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DECONSTRUCTING 'JAPAN'

史 Amino Yoshihiko 網野善彦

Among present-day Japanese historians, Amino Yoshihiko is unusual: though a Tokyo University graduate (1950), he chooses to work in a provincial women's college; from a core specialization in medieval history he ranges widely in time, exploring questions that take him both backwards to ancient Japan and forwards to the contemporary; he is deeply iconoclastic, raising fundamental questions about Japanese identity; and he is enormously popular, such that his books sell up to 100,000 copies.

Amino sees the history of Japan through fresh eyes, focussing not so much on the imperial and élite-controlled, rice-field-based, Kyoto-centred, male-dominated warrior and scholarly traditions, as on the regional kingdoms and countries, especially the patterns of pre-fourteenth century, pre-patriarchal diversity, and the mountains and villages and coastal settlements where different dreams stirred local communities throughout the archipelago (and beyond it in Korea, China and South-east Asia), before the homogeneous myths of 'Japan' and the pretences of 'emperor' and sun goddess were imposed over the land.

He has published prolifically. His recent books include, apart from what is translated here, *Nihon no rekishi o yominaosu* [Reconsidering Japanese history] (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1991); *Higashi to nishi no kataru Nihon no rekishi* [Japanese history speaking of East and West] (Tokyo: Soshiete, 1982); *Nihon chūsei no hinōgyōmin to tennō* [Non-agricultural peoples of medieval Japan and the emperor] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1984); *Ikei no ōken* [A different royal prerogative] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1986); *Umi to rettō no chūsei* [The middle ages of sea and archipelago] (Tokyo: Nihon Editā-sukūru Shuppansha, 1992); and with Mori Kōichi, *Uma, fune, jōmin: tōzai kōryū no Nihon rettōshi* [Horses, ships, commoners: The history of the Japanese archipelago and its east-west communications] (Tokyo: Kawai Shuppan, 1992). In the dying months of the popular intellectual weekly, *Asabi Journal*, two major discussions of Amino's ideas were featured,

Figure 1

Amino Yoshihiko



Amino in conversation with the anthropologist Aoki Tamotsu (11 January 1991), and with the philosopher Tsurumi Shunsuke (15 and 22 May 1992). Little of his work has been translated. One article, “Some problems concerning the history of popular life in medieval Japan,” appeared in *Acta Asiatica* 44 (1983), pp.77–97, and another is being translated into French for publication in 1993.

The world he explores excites many young people in Japan perhaps not least because, like the best historians, he is also partly a prophet. While shedding light on the forgotten or concealed past, he also suggests a new future which, by being imagined, becomes a possible agenda for social and political action.

—*Translator*

1. *One Country, One Name*

This article incorporates two sections from Amino's recent book: Amino Yoshihiko, *Nihonron no shiza: rettō no shakai to kokka* [Perspectives on Japan theory: societies and states of the archipelago] (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1990), “‘Nihon’ to yū kokugō” [The name ‘Japan’], Introduction, pp.6–20, and “‘Tan’itsuminzoku’ ‘tan’itsukokka’ no kyozō” [The myth of ‘one state’, ‘one race’], chap.4, pp.59–70.

¹ François Masé, “Tennō sōsō gishiki no henshin – toki, kūkan no shi to saisei oyobi kōkyūka no mondai” [Changes in the funeral ceremonies of emperors: problems of time, space, death, rebirth and permanence], *Shunju seikatsugaku* 5 (1989).

² Hashimoto Yoshihiko, “Hōgyō – daisō” [Imperial death and funeral], in *Tennō* [Emperor], ed. Kodama Yukita (Tokyo: Kondō Shuppansha, 1978).

Various theories about Japanese culture and Japanese society have continued to stir debate on the question of the identity of Japan and the Japanese, and the merits of these theories are vigorously contested. Many problems, however, still remain to be investigated. It seems to me that the debate is not necessarily always conducted objectively; indeed, there is even a tendency for emotionalism.

One example which might be taken to typify this tendency occurred during the recent imperial succession. [The Shōwa emperor, Hirohito, died on 7 January and was buried on 24 February, 1989.] The imperial funeral attracted attention and, after much discussion, it was decided that the construction of a Shinto-style *torii* and the burial of the emperor Hirohito in a huge tumulus was the correct ‘traditional’ method to be employed—and it was the one eventually adopted. Yet, as François Masé has noted, the precedent for such a burial goes no further back than the time of the Meiji emperor.¹ Emperors from Shōmu 聖武 (724–49) to Kōmei 孝明 (847–66) were consistently buried in Buddhist style, and from the empress Jitō 持統 (690–97) till the beginning of Edo, with one or two exceptions, they were cremated. From Gokōmyō 後光明 (1337–48) the practice was to conduct what appeared to be cremation but was actually burial at a site selected according to Buddhist ritual, adjacent to a suitable temple. After Gokōgon 後光嚴 (1353–71), all emperors, with the single exception of Gohanazono 後花園 (1429–64), were given a simple burial, without tumulus, at Sennyūji 泉湧寺, while from Jitō (690–97) till Junna 淳和 (823–33), the bones remaining after cremation were powdered and scattered. The word ‘traditional’ as applied to the recent imperial interment was therefore simply appropriated before people had an opportunity to evaluate the historical facts about such burials.²

Part of the responsibility for allowing this confusion about the construction of ‘tradition’, however, lies squarely with those of us specializing in historical research. How many historians, after all, were able to give a knowledgeable

reply when consulted on the historical facts at the time of the funeral? This was highly revealing of the truly lamentable state of affairs, one in which, I hasten to add, I include myself.

There have been many questions tackled with 'common sense' but which still need to be subjected to strict investigation; for example, much work remains for historians to do concerning the succession and 'Daijōsai' 大嘗祭 ceremonies. In the present paper, however, I want to turn my attention to the question of the name 'Japan' 日本.

It is self-evident that neither Japan nor the Japanese people *per se* existed prior to the use of this name, and it goes without saying that the name of the country is central to 'Japan theory' (Nihonron 日本論). Yet it is a problem that has not been confronted squarely in previous discussions about 'Japan'. In recent years, Iwahashi Koyata's *Nihon no kokugō* (The Name of Japan) would seem to be the only specialist monograph on the question.³ There are few states whose name is, like Japan's, neither a place name, a dynastic title, nor the family or clan name of a royal line. As we will see in the following discussion, there are still many things about the name 'Japan' which remain unclear, such as when it came into currency, what it meant, how it was used, how the characters 日本 were read, and so on. Perhaps this is why, even though many other facts have been more or less cleared up by researchers, the question of 'Japan' has never really been considered as one of primary historical concern.

It may well be thought that a people who knows little about the origins or meaning of its country's name is something of an oddity in this day and age. Yet all manner of discourse is engaged in using such expressions as 'Japanese people' or 'Japanese culture' that incorporate the term 'Japan', while the problem of 'Japan' itself remains unresolved and vague.

Recent research by ancient historians—Iwahashi Koyata being the most prominent among them—has, to a large extent, clarified many of the main issues surrounding the name 'Japan', but I would like to consider a number of related questions.

From as early as the Heian period, debate has surrounded the question of when the peninsula's first state, established in the Kinai 畿内 area, took the name 'Japan' and what that name designated. Over the centuries so many conjectures have been made that Iwahashi was led to remark: "it would seem everyone has developed a pet theory to suit her/himself."

³ Iwahashi Koyata, *Nihon no kokugō* [The name of Japan] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbun-kan, 1970).

