress/169	75 <i>ryō</i>	Tamura Shichibei 田村七兵衛, Kamikunugida; Gen'emon 源右衛門, Hachiōji

To protect its investments, Yakuōin could turn to higher Shingi Shingon authorities, and to the bakufu if land or resource-based disputes arose with other temples or status groups. The temple also promulgated its own policies for managing timber consumption. The burden of their daily enforcement rested on a small number of peasant families residing on Yakuōin's land holdings (but not within the temple's central precinct).⁴⁸ Temple records list these lay people as Yakuōin *danka*, indicating the clergy exercised both religious and domain-based authority over them.⁴⁹ Summarizing the various rules for forest and land management issued by the clergy between 1690 and 1809, the temple expected its subject *danka* to patrol the mountain diligently every ten days (*yama mawari* 山廻り), and report any evidence of illicit timber or bamboo harvesting.⁵⁰ (By the late Edo period, the temple also had several resident warriors, who worked in the temple's administrative office, but there is no indication of their participation in the disputes I discuss below.)⁵¹

Until the last decade of the seventeenth century, the clergy did not permit Yakuōin's lay families to use temple timber. In 1690, however, the temple administration allowed the peasants to cut dead wood six times a month.⁵² In 1750 the clergy then granted them the right to chop firewood for their daily needs. These materials were intended for personal use only, and Yakuōin continually forbade the sale of wood by peasants without prior approval. In exchange for these benefits, the temple gradually expanded its list of peasant obligations and restrictions. By 1809, Yakuōin's codes included articles against gambling, the impolite treatment of visiting priests and monks, and fighting with people who came from outside the temple domain. The peasants were also responsible for maintaining the main pathway to the temple precincts, and they were expected to assist pilgrims to Yakuōin's halls and shrines.⁵³

However, despite Yakuōin's efforts to maintain control over Mt. Takao's resources, it could not deflect outbreaks of timber-related litigation generated by conflicts with the villagers under Tokugawa supervision. Temple records detail seven major incidents over

48 Approximately ten households resided on the temple's lands. See TSM, vol. 3, no. 969, p. 495.

49 The *danka* household listings are in TSM, vol. 3, no. 589 (dated 1720), pp. 209–210; no. 648 (dated 1681), pp. 347–48; and no. 696 (dated 1858), pp. 495–99.

50 The years of issuance for the codes in TSM, vol. 3 are: 1690 (no. 656, p. 359); 1750 (no. 659, p. 362); 1768 (no. 660, p. 363); 1809 (no. 671, p. 388); and 1821 (no. 682, p. 476). The characters 山廻り can be read as *yama meguri* when used in the context of pilgrimages to mountain sites, but early modern silvicultural terminology uses *yama mawari* in reference to "mountain wardens" (Totman 1998, p. 259). In this context, I have assumed the latter to be the proper reading of 山廻り.

51 Toyama 2011, p. 184. These men were often the younger sons of warriors stationed in the Hachiōji garrison and the Kobotoke barrier watch.

52 TSM, vol. 3, no. 656, p. 395.

53 TSM, vol. 3, no. 671, pp. 388–89.

usage rights and boundary limits during the Edo period, with the most important being a 1648–49 fight between the clerical community and Kaminagafusa. The first sign of trouble appeared in 1637 when Yakuōin claimed peasants were guilty of the night-time theft of trees from the Iizuna shrine area; the development of new fields within the temple's holdings; and a general disruption of the temple lands on the mountain.⁵⁴ The temple argued that both parties had formerly adhered to a “mountain tag” (*yamafuda* 山札) system, in which Yakuōin annually issued grass and wood cutting rights to a limited number of peasants. Over time this process had become moribund; the temple now wished to deny all access rights to the villagers. The bakufu's written response to the clergy's petition no longer exists, but judging from later documents, Tokugawa officials ordered the re-implementation of the tagging process.⁵⁵

This method worked for nine years, but in 1648 the clergy used the prestige of its newly acquired vermilion land to file a new petition with the Tokugawa that claimed peasants were cutting prohibited trees while they harvested grass. Furthermore, the temple argued the peasant practice of controlled burns on nearby farmlands posed a constant danger to Mt. Takao's timber stands. Responding to these charges, the village headman and peasant representatives from Kaminagafusa filed their own complaint that claimed the temple imposed impossible restrictions on the village, reducing their ability to maintain the mandated post-horses at Komakino.⁵⁶ Eventually the case went to the bakufu's Hyōjōsho, and that body handed down the following ruling:

1. Since the time of Ōkubo Iwami 大久保岩見 [no kami] and the *daikan* Itō Yasubei 伊藤安兵衛, peasants from the Kaminagafusa village have paid taxes (*nengu* 年貢) on newly developed paddies and fields at the base of the mountain [Mt. Takao]. They will continue to do so, but henceforth they must not open new fields for cultivation.
2. Following precedents, peasants from Kaminagafusa village will determine the number of required mountain tags after consulting with the *daikan* Takamuro Kisaburō 高室喜三郎 and Okagami Jin'emom 岡上甚右衛門 to determine the number of horses involved. They will then receive that number of slips from the administrator of Mt. Takao [Yakuōin]. They must not bring in horses that are without a tag.⁵⁷ There is to be no fee for the tag. Addendum: Aside from gathering forage, the Kaminagafusa peasants must not cut down trees or bamboo.⁵⁸

In essence, the Tokugawa reaffirmed Yakuōin's exclusive rights to timber and bamboo on Mt. Takao. At the same time, the bakufu recognized the fodder requirements of its subjects in Kaminagafusa and the previously established means for permitting peasant access to the mountain. Therefore it firmly rejected Yakuōin's efforts to monopolize all vegetation on Mt. Takao.

54 TSM, vol. 3, no. 624, p. 321.

55 These precedents are listed in TSM, vol. 3, no. 629, p. 324. According to Vaporis, the bakufu mandated the requisitioning of village horses for the post-station system in the same year (Vaporis 1994, pp. 59–60).

56 Village leaders described their troubles in the document just cited. Yakuōin detailed its position in TSM, vol. 3, nos. 631, 632 and 633, pp. 325–28.

57 In other words, the packhorse count must not exceed the tag tally.

58 TSM, vol. 3, no. 634, pp. 329–30.

This reiteration failed to reduce complications stemming from the continuance of peasant access and grass-cutting rights, and by 1661 the same litigants yet again petitioned the shogun's officials. In this third round, Yakuōin filed a suit against Kaminagafusa villagers for violating the prior ruling when they destroyed small saplings scattered between patches of grass and small brushes. The peasants rebutted the accusation by highlighting the difficulties of avoiding young trees when they were intermixed with other vegetation.⁵⁹ From the standpoint of practical silviculture, the peasants' periodic removal of deadwood and brush reduced the threat of forest fires, and they thereby improved timber stand longevity. However, as the affidavits show, the efficacy of such activities depended on the villagers' ability (and desire) to distinguish saplings from other growth. (This potential for indiscriminant removals of valued timber helps explain Yakuōin's occasional reliance upon Bun'emon and others to bring in outsiders with experience in weeding seeded areas.)