Figure 2

Sujinryō: probably the earliest example of the 'key-shaped' tomb, about fourth century, near Tenri city. (Sujin is reputed to have reigned during the first century BC)



⁴ Yoshida Takashi, “Kodai kokka no ayumi” [Evolution of the ancient state], *Taikei Nihon no rekishi* [Outline history of Japan] (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1988), vol.3.

⁵ Fujita Shōzō, “Henshin ryūsei” [Transitional prosperity], *Gekkan byakka* [Monthly encyclopedia], no.129 (1973). Fujita stressed that emperor-name, country-name and reign-name (*tennōgō*, *kokugō*, *gengō*) should be considered together, and pointed to the characteristic manipulation of names by Japan’s rulers, where neither the reason for the change nor the method by which it was decided are made clear, as in the transition from Ōyamato 大倭 to Ōyamato-koku 大養徳国 to Yamato 大和.

⁶ Shi Shaojun, “‘Ri chuchutianzi’ to ‘ri mochu tianzi’ ni kansuru ichikosatsu – Kurihara Tomonobu hakase ‘keishasetsu’ o chūshin ni” [A study concerning the ‘Prince of the place where the sun rises’ and the ‘Prince of the place where the sun sets’, centring on the ‘Slant Theory’ of Dr Kurihara Tomonobu], transl. Wang Xiaolin, *Nihonshi kenkyū* 327 (1989), shows that from the Chinese viewpoint there was no difference in terms of rank between the place where the sun rises and the place where it sets. This shows that according to the contemporary Chinese sense of direction there was no extra value attaching to the east, but it is quite conceivable that the then Yamato (Wa 倭) government on the archipelago might have thought of the east as superior. In that case, it might surely be possible objectively to discern an element of insincerity in the posture adopted by the Yamato governments towards envoys sent to Sui. As spelled out below, this is discernible in the adoption of a Chinese perspective in the process of determining the name ‘Japan’, the usage of the appellation *tennō*, and later in the style adopted by the court.

⁷ *Nihon Shoki*, ‘*shiki*’, – *teihon*, *kaidaijutsugi* [*Nihon Shoki*, ‘private records’: commentary and explanation].

The first documentary reference to ‘Japan’ Iwahashi could discover was in the *Kushikiryō* 公式令, where, between the ninth year of Emperor Tenji 天智 (670) and the second year of Emperor Monmu 文武 (698), the name was first used officially in relations with other countries. Drawing upon work based on Chinese and Korean materials, such as that of Hashimoto Sōkichi, Iwahashi put the emergence of the name 日本 around the time of Taika 大化 (645).

The generally-accepted view among ancient historians today, which emphasizes the usage of 日本 by the envoy sent to Tang China in the first year of Taihō 大室 (701), is in basic agreement with Iwahashi. Yoshida Takashi thinks it might have been used from the later seventh century, but the fact is that the date cannot be established any more accurately than this.⁴

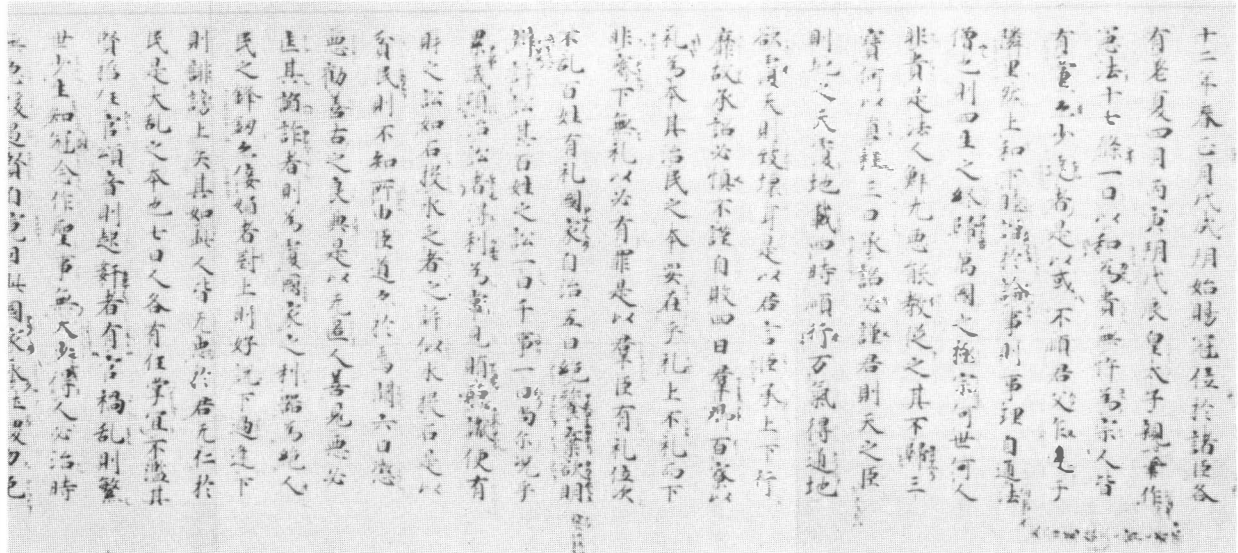
As Fujita Shōzō has observed, however, it is important to note the close correlation between the time when the name ‘Japan’ 日本 was adopted and when the appellation *tennō* 天皇 came into systematic use.⁵ Much controversy still surrounds this term, but the prevailing view is that it is related to the enactment of the Kiyomihara Code 淨御原律令 at the time of Tenmu or Jitō in the late seventh century. This would suggest that ‘Japan’ and *tennō* have been inseparably linked from earliest times.

There are also all sorts of theories, and no consensus, as to the meaning of ‘Japan’ 日本. Most widely held is the view which emerged in the Heian period identifying the *hi izuru tokoro no miko* 日出する処の天子 ‘prince of the place where the sun rises’ mentioned in the *Sui Shu* 隋書 as the *Higashi tennō* 東天皇 (eastern *tennō*) of the *Nihon Shoki* 日本書紀, holding that Japan was so named because, looking eastwards from the Tang Court, it was where the sun rose.⁶ If one adopts this view, it means that ‘Japan’ has a Tang or at least a Chinese continental perspective. Naturally, doubts were expressed as early as the Heian period concerning this interpretation, as in the observation that “Seen from this country, the sun does not rise from Kyoto” [i.e. it clearly emerges from somewhere else].⁷ Theories have abounded ever since. Iwahashi gives a detailed account of all this and, after careful consideration, rejects the China-oriented view on the grounds that to see oneself from the perspective of another would be “schizophrenic,” and that to think in terms of Japan as meaning ‘to the East’ when ‘viewed from China and Korea’ would amount to taking China and Korea as suzerain states. Noting the use of *hi no moto* 日の本 as a *makurakotoba* 枕詞 [tied word] for ‘Yamato’ やまと, he interprets it as a pun on *yama* 山 (mountains) and concludes that the country’s name was derived from the fact that the sun always rose from behind the mountain ranges to the east.

As against this, Yoshida Takashi recognizes that the state based in the Kinai region, the *ritsuryō* 律令 state, settled upon a name which expressed an awareness of the Tang, but points out that it is precisely this view of the world against a Chinese axis which raises a problem about the basic character of that state. On the other hand, he sees significance in the use of the character ‘sun’ 日, and considers that ‘Japan’ was adopted as the name of the country

Figure 3

Ritsuryō, the seventeen-article code of 604. (Zusetsu Nihon bunka no rekishi, 2: Asuka Hakuō [An illustrated history of Japanese culture, vol. 2: Asuka and Hakuō periods] [Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1979])



ruled by the *tennō*, the sun-prince (*hi no miko* 日の御子) or descendant of the sun-gods.⁸

I am not able to make any new or significant contribution to the debate on these various points at issue, but would agree with Yoshida's contention that the use of the name 'Japan' 日本 reflects a strong consciousness of the Tang empire on the Chinese mainland. Saigō Nobutsuna has also noted the working of a deep-rooted tendency on the part of the society of the archipelago to "see its essence in terms of the sun and the direction from which it rises," a tendency also evident in "the creation of the mythology of imperial authority."⁹

Thus the name 日本 signifies a natural phenomenon or orientation and, as mentioned above, is neither the name of the place of origin of the dynastic founders nor that of a dynasty or tribe. Closely related is the fact, pointed out elsewhere by Yoshida, that along with the establishment of the title *tennō* the imperial house took upon itself the right to grant clan and family names to its subjects while possessing no such names of its own. Notions such as *ekisei kakumei* 易姓革命 (transfer of the mandate to another family) or *tenmei* 天命 (the mandate of heaven) were simply used to legitimize the idea of imperial descent.¹¹ Probably nowhere else, at least in East Asia or Europe, is there to be found a royal or imperial house without a clan or family name, while, as we have noted above, the name of the country itself, 日本, is inextricably linked to the *tennō* institution.

⁸ Yoshida, "Kodai kokka no ayumi."

⁹ Saigō Nobutsuna, "Himukashi to 'Nihon' to" [Easternness and Japan], *Nihon no rekishi*, 1: *genshi-kodai, kodai-ōken'* [History of Japan, vol. 1: Origins – ancient period, ancient sovereignty], ed. Asahi Hyakka (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1989).

¹⁰ Yoshida Takashi, "Kodai shakai ni okeru 'uji'" [Lineage in ancient society], *Nihon no shakaishi*, 6: *Shakateki sōshūdan* [History of Japanese society, vol. 6: Social organizations] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1988). Yoshida takes the view that the family name of the Yamato kings prior to the establishment of the appellation *tennō* was 'Yamato' 倭.

¹¹ Hayakawa Shōhachi, "Ritsuryō kokka, ōchō kokka ni okeru tennō" [*Tennō* in the *ritsuryō* state and the court state], *Nihon no shakaishi*, 3: *ken'itoshibai* [History of Japanese society, vol. 3: Authority and control], ed. Asao Naohiro, 8 vols (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1986-7).

Figure 4

Hinomaru design on a fan held by Kikuchi Takefusa in defence of the walls of Hakata as the forces of Takezaki Suenaga prepare to meet the Mongol invaders (c.1293)—as depicted in the “Mōkō shūrai ekotoba” [*Scroll of the Mongol invasion*]. (Source: Shiryō taiki Nihon no rekishi, 2: chūsei [1] [*Outline of sources in Japanese history, vol.2: Middle ages, pt.1*] [Osaka: Osaka Shoseki,1979])



Already in the Heian period, however, not long after it came into use, the meaning of ‘Japan’ 日本 was most certainly unclear or doubtful; nor was there a definitive reading of the characters 日本, on which, as everybody knows, there is still no agreement to this day. There are basically two views—the traditional one that the characters 日本 were read ‘Hinomoto’, and the view, as espoused by Iwahashi, that the characters 日本 were simply adopted to represent the word ‘Yamato’, but since it was from the Heian period that characters began to be given Chinese as well as Japanese pronunciations, it is probably beyond dispute that two forms, ‘Nihon’ and ‘Nippon’, were used. Assuming that in ancient times the characters 日本 were pronounced ‘Yamato’, as Iwahashi insists, this would mean that the name was after all derived from the dynasty’s place of origin, but it is in the very adoption of the characters 日本 that the essence of the problem must be said to lie.

Regardless of this, it is clear that there is a persistent vagueness about the name of the country—as regards both its meaning and pronunciation. Most

people are unaware of this confusion and scholars remain unable to resolve the quandary. Perhaps this is truly a uniquely 'Japanese' problem?

Against the background of this archipelagic society's reverence for the sun (which may also be seen in the country's name), the *binomaru* 日の丸 symbol, in use at least from the Kamakura period onwards in both civilian and military life (on fans and banners), began to be treated as a national emblem,¹² and then, its origins as vague as ever, was adopted by the state for obligatory use as such. We can discern here a problem similar to that of the origin and nature of the country's name, both being imposed by unacceptably authoritarian measures. Is it not also at least partly due to a general vagueness about these matters that terms such as *kenkoku kinen no hi* 建国記念の日 (National Foundation Day) and the unbroken succession (*daisū* 代数) of emperors, fabrications without basis, are still even today in common parlance?

Even more deserving of attention is the question of what precisely was the territory indicated by the name 'Japan' whose people had a sense of being under such a state? It goes without saying that it did not extend over the whole of the territories of the present-day Japanese state. It is clear that this only occurred from the modern period in the case of Okinawa, which comprised the kingdom possessing the completely different name of 'Ryūkyū', and Hokkaidō, where mainly Ainu people lived. However, there is still a lot to be investigated and researched even about Honshū, Shikoku and Kyūshū, which were under the control of the *ritsurjō* state that by and large used this country name. It has gradually become clear from the researches of recent years that the way in which people were conscious of the country name 'Japan' or their consciousness of the Japanese state (*Nihonkoku ishiki* 日本国意識) was far from uniform.

¹² One scene of a fan with a gold *binomaru* against a red background may be seen in the "Hōnen shōnin eden" [Pictorial biography of Saint Hōnen], in Kanagawa Daigaku Nihon jōmin bunka kenkyūjo, *Shinpan emaki-mono ni yoru Nihon jōmin seikatsu ebiki* [Index of picture scrolls dealing with lives of ordinary Japanese people], ed. Shibuzawa Keizō (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1984), vol. 5, p.73. The iconographical investigation of such *binomaru*, including those on banners used by generals during the time of the Warring States, remains to be done.

Figure 5

Hinomaru flag seen as a Mongol boat is boarded and Mongol troops are beheaded—"Mōkō shūrai ekotoba." (Source: Zusetzu Nihon bunka no rekishi [An illustrated history of Japanese culture] [Kamakura: Shōgakusan, 1979])