Given the temple's previous resistance to peasant access from Kaminagafusa, Yakuōin may have over-stated the degree of destruction to strengthen its campaign against the tag system. If so, the tactic failed. Rather than revise the extant practices, the bakufu held firm on its earlier affirmation of peasant rights to the grass that grew in between Yakuōin's land and the taller varieties of vegetation under temple control. The absence of further temple-village contestations indicates both sides ultimately accepted the 1649 division of Mt. Takao's resources.

During this initial period, relations with Kamikunugida appear to have been more amicable, and in contrast to their northern neighbors, these villagers increased their religious patronage of the temple and its votive halls. According to the Ishikawa diaries, the household made periodic requests to the temple for rituals to ward off drought and illness. Village officials put on their finest vestments to escort the abbots when they left for Edo on official business, and it was not uncommon for them to show the same respect to Yakuōin's artifacts when they were sent off for display in Edo.⁶⁰ The locals also actively patronized Yakuōin's exhibition of treasures within the temple precinct (*kaichō* 開帳), and on one occasion, they helped the temple track down a trespasser.

With the demise of economic and legal tensions and increasing support from peasant elites, relations between the clerics on Mt. Takao and the Tokugawa house's villagers entered an era of relative stability that continued until the first decade of the nineteenth century. Like other temples, Yakuōin forged links to the local population through money lending, but this was done on an individual rather than a communal basis.⁶¹ It did not develop other commercial ventures, and for the remainder of the early modern period, temple-village interactions centered on religious activities (including the expansion of its pilgrimage networks), temple ground maintenance, and silviculture.

59 TSM, vol. 3, no. 636, pp. 330–31. The document does not provide a clear description of the area in question, but if the seedlings were so intermixed with other vegetation, I sense that Yakuōin did not employ well-developed plantation techniques at this time.

60 Toyama 1998a, pp. 34–44.

61 The TSM series provides two examples of temple loans to individuals in vol. 3, nos. 543 and 544, p. 12. Yakuōin extended loans to its branch temples as well (TSM, vol. 3, no. 542, pp. 8–11).

Timber Theft by Individuals

The ramifications of this understanding between clerics and lay communities went beyond the stabilization of the tag system. Even though Yakuōin permitted access to certain resources, the allure of the woodlands proved too tempting for some individuals. Temple records document many cases of peasants trespassing to cut and remove timber and brush wood. Such instances are listed below.

Chart 3. Incidents of Resource Theft on Mt. Takao

Date	Person(s)/village(s)	Crime	Outcomes	TSM source document ⁶³
1648.3.14	Peasant(s)/Nagafusa	“Transgression” 不届	Perpetrators flee to Daikōji 大興寺 in Kunugida	629, 632
1661.10.8	2 peasants/Bōgaito 坊谷戸 village (south of Mt. Takao)	Stealing firewood	Perpetrators flee to Kōfukuji 興福寺 in Kunugida	640
1664.2.22	Shingozaemon 新五左衛門	Cutting branches and standing timber	Incident mediated by Shōinbō 正印房	642
1672.4.29	Kanzaburō 勘三郎 / Annai 案内 in Kamikunugida	Stealing wood		646
1684.2.24	69 peasants/Kaminagafusa and Komakino	Cutting 77 pines	Incident mediated by Kobotoke barrier guards	651
1774.9	4 peasants/Kaminagafusa	Stealing standing timber		665
1791.6	Shōhachi 庄八 / Arai 新井 in Kaminagafusa	Cutting 4 trees on vermilion grant land	Incident mediated by Hōshūji 寶珠寺 abbot	667
1810.2.7	Kyūzaemon 久左衛門 / Kamikunugida	Cutting timber on disputed lands		672, 673
1837.8	Matashichi 又七, Heihachi 平八 / Annai	Cutting timber in “fit of youth” (waka-ge no kokoroe chigai 若気の心得違)	Incident mediated by Daikōji 大光寺 Fine of 3 <i>kanmon</i> 貫文	683
1839.10	Kaminagafusa peasants	Argument over a border dispute and timber cutting	Incident mediated by Konnanji 金南寺	688
1844.2	Chōgorō 長五郎 / Kaminagafusa	Cutting on temple lands		689

62 The source documents are in volume three of the TSM series.

Date	Person(s)/village(s)	Crime	Outcomes	TSM source document ⁶³
1846.4	Kenjirō 兼次郎 / Arai	Cutting standing timber	Fine of 5 <i>kanmon</i>	690
1856.9.25	Senzō 仙藏 /Koma-kino	Cutting and selling standing timber		692
1866.4	Zenjirō 善治郎 and others/ Kaminagafusa	Stealing standing timber	Incident mediated by Jōrinji 常林寺 abbot	702

Several points of contrast emerge between these cases and earlier litigation. In terms of their scale, incidents of theft involved individuals or very small groups. The one exception was the 1684 event involving villagers from the Komakino area of Kaminagafusa who had carted off seventy-seven trees for a dam project before being discovered. Judging from the number of perpetrators from Kaminagafusa, it appears that some segments of that village continued to resist the limitations imposed by the tag system. Secondly, the handling of such cases was markedly different from previous litigation. Whereas village officials adamantly defended their rights to the grass in the larger communal suits, in these instances they accepted Yakuōin's accusations of trespass and theft. Furthermore, since each event constituted a direct transgression against the bakufu's division of Mt. Takao's resources, village officials had to notify the *daikan*, but they could not expect these officials to intercede as mediators.

Overall, these factors would seem to strengthen the temple's hand in seeking punishment from warrior administrators, yet the greatest distinction between the large scale suits and these intrusions was the fact that clerics on Mt. Takao and the peasantry worked together to effect localized solutions without the intervention of bakufu officials. (As noted above, there were warriors living at Yakuōin, but they were not empowered to act as representatives of the Tokugawa regime.) Evidence from Yakuōin's records reveals these events shared a process of discovery and resolution that was nearly script-like in its regularity:

1. One or more peasants enter the temple's domain to cut timber or gather other forest resources in a way that contravenes the official tag system. In many cases, their objective is to acquire materials for private use.
2. Either Yakuōin's peasant wardens or peasant officials residing in the surrounding villages discover the illicit activities.
3. Local clerical and peasant administrators conduct an investigation, and in some cases submit initial reports to the *daikan*.
4. Eventually the culprit(s) and village representatives offer Yakuōin an apology for the transgression, along with a promise to never again steal timber or other materials. The written statements from the confessed trespasser usually include a statement begging the temple's compassion (*jibi* 慈悲).⁶³ In a number of cases, mediators

⁶³ For a recent discussion of the political importance attached to the ideal of benevolence in Tokugawa era criminal proceedings, see Botsman 2005, pp. 41–58.