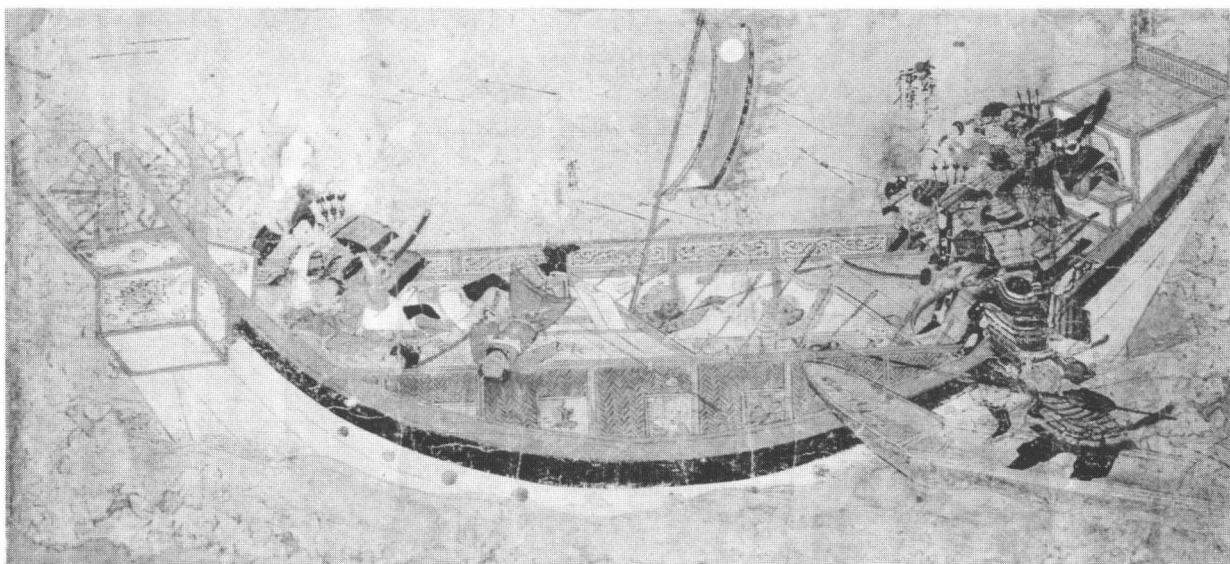


Figure 6

Present-day Yamato district, in the vicinity of Nara



¹³ Ōtsu Tōru, “Ritsuryō kokka to Kinai–kodaï kokka no shihai kōzō” [The Kinai region and the *ritsuryō* state: the control structure of the ancient state], *Nihon Shoki kenkyū* [Studies on the *Nihon Shoki*] (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1985), vol.13.

¹⁴ *Shōyūki* [the diary of Fujiwara Sanesuke, 957–1046], entry for 25th day, 4th month, 3rd year of Kannin.

As Ōtsu Tōru has emphasized,¹³ Kinai and Kigai 畿外 were clearly distinguished by the *ritsuryō* state; for aristocrats or officials to leave Kinai was to venture into the world of foreign lands (*gaikoku* 外国) or barbarians (*ebisu* 夷). In fact, it should be understood that ‘Japan’ 日本 was initially the name used by the Kinai people for their country, as may be observed from the fact that Kinai was originally known as ‘Yamato’. From early on, it was decided for this reason that ‘Japan’ 日本 should be used exclusively in external negotiations, yet even in a region such as northern Kyūshū which had close links with Kinai, a consciousness of the Japanese state (*Nihonkoku* 日本国) or being Japanese (*Nihonjin* 日本人), except among those who became state officials, does not seem to have reached very deeply into the society.

It was the same in the late Heian period. At the time of the Tōi 刀伊 invasion in the third year of Kannin 寛仁 (1019), when attention was directed to the boundary line between Japan and Silla,¹⁴ the people of the archipelago were called ‘Japanese’ (*Nihonjin*) by the Kōryō side too,¹⁵ while, judging by the way ‘Nihon’ was used in the *Konjaku Monogatari* 今昔物語集, in which ‘the extremities of Chinzei [Kyūshū]’ (*Chinzei no hate*

鎮西の果) and 'the limits of Mutsu [Tōhoku]' (*Mutsu no kiwa* 陸奥の際) were described as being 'within the country of Japan';¹⁶ it seems that a sense of 'Nihonkoku' was finally penetrating the society.¹⁷

Even so, the way in which the country name was understood by the people of Tōgoku 東国 (the East Country) known as the Tōi 東夷, and especially the Tōhoku people known as the Ezo 蝦夷 or Fushū 俘囚, as well as by the people of southern Kyūshū referred to as the Hayato 倭人, certainly differed from the kind of understanding that existed in western Japan, and this understanding developed later in the east. I think it is beyond doubt that, even if those territories were considered by the people of western Japan centred on the Court in Kyoto to be 'within the country of Japan', the easterners themselves certainly felt differently, and this undoubtedly played an important underlying role in the foundation of the state by the 'New Emperor' (*shin tennō* 新天皇) Taira no Masakado 平将門 in Tōgoku (935–40) and in the later establishment of the Kamakura bakufu by Minamoto Yoritomo 源頼朝.

However, although the Kamakura bakufu, which maintained control over Tōgoku by defeating the Fujiwara clan of north-eastern Ōshū in war, continued to use Kantō 関東 as something like a country name, in the end no such country name was actually established, especially since the central figures there preferred instead to strive to become rulers of 'Nihonkoku',¹⁸ and this, as Ōishi Naomasa has pointed out, was one of the factors facilitating the penetration of Tōgoku and Tōhoku by 'Nihonkoku' consciousness.¹⁹

Nevertheless, it is evident from the customs of Tōgoku, in which, as Nitta Ichirō has observed, Amaterasu Ōmikami was not listed among the gods to be worshipped (*kishomon no shinmei* 起請文の神名), that the sense of 'Nihonkoku' in this region differed in substance from that in Kinai or western Japan.²⁰ There are presumably other such problems which call for further

¹⁵ Ibid., entry for 3rd day, 8th month.

¹⁶ *Konjaku monogatari-shū* [Collection of stories old and new] (Tokyo: Yūseido, 1970), vol.19, no.28.

¹⁷ On this point, see chap.1 of this volume [i.e. Amino, *Nihonron no shiza*. —Trans.].

¹⁸ From the preservation of terms such as *Kantō geijō* 関東下知状 (Kantō judgement) and *Kantō gokyōsho* 関東御教書 (Kantō proclamation) in official document terminology, it would seem that the bakufu made positive use of the word Kantō as a term denoting its own strength in relation to the outside. The fact that it lay to the east of 'Kyoto' should no doubt also be noted.

¹⁹ Ōishi Naomasa, "Sotogahama Ezojima kō" [A consideration of the Ezo that lies on the remotest shores], *Seki Akira sensei kanreki kinen Nihon kodaishi kenkyū* [Studies in Japanese ancient history in honour of the sixtieth birthday of Professor Seki Akira] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980).

²⁰ Nitta Ichirō, "Kyogen o ōseraruru kami" [Gods who speak falsely], *Retto no bunkashi* [Cultural history of the archipelago] (Tokyo: Nihon Editāsukūru Shuppansha, 1989), vol.6.

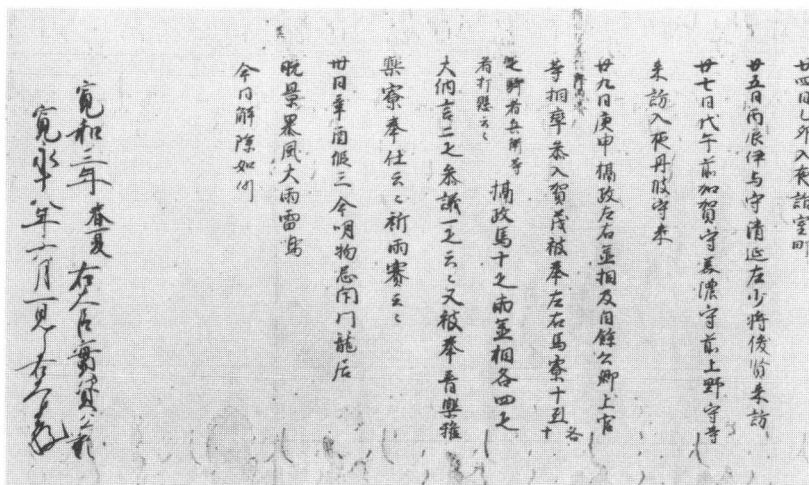


Figure 7

A page from the *Shōyūki*, the diary of Fujiwara Sanesuke.