(*atsukai-nin* 扱い人) from the local area intervene to facilitate the apology process. According to these documents, the Kobotoke barrier guards performed this service once in 1684, but the peasants often turned to nearby Buddhist priests who dwelt in their villages.

In method and expression, the deferential apology reflected the status prestige of Yakuōin's clerics, and the temple's legal authority as a major landholder in the region. The secular nature of the process is also implicitly reflected in the lack of religiously framed expressions in the documentation. A sense of reverence for the temple-shrine complex atop Mt. Takao might have informed individual acts of contrition, but there are no explicit references to any fear of karmic retribution or divine anger; nor do the transgressors offer any apologies to Iizuna Gongen. If such sentiments existed, they were not part of the public discourse. Wariness over the reaction of secular authority, however, was surely a major factor, as trespassers who lived in the Tokugawa-governed villages were liable for official punishment if Yakuōin had opted to press its charges with the bakufu. Since the apologetic peasants were aware of their precarious position, and they probably preferred ritualized groveling over time in jail, one can question the sincerity of their apologies, but the statements of remorse do appear to have forestalled temple efforts to seek other forms of punishment.⁶⁴

While the peasant affirmations of Yakuōin's rights might seem to substantiate modern perceptions of clerical arrogance, this narrow characterization falters when we consider the intermediary roles played by other Buddhist priests in the area. Five temple abbots performed this service.

Chart 4. Clerical Mediators⁶⁵

Temple	Location	Sectarian affiliation	Regional head temple
Daikōji 大光寺	Kamikunugida	Shingi Shingon	Yakuōin
Kōfukuji 興福寺	Kamikunugida	Sōtō	Ryūhōji 龍鳳寺
Hōshūji 寶珠寺	Kaminagafusa	Rinzai	Kōonji 廣園寺
Jōrinji 常林寺	Kaminagafusa	Sōtō	Kamikunugida Kōjōji 高乗寺
Konnanji 金南寺	Kaminagafusa	Shingi Shingon	Yakuōin

*The personal name of one Shōinbō 正印房 also appears, but there is no further information on his identity.

All the temples were in the villages around Mt. Takao, and their abbots lived in close proximity to the peasants participating in the appeal process. Although two temples were a part of Yakuōin's head-branch system, lay reliance upon Rinzai and Sōtō abbots indicates the peasants' choice of an intermediary was not necessarily based on the cleric's sectarian affiliation with Yakuōin.

⁶⁴ Dan Fenno Henderson has referred to this apology process as a form of "didactic conciliation": a public admission by the accused that they had learned from the error of their ways and would no longer create difficulties for other villagers or the temple. See Henderson 1965, p. 5.

⁶⁵ The TSM transcription for document no. 629 uses the characters 大興寺, but the *Shinpen Musashi fudoki kō* listed the temple as 大光寺 (Ashida and Nemoto 1996, p. 202), as do other Yakuōin documents. I have opted for the more common rendering in my transcription.

The TSM documents themselves do not define the nature of these cleric-peasant relationships. A sense of personal trust or affinity with individual abbots certainly influenced the decisions of some villagers, but recent studies of similar events reveal institutional ties between temples and *danka* households also determined the choice of many clerical mediators. Furthermore, contrary to long-held scholarly assumptions regarding the general eradication of medieval temple sanctuaries, there is new evidence here of continuing Buddhist intervention in local squabbles, albeit in a modified and more limited form when compared to pre-Edo practices.⁶⁶ Satō Takayuki 佐藤孝之 in particular has argued that “entering the temple” (*nyūji* 入寺), a common phrase for seeking clerical aid, existed in numerous areas throughout the early modern period.⁶⁷ He has identified three contexts for this strategy:

1. Individuals seek temporary withdrawal from secular society in order to apologize to others of their own status group for private conflicts, or minor infractions against village rules.
2. Officials sanction the use of temple precincts in lieu of jails (*rōsha* 籠舎) or village confinement (*mura azuke* 村預) for punishing those guilty of misdemeanors or accidental fires (*shukka* 出火).
3. Women use refuge in a temple as a negotiating tactic in divorce cases, while men and women employ the same strategy to seek clerically mediated reprieves from warrior prosecution for minor crimes.

In the case of context two, especially in instances of accidental conflagration, the Tokugawa and some domains accepted the punishment of temple confinement for thirty days or more. Once the guilty party completed his term, he could ask the resident abbot to file on his behalf a request for “release from temple refuge” (*nyūji gomen* 入寺御免) either to village officials or to the regional *daikan*.⁶⁸ Local traditions might add minor modifications to the formula, and one Shimotsuke 下野 village even punished illegal tree cutting by imposing temple confinement and a fine of 200 *mon* per tree.⁶⁹

The Tokugawa regime’s stance toward temple refuge depended on the nature of the incident. It accepted the strategy in connection with divorce petitions and as punishment for accidental fires, but warrior administrators adamantly rejected clerical mediation in connection with serious crimes such as murder or arson. These felonies were punishable by death; hence bakufu officials took control of the case and the suspects. Tokugawa codes

66 The term *kakekomi* 駆込 (“running into a temple”) is a traditional term used in reference to this practice, but recently scholars also use *ajiiru* アジール, a transliteration of the French *asile* and German *asyl*. Amino 1996 [1978] is a well regarded study of medieval asylum practices, while Hiraizumi 1934 was a seminal study that claimed asylum largely died out in Japan during the rule of Oda Nobunaga 織田信長 and Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉. According to this earlier view, the only vestige of Buddhism’s former authority was wielded by Mantokuji 満徳寺 and Tōkeiji 東慶寺, two convents with Tokugawa house patronage that offered sanctuary to women seeking divorce.

67 Satō summarizes his years of research on this topic in *Kakekomidera to mura shakai* 駆込寺と村社会 (Satō 2006). Other studies contributing to the reconfiguration of scholarly perceptions include Ogi 1985, pp. 122–39; Abe 1965; Ishii 1961, pp. 185–91; Takagi 1990. For an analysis in English, see Vesey 2001, pp. 275–310. Sachiko Kaneko Morell and Robert Morell have recently discussed divorce proceedings at Tōkeiji in their *Zen Sanctuary of Purple Robes* (2006).

68 Ishii 1961, p. 191.

69 Kanuma Shishi Hensan Inkai 1968, p. 336.

did not explicitly acknowledge the role of temple entrance in other aspects of rural life, yet commoners evidently did seek support from their *danka* temple abbots in times of social discord or village-level legal duress. This is an indication of a continued idealization of temples as sanctuaries that survived among the general populace long after the formal warrior proscription of the medieval temple refuge practices. Given such precedents, some of the peasants listed in Chart 3 probably were following this tradition.

Depending upon the specifics of a case, it was not unusual for a single temple refuge event to incorporate one or more motives simultaneously, a point evident in public statements given by several transgressors against Yakuōin's domain.

TSM, vol. 3, no. 629 (1648.3.14)

For a number of years, the villagers of Kaminagafusa have received mountain tags from the temple, and with the acknowledgement of the [Tokugawa administrators], we have taken horse fodder and kindling from Hikageyama 日影山. However, in the year before last [1646] villagers from Arai committed a transgression ... [T]he headman and the villagers conferred, and believed they should be taken to the local jail. While escorting [the trespassers] along the road, the [abbot of] Daikōji and Mokuzaemon 左衛門, headman of Kunugida, took charge of them and they entered the temple.

TSM, vol. 3, no. 640 (1661.10.8)

On the twenty-fifth day of the intercalary eighth month, we were stealing kindling from the temple's mountain and were discovered by the mountain wardens ... We were ordered into confinement. On the way, we fled to Kōfukuji in the Sanda 散田 area of Kunugida; the abbot petitioned for our release from the temple. [Remainder abbreviated.]

In either case, village officials initially decided to place the offenders in secular holding facilities, but eventually accepted confinement within local temples. Judging from the concluding phrase “release from temple entrance” in TSM, vol. 3, no. 640 and the fact that the individual in the first case spent forty days at Daikōji before Yakuōin accepted his apology, these local temples functioned as sites of incarceration.⁷⁰ That being said, in light of the second trespasser's preference for Kōfukuji over a warrior or village facility, and the direct intervention by the Daikōji abbot and Mokuzaemon, the perception of temple entrance as a form of asylum also informed the sequence of both events. The hapless villagers were able to interject a third party—their local temple abbots—between themselves and secular officials or Yakuōin, and thereby gain a somewhat more favorable resolution to their predicaments.

While not as dramatic, in other instances local abbots worked with village officials to ease tensions between Yakuōin, village administrations and the accused in the hope of facilitating a resolution. When asked to act in this capacity, the mediating cleric usually served as a direct link between parties. For example, in the 1837 incident involving Matashichi and Heihachi, their apology to Yakuōin letter stated:

⁷⁰ The time frame is noted in TSM, vol. 3, no. 632, p. 327.

We were caught [cutting timber on the temple's vermilion seal lands] by the mountain wardens. They not only confiscated our tools but also filed [for an investigation], and we were taken by surprise. Several village officials and members of our group association asked the abbot of Daikōji, a temple under your supervision, to offer our apologies. With special consideration, he heard our petition, and we are quite thankful.

The extent of the Hōshūji abbot's involvement in the earlier 1791 case is less clear, but his signature on the apology letter was a rhetorical marker of his willingness to stand symbolically with the defendant Shōhachi in making the apology to Yakuōin.⁷¹

Later Tensions over Diverging Perceptions of Mt. Takao's Borders

By gaining apologies from these trespassers, Yakuōin managed to maintain the public integrity of its authority during the eighteenth century interlude of relatively quiet coexistence. The Tokugawa delineation of temple and villager rights on Mt. Takao remained in force, and there was no major litigation over the trees. During the first decade of the nineteenth century, however, emerging boundary disputes incited renewed tensions between the temple and Kaminagafusa. They also affected Yakuōin's relationship with Kamikunugida, a connection that had been stable and mutually beneficial for nearly two centuries. The crux of this litigation lay in the ambiguous definition of the actual boundaries. The *daikan* had conducted a general survey of the mountain when the Tokugawa first issued the vermilion grant, and ordered the placement of boundary markers (*bōjikō* 傍示杭), but no one had thought to make a detailed map. Instead, the various parties relied upon the assumption of mutually recognized borders.⁷² This was hardly a foolproof method for maintaining consistency over several generations, and it is perhaps no surprise that decades of farming and resource gathering activities had led to peasant encroachments into the poorly defined fringes of Yakuōin territory.

The first major rift occurred in 1807 when Yakuōin asked officials from the Annai, Kawarajuku and Harajuku districts (the so-called "three groups," *sangumi* 三組) of Kamikunugida village to help Yakuōin excavate an old firebreak in two small areas called Takisawa 瀧沢 and Sawako 沢子.⁷³ The temple claimed the project site was on its lands and village officials concurred, but their failure to confer with fellow villagers prior to accepting Yakuōin's request created confusion and mistrust among the peasants. From the perspective of many village residents, the land had lain open for so long that it was a legitimate site for gathering dead leaves and grass used in the production of fertilizer. The issue was further complicated by the existence of twenty-two small, tax-yielding fields maintained by the Annai group. To re-enforce their claims, the villagers pointed out that six or seven years earlier, *kanjō bugyō* officials judged the open space to be within the border of their village. Angrily believing their own leaders had abrogated the village's resource and land rights, the peasants sued. In

71 Sone Hiromi 曾根ひろみ discusses the ramifications of the apology process in response to local suits and other forms of social disruption in her "Minshū no tsumi to sekinin ishiki" 民衆の罪と責任意識. See Sone 1994, pp. 131–40.

72 TSM, vol. 3, no. 432, p. 423.

73 The incident referred to here appears in item no. 682 in TSM, vol. 3, pp. 412–76. Judging from a rough map produced in connection with the case, Takisawa and Sawako lay to the south of the temple's main entrance at the base of Mt. Takao.

1810, the litigation ended with a negotiated settlement (*naisai* 内済) in which the Annai, Kawara, and Harajuku peasants recognized Yakuōin's claim over the disputed lands.⁷⁴ In exchange, they were allowed to remove the dead vegetation from the area as before.

Although the objective of the firebreak excavation was woodland protection, and the temple was not a litigant in the initial suit, Yakuōin's arguments concerning its boundary lines in the Takisawa/Sawako areas inadvertently disrupted the long-standing equilibrium between the temple and Kamikunugida. As a result, the settlement ultimately proved to be but a momentary respite for all. During the second month of 1811, residents from Kawara began to remove overgrown vegetation from previously disputed areas without notifying clerical officials.⁷⁵ In the process, they cut down a number of twenty-year old cedars, pines and other miscellaneous trees. The temple's mountain wardens later reported the clearances to the temple administration, and within weeks of the previous negotiated settlement, Yakuōin faced another imbroglio over its borders. Once again claim and counter-claim passed up and down the mountain as temple and villagers strove to assert their rights and rectify perceived wrongs.