(Source: *Tōkyō Daigaku sbiryō hensanjō*, ed., *Shōyūki* [Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1959])

Figure 8

Tosaminato 十三湊 in Tsugaru (present-day Aomori prefecture) — a prosperous port town in the Muromachi period, frequented by many ships and the base for the Andō who declared himself the 'great general of Hinomoto'. The area from here to the south of Hokkaidō was known in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as 'Hinomoto' (日本)

investigation, but by the time of the Northern and Southern Courts (1336–92) and the Muromachi period, as is already well-known, a 'Hinomoto' distinct from 'Nihonkoku' 日本国 had made its appearance in the northern part of Tōhoku and southern Hokkaidō.

As explained in detail by Kaihō Mineo, references such as to the 'Hinomoto' party of Ezo depicted in the "Suwa daimyōjin ekotoba" 諏訪大明神絵詞 (Suwa shrine scroll), to the Andō 安東/安藤 who was known as the 'great general of Hinomoto' (Hinomoto daishōgun 日本大將軍), and to 'Judge Iwaki of Ōshū, general of Hinomoto' (Ōshu Hinomoto no shōgun, Iwaki no hangan 岩城の判官) who appears in the sermon song (*sekkyōbusbi* 説経節) "Sanshō dayū" 山椒大夫, and so on, make it clear that the



region from northern Tōhoku to Hokkaidō was called Hinomoto (日本), and that it was so referred to by people of other regions too.²¹ In the records of the Ōmi 近江 merchants of the sixteenth century detailing the extent of their travels throughout the country, the phrase 'Hinomoto (日下 *sic* in the east' occurs; in fact, the eastern boundary of 'Nihonkoku' was really 日本.²² This is an inevitable consequence of the fact that 日本 is a word indicating that natural phenomenon—the east where the sun rises—and demonstrated nicely why it could not become the exclusive property of one state.

Furthermore, as has emerged from the excavations of the Shōzankan 勝山館 remains at Kaminokunichō 上の国町, Hiyama-gun, Hokkaidō, the northern Tōhoku and southern Hokkaidō region was one jointly occupied by the so-called *wajin* 和人 (or 'Japanese') and Ainu, where from the fifteenth century the notion of 'kings of Ezo-Chishima [Hokkaidō-Kuriles]' (*Ezo-Chishima ō* 夷千島王) and 'kings of Ezo' (*Ezo ō* 夷王) was cultivated.²³ The 'Matsumae lords' (*Matsumae dono* 松前殿) of the early seventeenth century, under the influence of this trend, declared to the visiting Portuguese missionary Angelis, "Matsumae is not 日本."²⁴ It is clear from this that a sense of self-identity which, as in the Ryūkyū kingdom, clearly distinguished itself from 'Nihonkoku', existed within these Hinomoto 日本 lands. It might even be said that conditions were ripe for the establishment of a 日本 different from the 日本国 ('Nihonkoku') of the emperor.

This was the case not only in the north. As the researches of Tanaka Takeo, Murai Shōsuke, Takahashi Kōmei and others have revealed in recent years, a similar attitude, one not encompassed by 'Nihonkoku', was widespread in the so-called *Wakō* 倭寇 region which included the southern part of the Korean peninsula, Cheju Island, Tsūshima and northern Kyūshū. The same sort of problem applies to the region around southern Kyūshū and Amami.²⁵ For even after the beginning of the sixteenth century, a large area of what Fujimoto Tsuyoshi terms an 'indeterminate region' still existed at the boundaries of the Korean peninsula and 日本国 ('Nihonkoku').²⁶ It is also noteworthy that the people of the Ryūkyūs and Okinawa referred to this 日本国 not as 'Nihon' but as 'Yamato',²⁷ and, on the other hand, that the origin of the word 'Japan' as used in Western languages is 'Nippon'.²⁸

While we will never know how 日本 was pronounced when the Lords of Matsumae, mentioned above, asserted that Matsumae was not 日本, as far as what might be called the 'Japan' consciousness of that time goes, further investigation is needed into what the people of Hokkaidō, the Ainu, actually called the people of 日本国 ('Nihonkoku'), what the word *wajin* 倭人, then widely used—including on the Korean peninsula—meant, and what Japan (日本国) and Japanese (日本人) were called by the people living in the region encompassed by that name.

²¹ Kaihō Mineo, *Chūsei no Ezochi* [Ezo lands in the middle ages] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1987).

²² See chap. 1 below [i.e. of Amino, *Nihon no shiza* —Trans].

²³ Matsuzaki Mizuho, "Dōnan no wajin no yakata" [Mansions of the Japanese in southern Hokkaidō], *Yomigaeru chūsei, 4: kita no chūsei—Tsugaru, Hokkaidō* [Rereading the middle ages, vol.4: The middle ages in the north: Tsugaru and Hokkaidō] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1989).

²⁴ Seishin Katorikku Bunka Kenkyūjo, ed., *Hoppō tankenki—Genna nenkan ni okeru gaikokujin no Ezo bōkokusho* [Northern explorations: reports by foreigners about Ezo in the Genna period (1615–24)], no.1, "Anjeris no daiichi Ezo hōkoku" [Angelis' first Ezo report] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1962).

²⁵ Tanaka Yasuo, "Wakō to higashi Ajia tsūkōken" [Japanese pirates and the East Asian sphere of communication], *Nihon no shakaishi, 1: rettō naigai no kōsui to kokka* [History of Japanese society, vol.1: Communication and states within and beyond the archipelago] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1987). Murai Shōsuke, *Ajia no naka no chūsei Nihon* [Medieval Japan in Asia] (Tokyo: Azekura Shōbō, 1988). Takahashi Kōmei, "Chūsei higashi Ajia kaiiki ni okeru kaimin to kōryū—Saishūtō o chūshin to shite" [Maritime people and exchanges in medieval East Asia, centring on Cheju Island], *Nagoya Daigaku Bungakubu kenkyū ronshū* [Collected research papers from Nagoya University Faculty of Letters], *Shigaku* 33 (1989).

²⁶ Fujimoto Tsuyoshi, *Mō sutatsu no Nihon bunka* [Two more Japanese cultures] (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1988).

²⁷ Takara Kurakichi, *Ryūkyū Okinawa no rekishi to Nihon shakai* [Japanese society and the history of the Ryūkyūs and Okinawa], in Tanaka, "Wakō to higashi Ajia tsūkōken."

²⁸ Iwahashi, *Nihon no kokugō*; Aoki Kazuo, "Nihon—kokugō" [Japan: country name], *Sekai daihyakka jiten* [World encyclopedia] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1988), vol.21. [In other words, the term 日本 passed via the southern Chinese pronunciation of the characters into what Marco Polo recorded as 'Zipangu', from which came 'Japan'. See *Kodansha encyclopedia of Japan* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1983). —Trans.]

As should be clear from the above, 日本 itself is a purely historical construct, and for that reason we should firmly reject historical images rooted in the 'In the beginning were the Japanese' sort of framework that is still widely adhered to. I think the reason we have been led badly astray in the way we view Japan itself is because we mistakenly believed that this conformed to the truth.

At the risk of repetition, just as there could be no *tennō* before the appellation itself took root, so there could be neither a Japan nor Japanese before the name for Japan came into currency. Research by contemporary historians now shows that not only Emperor Yūryaku (456–79) but even Emperor Tenji (668–71) did not exist; neither the people of Jōmon 縄文 nor the people of Yayoi 弥生, and neither the *uajin* of the tumulus period nor even Prince Shōtoku 聖徳太子, could have been 'Japanese' (日本人); nor was 'Yamataikoku' 邪馬台国 Japan (日本). Japan (日本) began with the *ritsuryō* state, inseparably tied to the appellation *tennō*, which controlled Honshū, Shikoku and much of Kyūshū and was based in the small region of Kinai, and which through fierce struggles with subsequent states and with the various societies and regions of the peninsula, gradually became what it is today.