This new round disrupted the previous settlement, but clearly it had not resolved the fundamental problem of poorly defined boundary lines. As a result, the long-standing precedent of daily peasant access into Takisawa and Sawako created a strip of land over which both sides could still make contradictory claims. These differences resulted in a new round of temple-peasant legal action that ended only in 1814 with another warrior-mediated resolution. Following a new inspection of the disputed area by two bakufu representatives, the *jisha bugyō* repeated past practices by accepting arguments from both sides. Yet again the bakufu affirmed Yakuōin's claims to the trees and the principle of limited access to collect fodder. At the same time, it did award usage rights over the twenty-two fields to the Annai group, because the fields were now on the village's tax registers, and the villagers had come to rely upon these locations for fertilizer.⁷⁶ Addressing their peasants, Tokugawa officials reprimanded (*shikari* 叱り) them for not respecting the dignity of the vermilion seal grant. Nevertheless, in light of the original 1649 order against further land clearances, the peasants had advantageously used border ambiguities to open new fields on the fringes of the temple's domain. As a side note, Yakuōin's abbot also received an official reprimand for having incorrectly implicated a warrior from the Hachiōji garrison in its suits.

While the 1814 decision brought some respite to Yakuōin's now fractious relationship with villagers to the east, in 1838–39 the axis of contention swung around again to the north and another boundary issue with Kaminagafusa residents. Documents cited in Chart 3 show how individuals from the post-stations were entering the temple domain in search of wood and fodder. Such intrusions perplexed village officials who were responsible for their fellow peasants. In an effort to ameliorate problems arising from the lack of border clarity, the headman and elders of Kaminagafusa twice petitioned Yakuōin in 1838 for a northern boundary survey.⁷⁷ This was thus an instance of coordination, rather than conflict, between local religious and secular leaders striving to restrict aggressive peasants. This particular

74 The bakufu *daikan* oversaw this suit, since the litigants were Tokugawa domain peasants. See Furujo 1998, p. 278.

75 The temple's initial report to the *daikan* is in TSM, vol. 3, no. 681, pp. 450–51.

76 The contents of the ruling are in TSM, vol. 3, no. 681, p. 472.

77 TSM, vol. 3, nos. 684–688, pp. 478–82.

event is also of interest, because the abbot of Yakuōin's branch temple of Konnanji 金南寺 actively mediated the negotiations between Kaminagafusa and his superiors on Mt. Takao. Despite the sacerdotal and institutional ties that united temples and Buddhist priests, this instance reinforces the earlier observations regarding the willingness of village-based abbots to help their peasant neighbors, when the latter came into conflict with higher clerical authorities.

The final conflict grew out of the earlier nineteenth century bout with the Kawara post-station. Even with the previous efforts to define a mutually agreeable solution to the problem of overlapping land and resources rights, the amorphous boundaries were still open to exploitation. According to a Yakuōin complaint filed with the *daikan* in 1850, a village elder named Yasubei 安兵衛 had cunningly used residual border ambiguities to his benefit. As the holder of one of the twenty-two fields granted to the Annai group, Yasubei had planted his own trees in the plot. Yakuōin argued he then took advantage of the confusion caused by the intermingling of vegetation to expand his holding at the temple's expense.⁷⁸ Even if his intentions were not as duplicitous as charged, by growing his own trees—the material resource at the core of Yakuōin's legal arguments—Yasubei mirrored the clergy's own methods for staking a claim to Mt. Takao. Eventually, both sides agreed to a new survey of Yasubei's property line; this decision finally brought closure to forty years of intermittent legal action.⁷⁹

The Nature of Clerical-Lay Relations on Mt. Takao

Given Yakuōin's placement within the four matrices outlined above, its domination over the villagers is hardly surprising. Not only did it hold the literal high ground, it had strategic advantages within legal, social, and religious geographies that contoured the course of clerical-lay relations in the region. This position was reflected in the complex, and often cumbersome, system for handling the disputes discussed above. *Daikan* could facilitate negotiated settlements between litigants, investigate suits among villagers under their supervision, and hold felons caught on Tokugawa house lands. However, the bakufu only allowed *daikan* to punish commoners for gambling.⁸⁰ Whenever a case exceeded their authority, they had to petition the *kanjō bugyō* for final judgments and sentencing. Furthermore, while *daikan* regulated the economic activities of small temples located on Tokugawa lands, their jurisdiction ended at Yakuōin's border. On the other side of that boundary, the *jisha bugyō* assumed jurisdiction.⁸¹ Furthermore, if a crime merited a particularly harsh sentence, or if litigants came from several status groups or different daimyo domains, the *kanjō bugyō* had

78 TSM, vol. 3, nos. 694–695, pp. 492–94.

79 TSM, vol. 3, no. 697, pp. 500–509.

80 The bakufu conferred this authority in 1794. According to the penal practices of the day, a felon's third conviction for gambling resulted in banishment to one of several remote islands (*ontō* 遠島). In such cases, *daikan* handed the case over to the *kanjō bugyō*, because they could not order this punishment on their own authority (Hiramatsu 1960, p. 469; Nakata 2005, p. 166).

81 A major exception to this limitation was the *Kantō torishimari shutsuyaku* 関東取締出役 (Kantō regulatory patrol) established by the bakufu in 1805. This unit consisted of eight (later twenty) functionaries drawn from the Kantō *daikan* offices who were empowered to enter all non-Tokugawa house lands in pursuit of criminals. Even then, they were required to send suspects apprehended on temple holdings to Edo for prosecution. See Hiramatsu 1960, pp. 523–25.

to consult the Hyōjōsho council for the final verdict and punishment. This applied to the *jisha bugyō* as well: in the gravest cases, they deferred to the council as a whole. In short, the distinctions between Yakuōin and the villages were mirrored throughout the bakufu's legal structure. This bifurcation of authority within the overall regulatory framework echoed and amplified the status system that recognized the clergy's higher social position vis-à-vis the peasants. When combined with the Tokugawa house's support for Yakuōin's proprietorship through its vermilion grant to Mt. Takao, these early modern institutional and social structures gave the abbot and temple administrators a stronger position from which to assert their rights over the bakufu's own peasants in the timber and land suits. This state is reflected in the general structure of Figure 3.

However the same legal and social systems imposed limitations as well. Most importantly, the bakufu did not grant the clergy full autonomy over any of their domains. In practice, temple lands such as those on Mt. Takao were comparable to holdings controlled by the more elite *hatamoto* who ran the *kanjō bugyō*. Both had the right to tax and administer resident peasants, investigate incidents, hold suspects, and impose minor punishments, but the bakufu did not permit the clergy or its own vassals to usurp its ultimate authority over criminal prosecutions.⁸² Furthermore, since the bakufu claimed jurisdiction over cases involving transgressions across domain boundaries, temples such as Yakuōin might restrain trespassing peasants, but they could not actually punish them. That right fell to the bakufu's magistrates and the Hyōjōsho.