If the Japanese people come to understand the history of this development, the use of the name 日本 (Nihon) may be reconsidered: we can continue using it as an expression of boundless gratitude to the sun, or, alternatively, we can reject it as something that has become stained and bloodied, and choose a completely new one. I believe that when we become able dispassionately to confront this choice, the term *tennō* will also fade away.

2. 'One Race', 'One Nation'?

²⁹ High school texts, both in the past and today, continue to be written within this paradigm. I myself used to teach within it, and this book is the fruit of my soul-searching for having done so.

³⁰ Amino Yoshihiko, *Higashi to nishi no kataru Nihon no rekishi* [Japanese history telling of East and West] (Tokyo: Soshiete, 1982).

The 'island-country theory' (*shimaguniron* 島国論) and the 'rice monoculture theory' (*imasaku ichigenron* 稲作一元論) stem from a view of Japan (Nihonkoku 日本国) as having been from ancient times a 'unified state' (*tan'itsu kokka* 单一国家) peopled by one highly homogeneous race (*tan'itsu minzoku* 单一民族).

The 'original Japanese', who are different in character from neighbouring peoples and have been living in the Japanese archipelago since the Jōmon period, are our ancestors. The culture and way of life centring on rice-cultivation spread from western Japan during the Yayoi period and was widely adopted by these people. From this emerged the state with the name 'Japan' (日本), headed by the emperor. Despite various vicissitudes, this Japan (Nihonkoku) has continued to the present and the Japanese people (Nihonjin) who comprise it have undergone a distinct historical development without suffering any major invasion or conquest by neighbouring peoples.

This framework, it must be acknowledged, is essentially retained even in post-war writings which are critical of the imperial view of history (*kōkoku shikan* 皇国史観).²⁹ Yet this 'common knowledge' is no more than a

fantasy based to a considerable degree on distortions. In particular, it is a historical fabrication which has almost entirely purged the unique society, including the Ainu, that existed in Hokkaidō and northern Tōhoku; it also ignores the formation and development of the Ryūkyū kingdom in the Okinawan islands. Furthermore, it embodies a perspective that entirely overlooks the numerous attempts to establish a state separate from that of Kinai, attempts that were made not only on the main islands of the archipelago—Honshū, Shikoku, Kyūshū—territories constituting the main reach of Nihonkoku—but also in regions like northern Kyūshū and the Tōhoku-Kantō region in the north-east of the country. Indeed, the situation that pertained in these regions indicates the coexistence of several separate states.

Elsewhere I have discussed in detail the social and cultural differences between eastern and western Japan.³⁰ As Watanabe Makoto has shown, even when analysing the Jōmon period a more complex regional division is necessary,³¹ and efforts should be directed towards re-evaluating the characteristics of all regions according to a classification based on many criteria, as Obayashi Tarō has tried to do.³²

These considerations, however, cannot, I believe, alter the fact that a difference between east and west Japan (taking the division as being along the central structural line [the geological fold running down the centre of Japan's main island]) has existed throughout, perhaps from as early as neolithic times, as Katō Shinpei, Nishida Masanori and others have said.³³ Nishida suggests that even during the Jōmon period it may have been along this natural geographical divide that the networks which linked the north of the continent to eastern Japan made contact with the networks which stretched from the south and west towards western Japan, and that the human patterns of 'pre-civilization' society might have developed over a much longer period than previously imagined.

This means that even in the early Yayoi period in western Japan and the Jōmon period in eastern Japan, two discrete societies existed side by side. Kinoshita Tadashi takes the view that differences in blood-taboo customs alone amounted to a basic cultural disparity between the two regions.³⁴ Undoubtedly, there were clear differences between them in their attitudes towards hunting and fishing, which involved the taking of life.³⁵ And, so far as the distribution of discriminated villages is concerned, even though we lack sufficient data there is no doubt that, compared to western Japan, eastern Japan had fewer such villages, and they were located in much more narrowly confined regions. Outcast villages were never found in Ainu society, nor, as Araki Moriaki has correctly pointed out, did they exist (originally) in Okinawa.³⁶

In the transition from the Yayoi to the Kofun 古墳 period, apart from these two big regions which developed their own relations beyond the archipelago the outline of various other regions may also be discerned. In eastern Japan there were Hokkaidō and northern Tōhoku with links to

³¹ Watanabe Makoto, *Jōmon jidai no chishiki* [Jōmon-period consciousness] (Tokyo: Tōkyō Bijutsu, 1983). Mori Kōichi classifies the regions of the Japanese archipelago into: the Japan Sea coast, Tōhoku, Hokkaidō, the central high plain, Kantō, Izumo, the Seto Inland Sea coast, southern Kyūshū, the southern islands, and the islands off the Pacific coast. See Mori Kōichi, ed., *Nihon no kodai, 2: retō no chūki bunka* [Japanese ancient history, vol.2: Regional cultures of the archipelago] (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1986).

³² Obayashi Tarō, *Higashi to nishi, umi to yama* [East and west, seas and mountains] (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 1990).

³³ Katō Shinpei, "Nihon kyūsekika bunka no nagare o sakanoboru" [Tracking back through the flows of neolithic Japanese culture], *Rekishi to jinbutsu*, Feb. 1983; Nishida Masaki, "Jōmon jidai no kankyō" [The environment of the Jōmon period], *Iwanami kōza Nihon kokugaku, 2: ningen to kankyō* [Iwanami Kōza Japanese archeology, vol.2: Humans and the environment] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1985).

³⁴ Kinoshita Tadashi, *Maio-kodai no shūsan shūzoku* [Burial urns: ancient birth customs] (Tokyo: Yūzankaku Shuppan, 1981). Kinoshita has discovered regions in Izumo and western Kantō where Jōmon customs survive, and even in eastern Japan sees South Ōu and north-eastern Kantō as sectors where Yayoi cultural customs were strong. He sees the killing-taboo customs of fishing villages as a product of the new cultivator-fishermen peoples of the Yayoi period.

³⁵ Itō Kiyoshi, "Nanbokuchō dōranki no shakai to shisō" [Societies and ideas in the period of the Nanbokuchō disturbances], *Kōza Nihon rekishi, 4: chūsei (2)* [Kōza Japanese history, vol.4: Middle ages, pt.2] (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1985).

³⁶ Araki Moriaki, "Nihon shizō keisei ni shimeru Ryūkyū Okinawashi no chii" [The position of Ryūkyū and Okinawan history in the construction of the historical image of Japan], *Chibōshi kenkyū* 197 (1985). Araki says that very small numbers of *bisabetsu-min* 被差別民 (outcast peoples) existed in connection with the 'Annya' puppet theatre that originated on the mainland, but that these, too, disappeared.

³⁷ Ōtsu, "Ritsuryō kokka to Kinai."

³⁸ The despatch of troops to Tōhoku in the Kanmu 桓武 period at the beginning of Heian represented a clash between the leadership that had grown up in Tōhoku society and the *ritsuryō* state's control of the area. Sasagawa Haruo, "Heian shoki no seiji kaikaku" [Political reform in early Heian] *Iwanami Kōza Nihon rekishi*, 3: *kodai* (3) [Iwanami Kōza Japanese history, vol.3: Ancient period, pt.3] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976).