Inefficiencies within the dual magistrate system inadvertently neutralized some of the clergy's institutional advantages as well.⁸³ The *jisha bugyō* held their positions for only several years, and the support staff was none other than their own semi-trained retainers, hence they often relied upon *daikan* to handle the many investigations. Eventually, the bakufu sought to rectify this deficiency by ordering the longer-serving *kanjō bugyō* to familiarize their newly appointed colleagues with *jisha bugyō* duties.⁸⁴ While this commingling of offices did not mitigate the temple magistrate's authority per se, on a practical level it did blur some of the procedural boundaries within the bakufu. For the clerics living in the Mt. Takao region, it meant *daikan* initially took charge of every suit, regardless of the litigants' status identity. For example, the 1807–1814 disputes were first handled by Ina Tomonosuke Tadatomi 伊奈友之助忠富, and in the last stages by Onoda Saburōemon Nobutoshi 小野田三郎右衛門信利. Later Egawa Tarōzaemon Hidetoshi 江川太郎左衛門英敏 took on the 1850 incident between Yakuōin and the Annai group. This convergence in turn limited the clergy's potential to play off jurisdictional tensions between the different bakufu organs.⁸⁵ During the 1811 litigation, it even caused a bit of confusion, because the clerics were uncertain as to whether they should first file with the *daikan* Ina Suke'emon, or go directly to the *jisha bugyō*. In response, Ina handled the complaint on the assumption that

82 See Itō 1995, pp. 320–21. Hiramatsu extensively covers these restrictions on the clergy in his 1960 study, pp. 311–36. He also notes the parallel between the clergy and the *hatamoto* on p. 333.

83 Botsman 2005, p. 107.

84 Hiramatsu 1960, pp. 421 and 620.

85 For an example of how the clergy could benefit from manipulations of the system, Hiramatsu discusses an 1810 case in which a peasant from a Kantō area holding of the Yodo 淀 domain fled to Gannyūji 願入寺, a prominent temple in the Mito 水戸 domain. The Yodo administrator demanded the peasant's expulsion from the temple, the abbot refused, and the incident eventually went before the *jisha bugyō*. In the end, the domain promised leniency in exchange for the abbot's agreement to hand over the asylum seeker. See Hiramatsu 1960, p. 358.

he could facilitate a negotiated settlement. When that proved impossible, Ina notified the magistrates.⁸⁶ In the final dispute with Yasubei, the *daikan* Egawa conducted the border survey, and he was able to arrange for a settlement between the parties; therefore, higher officials were not asked to render judgment.⁸⁷ In Figure 4, the arrows between “Yakuōin,” “*Daikan*,” and “*Jisha bugyō*” reflect this initial reliance.

In line with the observations of Yoshida and Tsukada, the benefits of status cut both ways, as the peasants asserted their authority on Mt. Takao by tactically relying upon the needs of the mandated highway system to extend their claims over the low-growth grass and shrubs. Despite the temple’s best efforts to exclude the villagers completely, it could not prevent them

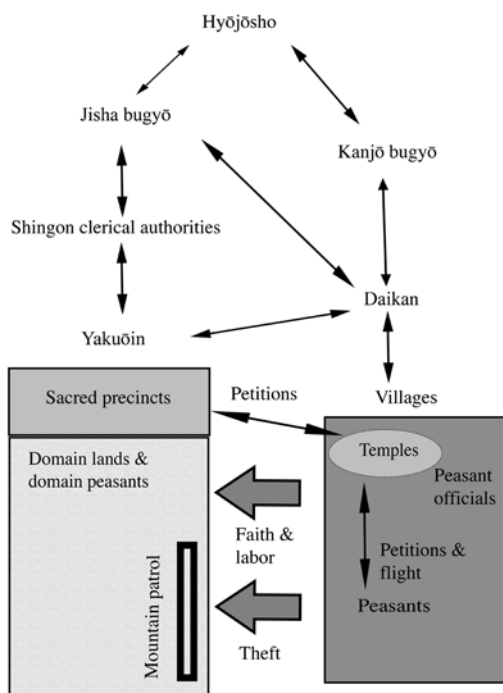


Figure 4. Temple–Village Interactions on Mt. Takao

from using fodder as a medium for interjecting their rights in between the temple’s control over the land and taller vegetation. This structure is reflected in Figure 5: the top panel depicts the geographical and biological strata of the mountain (i.e., land, low level grass, taller stands of timber/bamboo); and the bottom image shows how these physical layers translated into overlapping yet distinct spheres of legally recognized ownership.

The Kamikunugida residents’ struggle over the firebreak reflects a somewhat similar process. Clearly the authority vested in Yakuōin and the local village leadership did not cow the peasants. Once pushed beyond a certain point, they went directly to the bakufu in defense of their prerogatives. The actual increase in acreage for the villagers was small, but the results nonetheless reflected a shift in temple-village dynamics. Whereas peasant litigants only gained usage rights in the early suits, in the nineteenth century they solidified their control over the land itself by drawing upon the Tokugawa house’s authority, and using Yakuōin’s own tactic of proprietorship over trees as a basis for controlling tracts at the mountain’s base.

The creation of overlapping claims to temple holdings was not unique to Yakuōin, a point made by Yoshida’s study of the water carriers who operated within Sensōji’s precincts. Along the same lines, according to Ōtsuka Eiji 大塚英二 and Kaneyuki Shinsuke’s 金行信輔 study of early modern “temple towns” (*monzenmachi* 門前町), the clergy always maintained their formal proprietary rights over the land itself. However, long-term lay residents gradually acquired *de facto* control over the sale and disposition of their dwellings and

86 Furuji 1998, pp. 285–89. His analysis is based on TSM, vol. 3, no. 681, pp. 451–52.

87 Furuji 1998, pp. 289–90.

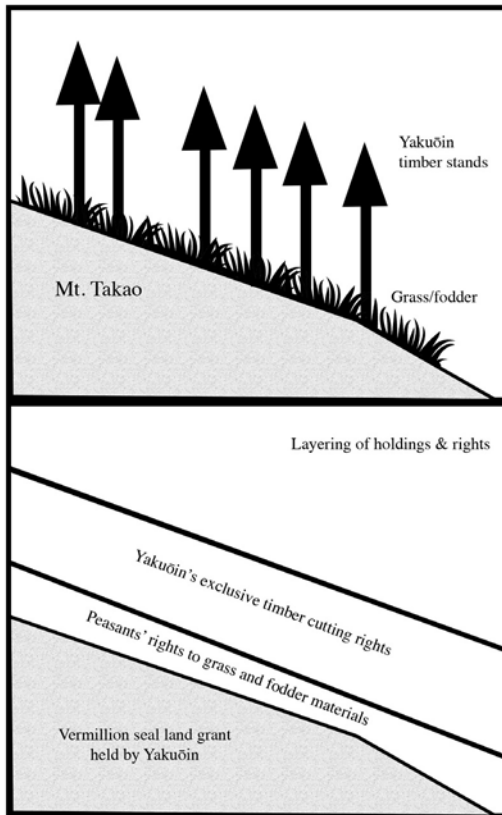


Figure 5.

shops.⁸⁸ Under such circumstances, the clergy no longer had absolute authority over lands and goods that were, theoretically, under their administrative control.

Ironically, the bakufu's own policies exacerbated these tensions on Mt. Takao. By inadvertently setting its benevolence towards the temple against the economic concerns of its own villagers, the Tokugawa empowered the clerics and the peasants alike—a point that neither missed as they employed the bifurcated authority to assert their ownership and usage privileges. No major border/resource dispute involved major crimes such as murder or arson that might have radically altered one of the litigants' legal standing. So, once the bakufu's initial verdict created a system of dual rights to Mt. Takao's resources, subsequent generations of officials had to reiterate the status quo supporting both parties. There were occasional refinements to the initial 1649 judgment (especially with the border surveys), but

until the very end of the regime, the bakufu was forced continually to mediate the residual tensions generated by idiosyncrasies inherent in its own methods of rule.

Overlapping claims to “possession” may have had a sacred/secular dimension as well. I have already noted the general lack of religious terminology in the peasants' written apologies, but this applies to clerical documents, too. In his discussion of medieval Buddhism's attitudes towards the environment, Fabio Rambelli describes a series of cases in which clerics invoked the existence of sacred trees (*reiboku* 霊木), closed precincts, and deities to inhibit or restrain peasants from cutting timber on temple lands.⁸⁹ They were motivated by the threat of extensive environmental degradation caused by over harvesting, but according to Rambelli, temple administrators commonly used religious symbolism to maintain political and economic control over their holdings. In some instances, the invocation of spirits hid the clergy's conservative response to the emergence of market driven timber and charcoal production.

We might expect Yakuōin's abbots to bolster their written suits and petitions with phrases such as “Iizuna Gongen's trees,” or “the mountain's sacred grounds,” but aside from the early reference to the Iizuna shrine tags, they did not invoke the mountain's spiritual

88 Ōtsuka and Kaneyuki 2002, pp. 267–68.

89 Rambelli 2007, pp. 156–61.

or cosmological significance. In fact, while early modern and medieval temples might have shared the goal of peasant exclusion, the position of Mt. Takao's clergy was in some sense diametrically different from that of their medieval predecessors, because it was they and not the villagers who had employed progressive silvicultural technology with an eye for sales in the Kantō timber market. For Yakuōin, the boundary disputes and resource access problems were secular issues, and validation for their claims derived from the Tokugawa house and the legal structures for holding domain lands, rather than visions of sacred spaces, the buddhas, or other deities. Along similar lines, other documents dealing with prosaic matters of daily management such as reports to the bakufu and loan statements were not couched in religious terms. This terminology was generally only used in written items pertaining to rituals and sacerdotal issues. It would appear the clergy thus perceived a socio-religious spatial divide within their holdings: the temple/shrine precincts and ritual activities therein were "sacred," while the larger domain was a secular space governed by secular rules and terminology.

But did the peasants have a similar spatial construct of the mountain and their role in maintaining it? Toyama Tōru's study of the Ishikawa diaries shows the residents of Kamikunugida annually worked on projects within the temple's borders, and they made regular petitions to the enshrined deities. The temple paid them in kind for their work by allowing them to remove leaves and other vegetation suitable for fertilizer, yet Toyama argues this extensive labor support can perhaps be better understood as an expression of lay faith. Unlike *danka* villagers who were obliged to maintain their mortuary temples, there was no such formal relationship between Yakuōin and the Kamikunugida peasants. Furthermore, the diaries usually stated the villagers were working "on Mt. Takao" not "for Yakuōin," a choice of wording that connotes an inclusive view of the mountain above them: it was a sacred world, and they labored to serve it.⁹⁰ Toyama's analysis also reveals a drop off in such interactions after 1807. The land disputes were surely one cause, as they altered the nature of the relationship from "Mt. Takao—Kamikunugida" to "Yakuōin's rights vs. peasants' rights." This was also the period when Yakuōin was actively expanding its base of lay devotees in Edo and other Kantō towns. Increasing numbers of pilgrims made the trek to worship Iizuna Gongen, thereby transforming the shrine from a local site to a regional cultic center. The influx of visitors brought money into the area, but Toyama concludes Yakuōin's expanded popularity may have alienated the Kamikunugida villagers who had long venerated the mountain and Iizuna as "their" protective deity.⁹¹

Up to this point I have used the conflicts over Mt. Takao and its vegetation to gauge the nature and limits of the Buddhist clergy's non-religious authority in Edo society. However, an emphasis on contention alone would be myopic, because the records also contain examples of clerical integration into village communities. According to Edward Pratt, the scholarly tendency to emphasize conflict as the primary object of socio-historical analysis has deflected attention from the more cooperative aspects of early modern rural life.⁹² His call to consider other social dynamics resonates with some facets of Yakuōin's

90 Toyama 1996, pp. 533–54.

91 These comments apply to Kamikunugida, but it is not clear whether villagers in Kaminagafusa shared a similar level of awe for the mountain. After all, the majority of peasants from the latter village struggled against the temple's control of the timber and vegetation.

92 Pratt 2000, pp. 5–12.

early modern history. Although the social and legal system underpinned the temple's advantageous position, the constant reliance upon mediated resolutions reveals a web of mutually supportive cleric-peasant relationships. Consider the role of Yakuōin's own peasants who watched over the mountain and protected the trees. (See Figure 4, the black-outlined box.) As domain subjects *and* Yakuōin's *danka*, these families were obligated to fulfill this duty under two distinct systems of authority. At the same time, the mountain wardens were a constant reminder of the clergy's utter dependence upon their peasants for the integrity of Yakuōin's domain rights.⁹³ These laymen were nothing less than the temple's first line of border defense, and if a warden turned a blind eye to instances of trespass, the clergy might never know. This was also true for grounds and resource maintenance: the temple could not function without its own lay families and outside village laborers. What is more, the temple could only get its lumber to market via buyers who lived in the nearby villages. The clerics' recognition of their dependency informed the easing of regulations on woodcutting noted earlier, and the payment of vegetation in compensation for peasant labor. Regardless of their social and legal advantages, the cleric's managerial system clearly relied upon multi-layered status spaces *within* as well as outside their domain in order to meet Yakuōin's institutional needs.

Despite the periodic episodes of conflict, the clergy relied upon effective village leadership as well. The 1807–1810 firebreak litigation was a case in point, because Kamikunugida officials inadvertently created trouble for Yakuōin through their inept destabilization of intra-village relations. Exchanges in 1838 between the temple and Kaminagafusa's officials to stem the theft of temple resources also highlighted the importance of external village oversight to the integrity of Yakuōin's domain.