³⁹ There is a debate over whether the confrontation between Iwai and Kinai should be seen as 'war' or 'rebellion', but undoubtedly there were many elements of 'war' in it.

north-east Asia (referred to below as 'Hokkaidō-Tōhoku'); and southern Tōhoku, Echigo, Kantō, and Chūbu, further sub-divisible into southern Tōhoku, northern Kantō, Shinano and Echigo on the one hand, and southern Kantō and eastern Tōhoku on the other (referred to below as 'Kantō-Tōkai'). These areas grew along with the spread of rice-cultivation.

In western Japan there were western Tōkai, Kinai, Hokuriku 北陸, San'in 山陰, Kibi 吉備, northern Kyūshū, and so on, which although differing among themselves maintained links with the Korean peninsula and the Chinese mainland, but may be regarded as constituting a distinct region (referred to below as 'Kinai-Chūgoku'; southern Kyūshū and the Satsunan islands (hereafter 'southern Kyūshū'); and 'Okinawa', which was an independent region maintaining its own communications beyond the archipelago.

At the same time, a network of sea communications grew up between the people living along the Japan Sea, the Seto Inland Sea, and the Pacific coast. They maintained links with the regions listed above, and probably also expanded their networks beyond the Japanese archipelago.

The political forces which dominated the centre of 'Kinai-Chūgoku' unified the political forces of the other regions, brought 'Kantō-Tōkai' and 'southern Kyūshū' under its control, and established the *ritsuryō* state, taking the name 'Nihon' 日本 to describe itself. There is no denying, however, that this state might better be described as 'Kinaikoku' 畿内国: it was based in Kinai, and patronisingly designated all other regions 'outside states' (*gekoku* 外国) or 'the states in all directions' (*shihōkoku* 四方国), treating in particular the people of the 'Hokkaidō-Tōhoku' and 'southern Kyūshū' regions as if they were subjugated foreigners.³⁷ It was not long before this state began expanding its sphere of control by provoking a 'war of aggression' against the 'Hokkaidō-Tōhoku' region.³⁸

We should note a tendency among historians when referring to struggles within the Japanese archipelago, including wars waged during the process of unification by the 'Tōkai' region, to eschew the word 'war' (*sensō*), preferring instead such terms as 'chastisement' (*seitō* 征討), 'punishment' (*seibatsu* 征伐) or 'disturbance' (*ran* 亂). The word 'war' is used, but only in relation to conflicts with entities on the Korean peninsula or the Chinese mainland. The struggles between northern Kyūshū and Kinai,³⁹ and especially those between the *ritsuryō* state and Tōhoku, should more correctly be described as 'wars'. To avoid this term reveals a subjective bias in favour of the 'one-state theory'; we should recognize that such insensitivity has pained and humiliated the people who were supposedly 'chastized' or 'punished'. In fact, a deep gulf was riven between the Kantō people who fought in the front lines in these wars for the *ritsuryō* state and the Tōhoku people who were attacked. Inevitably, the intra-archipelagic war and aggression which stirred confrontation between the various regions served to reinforce all the more their essential regional character. Thus, while nursing their multifarious grievances over the discrimination, control and aggression of the *ritsuryō* state,

the various regions managed to preserve their uniqueness, and as that state began to lose its grip from the late ninth century onwards, they once more found themselves in a position to assert their autonomy.

Stimulated by these wars and influences from north-east Asia, Hokkaidō entered the phases of Okhotsk culture and Satsumon 擦文 [patterned earthenware] culture, while the establishment of a kingdom by the 'new emperor' Taira no Masakado with a base in the area that later became known as Kantō (including the Izu peninsula), was an event of decisive significance.

Short-lived though it may have been, this state set up its own 'real emperor' (*bon tennō* 本天皇) in opposition to Kinai's 'new emperor' (*shinnō* 新皇), and a centre of political power and authority evolved based on the society of eastern Japan which was quite distinct from that of western Japan and which represented an embryonic 'East Country' (Tōgoku 東国).

True, this Tōgoku did not have a name of its own (although 'Tōgoku' has a similar connotation to 'Kantō'), and in its official nomenclature it was not entirely free of the authoritarian order developed by the Kinai state. Yet though in some respects it appeared to be subsumed within the imperial regime, in others it developed its own order of authority and ceremony and constituted itself as a state, with a Tōgoku sovereignty paralleling that of the Kinai dynasty. As Murai Shōsuke suggests, among the main regions of the Japanese archipelago it unmistakably became a centre rivalling Kyoto.⁴⁰

However, even within eastern Japan, the northern part of the 'Kantō-Tōkai' region maintained links with southern 'Hokkaidō-Tōhoku', and as part of the movement towards establishing an embryonic Tōgoku state from the tenth century onwards, began to seek a way to set up a state separate from Kantō and Chūbu. The Abe 安倍, Kiyohara 清原, and Ōshū Fujiwara 奥州藤原 clans were already moving in this direction, and there is also sufficient evidence to suggest that southern Hokkaidō, too, came within this framework. Furthermore, the bitterness left over from the wars between Tōhoku and the *ritsurjō* state make it clear that Tōhoku maintained antagonistic relations with Tōgoku, but was frustrated in its efforts to create an independent entity when it was defeated in the late twelfth-century Tōgoku-Tōhoku wars between Minamoto no Yoritomo and Fujiwara Yasuhira 藤原泰衡.

Tōhoku retained its independent character, however, even after it came under the sway of Tōgoku. From the mid-Kamakura period onwards, Kantō retainers were virtually ousted from Tōhoku and the Hōjō 北条 clan spread its control over the region. A similar development is evident in Hitachi 常陸, which supported the Tōhoku side in these wars,⁴¹ although it is possible that this may simply reflect the resistance against Kantō on the part of the native inhabitants of Tōhoku and Hitachi.

The pattern of Tōhoku allying itself with Kinai against Tōgoku—not unlike the alliance between the Ōshū-Fujiwara clan and the cloistered emperor Goshirakawa 後白河—was repeated during subsequent periods

⁴⁰ Murai Shōsuke, "Chūsei Nihon rettō no chiiiki kūkan to kokka" [Regional space and the state in the medieval Japanese archipelago] *Shisō* 732 (1985).

⁴¹ *Ibarakiken shi: chūsei* [History of Ibaraki prefecture: medieval] (Ibaraki: Ibaraki Ken-shi Hensan Chūseishi Bukaihen, 1965), chap.2.

⁴² Fujii Noriyuki, "Meiji gannen iwayuru 'Tōhoku chōtei' seiritsu ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu – Rinnōji no miya kogen ho shino o megutte" [A consideration of the establishment of the so-called 'Tōhoku court' in 1868 – concerning Prince Rinnōji], Tezuka Yutaka, ed., *Kindai Nibonshi no kenkyū* [Studies in modern Japanese history] (Tokyo: Kitagi Shuppan, 1981).

⁴³ The realm within which Kebiishi 檢非違使 was active as *kyokanshi* 拒捍使 was Go-Kinai 五畿内 and Tamba Ōmi 丹波近江, and it was these same territories from which levies were exacted. Lands directly administered by the imperial household were also heavily concentrated in this area. Kiyota Yoshiki, "Kebiishi no shihai chiiki to saiban kankatsu" [Kebiishi and judicial control], *Nenpō chūseiishi kenkyū*, 1976, no.1; Amino Yoshihiko, "Chūsei toshiron" [On medieval cities], *Iwanami Kōza Nihon rekishi*, 7: *chūsei* (3) [Iwanami Kōza Japanese history, vol.7: Middle ages, pt.3] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1976).