The methods for resolving cases of individual trespass present several other related yet distinct facets of Buddhist-lay communal integration. As the aggrieved party Yakuōin had every right to press charges, yet it often opted to work with the villages by participating in the mediation/apology process to reaffirm its rights. Of equal significance, just as Yakuōin relied upon its own peasants to ward off intruders, the bakufu's villagers asked their local priests to assuage Yakuōin's anger. The "Petitions" arrows centering on the "Temple" oval at the bottom of Figure 4 represent the reliance upon village-based abbots in the mediation process.

This study has focused on the trees of Mt. Takao as a means for analyzing the Buddhist clergy's social and economic interactions with the laity. Within this framework, it has not addressed the question of clerical morality and ethics, but some comments are in order given the tone of moral condemnation that has shaped scholarship on early modern Buddhism. Yakuōin's resistance to resource sharing contravened the Buddhist doctrine of non-attachment and other religious ideals. On the other hand, once the initial tensions died down and both parties accepted the tag system, the clergy did not challenge it for the remainder of the period. There were later disputes over border areas, but there is no evidence of the temple trying to further expand its domain, or exploit villager labor. Nor is there evidence of the abbots or their representatives ever demanding severe punishments for peasants who did break the rules. It would be presumptive to assume that Yakuōin's priests were moved by benevolence alone, yet the temple's handling of these events does not reflect

93 This is reliance is clearly stated by the priest of Anrakuji 安楽寺 who represented Yakuōin's interests in the 1858 dispute. See TSM, vol. 3, no. 694.3, p. 493.

the level of clerical arrogance that characterizes earlier interpretations of the early modern Buddhism.

Furthermore, from the standpoint of resource preservation, the temple's anxiety over harvesting methods is understandable. Once lost, restraints on cutting activities are often difficult to re-impose. Modern scholarship on the severe ecological impact of forest depletion has shown the temple's concern for its trees was in fact well founded, as large building programs and the reconstruction of Edo after its many fires devastated tens of thousands of acres of woodland during the early modern period.⁹⁴ Although the temple never couched its motives in religious terms, and it did grow trees for sale, the consistent effort to protect the timber from uncontrolled harvesting speaks to a sense of responsible stewardship among the clerics who administered Mt. Takao.

Concluding Observations

We began this study by outlining four sets of hierarchical relationships that underpinned the Buddhist clergy's social, cultural and economic position on Mt. Takao. With the onset of the 1648–49 dispute over resource access, the temple community tried to rigidify its spatial and economic distance from the local villages through monopolistic claims to the mountain and its trees. Although the bakufu's governing systems in theory supported distinctions between the clergy and the peasantry, the judgment of 1649 in fact mandated a relationship based on negotiation and a degree of economic integration. This fundamental attitude became the norm among warriors, clerics and peasants, and it created or facilitated varying degrees of interweaving within each matrix. The evolution of the temple's own administrative apparatus reflected this trend in that Yakuōin's domain came to function as an integrated clerical/lay community. The same can be said of the Buddhist abbots and their peasant parishioners in the surrounding villages, who worked together to ameliorate the plight of peasant trespassers.

Normative status distinctions and the Buddhist clergy's religious authority over the laity continued until the end of the Tokugawa age, but the events on Mt. Takao indicate the process of defining the nature and degree of clerical-lay interaction was just as important to the residents of the area as the mechanisms that made them distinct communities within Edo society. This interest in negotiating strategies came from the realization that it was possible to gain control over the social/economic/spatial blending on Mt. Takao by using relationships in one matrix to circumvent or reduce limitations imposed by another. Hence, while the clergy held a strong hand with respect to the temple registration system, in other areas of activity like land and resource management, the peasants could play their own status-based trump cards to gain access to lands and resources that might otherwise be denied to them. The legal suits and many examples of mutual support also show how peasants could use the auspices of their status superiors (village clerics and bakufu officials) to resolve some legal and economic problems advantageously. With respect to the clergy, the negotiated

⁹⁴ Totman 1998 discusses many problems that arose from poor tree and mountain management practices, and the stunning demands placed upon Japan's timber resources; see pp. 50–80. To cite one example, Yoshida Yoshiaki 吉田好彰 estimates the rebuilding of Edo after the Meireki 明暦 fire of 1657 cost millions of board feet of wood (Yoshida 1959, p. 52).

settlements offer examples of Buddhist abbots who shared a common communal identity with their neighboring peasants. As such, they do not reflect the self-serving figures depicted in Edo period popular imagery or later scholarship. Taken together, these complex and sometimes subtle interactions create a model of clergy-lay social dynamics that differs from interpretations found in many previous studies of early modern Buddhism and village life.

One other trend that gradually emerges from these accounts concerns the shifting social identity of the clergy in the nineteenth century. With the fall of the Tokugawa regime in 1868, and the subsequent birth of the modern Japanese nation-state, Buddhist clerics lost their early modern status position as well as the last vestiges of their socio-political exclusivity.⁹⁵ Well-supported temples managed to maintain their religious and cultural prominence into the modern period, but the transformation of once distinct Buddhist clerics into common citizens of the modern state was a watershed moment in Japan's religious history. There is no denying the trauma experienced by temple communities that underwent this dramatic alteration of identity in the early 1870s. However, judging from Yakuōin's reliance upon Tokugawa authority rather than Buddhist doctrines, its preference for standardized legal terminology rather than religious imagery, and its increasing reliance upon the laity in its management methods, it would appear that Buddhism's legal and social secularization had begun long before the advent of the Meiji state.⁹⁶

Finally, what of the timber that caused so much contention? Given the many ironic turns in the story of Mt. Takao, it is fitting to conclude with another twist: in the end, neither the Buddhist clerics, nor the peasants, nor the bakufu got it. The new Meiji government asserted its control over the mountain in 1871, and two years later, it considered using the wood for the emerging Japanese navy.⁹⁷ During WWII, the timber was harvested for ship construction. Then, for the one hundredth anniversary of the Meiji Restoration in 1967, the government transformed the area into the park that exists today. Yakuōin and Mt. Takao now draw thousands of day-trippers from Tokyo and elsewhere who seek relaxation and peace under the shade of the trees. Probably very few are aware of the many struggles over their preservation.

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95 Ketelaar 1990 surveys the early Meiji trials of the Buddhist clergy, and Jaffe 2001 discusses the impact of their change in status on pp. 58–94.

96 Looking beyond the region of Mt. Takao, even the Tokugawa's bifurcated bureaucracy experienced a degree of practical integration since the *jisha bugyō* (the magistrates of religious matters) came to rely upon their counterparts in the *kanjō bugyō* (the magistrates for many secular matters) for some administrative processes.

97 TSM, vol. 3, no. 703, pp. 516–17. I do not know the extent of the navy's usage of Mt. Takao's resources, but given the gradual shift towards steel ships, and eventually steam power, I assume it was limited. Totman 2007 does not directly refer to Mt. Takao, but his study analyses the forestry policies of the Meiji government.

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