⁴⁴ To see the so-called fall of the house of Taira only in terms of the tragic tale *Heike Monogatari* is to see just one aspect. Just as in the case of Tōgoku, between the retainers of the Taira clan, too, there seems to have been a confrontation, evident in the differences between Taira no Kiyomori and Taira no Shigemori, and in the conflicting tendencies—towards establishing an independent line and a 'West Country' state on the one hand, and to remain attached to Kyoto and compromise with the *insei* 院政 administration of the retired emperor, on the other.

⁴⁵ Hosokawa Yoriyuki, who was sent to China in the first year of Embun (1356), was known as 'Chūgoku kanryō' 中国管領 (Governor of Chūgoku). In Jōwa 5 (1349), Ashikaga Tadafuyu had been called 'Nagato no kuni tandai' (Nagato garrison), but by this time the word 'Chūgoku' as a regional name had appeared. See Ogawa Shin, *Ashikaga ichimonshugo hattenshi no kenkyū* [Studies in the history of the development of the Ashikaga clan office] (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1980); Amino Yoshihiko, "'Chūgoku' to yu chiikimeiri" ['Chūgoku' as a regional name], *Nanbokuchōtōbun: Chūgoku Shikoku hen, dai nikan gepō* [Nanbokuchō testimony: Chūgoku and Shikoku, vol.2 monthly] (Tokyo: Tokyōdō Shuppan, 1989).

of political upheaval, as, for example, in the alliance between Tōhoku's 'Little Bakufu' 小幕府 and Emperor Godaigo 後醍醐 (1334–38) during the Kenmu 建武 reign, or the alliance during the Muromachi period between the Sasagawa 篠川 and the Muromachi shōgunates, and that of the Uesugi 上杉 clan and the West Army (Nishigun 西軍) at the time of the Battle of Sekigahara. This can be seen as the surfacing of a latent regional-autonomy consciousness in Tōhoku in the form of an abiding resistance to the Kantō-Tōhoku state. Though jumping somewhat forward in time, the Ōu-Etsu alliance during the Bakumatsu disturbances, although it may have not been evident on the surface, was related to the movement to set up a Tōhoku Court 東北朝廷 under Prince Rinnōji 輪王寺宮 (1846–95), with the reign name of 'Taisei' 大政.⁴² Is it not possible to see in this fierce Tōhoku inclination for independence in the face of repeated defeats the tradition of a Tōgoku state throbbing beneath the surface?

We can follow a similar course of events in western Japan where the Kinai region expanded slightly from the end of the Heian into the medieval period, coming to embrace at least Ōmi and Tamba (the central part of present-day Kyoto prefecture and part of Hyōgo prefecture), while retaining its position as the centre of one of the main regions of the archipelago.⁴³ From the first half of the tenth century, however, the uprising (consisting primarily of seafaring people or 'pirates' 海賊) led by Fujiwara Sumitomo 藤原純友, inspired by Taira no Masakado's bid for independence, swept through the region stretching from the Seto Inland Sea to northern Kyūshū, but it was put down before an independent kingdom could be established. In the late twelfth century the Taira clan continued the tradition by attempting to set up a new centre of power in Itsukushima 厳島 before moving its capital to Fukuhara 福原; again, at the end of the Heike period they abandoned Kyoto and tried to set up a 'capital' in Dazaifu 大宰府, which the Taira had long controlled. In the activities of Taira no Kiyomori and that part of the Taira clan which pursued his ambitions, therefore, may be discerned a clear tendency towards the *de facto* establishment of a 'West Country' (Sai-goku 西国) state.⁴⁴ As was probably the case in the time of Fujiwara no Sumitomo, too, but was reinforced through Kiyomori's trade between Japan and Sung China, this movement to establish alternative centres of power expanded its horizons beyond the archipelago. Links between the Korean peninsula and Kyūshū, the Seto Inland Sea and San'in became particularly close, according to the reports of the ambassadors of the various domainal lords along the sea coast.

The Taira clan's attempts at independence were emulated in the Muromachi period by the Ōuchi, clan who claimed Korean ancestry, and then by the Mōri clan. It should be noted, however, that in the meantime, during the Nanbokuchō period, the term 'Chūgoku' 中国 emerged as a regional name.⁴⁵ Certainly, the establishment of the Nagato garrison (Nagato *tandai* 長門探題) at the time of the Mongol invasions was one reason for the introduction of this new name, but the immediate cause was probably the

creation of a garrison by Ashikaga Tadafuyu 足利直冬 in 1349 (Jōwa 5) to 'punish' the eight domains of Bingo (the eastern part of present-day Hiroshima prefecture), Bitchū (the western part of Okayama prefecture), Aki-Suō (the eastern half of Yamaguchi prefecture), Nagato (the north-western part of Yamaguchi prefecture), Izumo (the eastern part of Shimane prefecture), Inaba (the eastern part of Tottori prefecture), and Hōki (the western part of Tottori prefecture), when the word 'Chūgoku' became widely used. 'Chūgoku' presumably indicated those domains which lay between Kinai and Kyūshū, but there it would be useful to investigate the extent to which awareness of Chūgoku as a regional entity developed.

There is no doubt that the western San'in region, including the areas controlled by the Ōuchi and Mōri clans, was a part of Chūgoku, but San'in also maintained links with Tōhoku through lines of communication along the Japan Sea, as did Hokuriku. Perhaps more emphasis needs to be placed on the fact that regional consciousness developed along sea routes. The same may be said of Shikoku (an early example of a regional name), which itself is divided into Tosa 土佐 (present-day Kōchi prefecture), belonging to the Pacific coast, and the other three domains on the Seto Inland Sea. Relations between Tosa, Hyūga (covering part of present-day Miyazaki and Kagoshima prefectures) and Kii 紀伊 were close, while Kii also had sea-links with Izu 伊豆 and Bōsō 房総. The latest date we can give for the development of this network of maritime connections is the twelfth century.

The region of 'southern Kyūshū', which preserved the Hayato tradition, also tended to be linked with eastern Japan along this route. Overtures from the Tōgoku state were in fact often directed at Kyūshū, including northern Kyūshū. Minamoto no Yoritomo first tried to win over Kyūshū; then Ashikaga Takauji 足利尊氏 seized military control; and the Kamakura shogun Ashikaga Mitsukane 足利満兼 joined forces with the Ōuchi clan [of Suō, or Yamaguchi], all instances of Tōgoku's repeated attempts to draw Kyūshū into an alliance to resist the power of Kinai-Tōhoku.

From the earliest times Kyūshū was sensitive to trends on both the Chinese mainland and the Korean peninsula. As Tanaka Takeo and Satō Shin'ichi noted quite early on, Kaneyoshi, the Nanchō prince who took the name 'Ryōkai' in the late fourteenth century, sent tribute to the Ming Court and was invested by the Chinese emperor as 'King of Japan' (*Nibonkoku ō 日本国王*).⁴⁶ It is of considerable interest, as Murai says, that this was "the autonomous choice of the Kyūshū state."

Satō suggests that it was this initiative by Prince Kaneyoshi that led Ashikaga Yoshimitsu 足利義満 to accept enfeoffment by the Ming Court, becoming 'King of Japan' and using the Ming reign title. Takahashi Kōmei has shown, however, that the Muromachi shoguns were in the anomalous position of being 'kings' who ruled Japan as subjects of the Ming emperor, on the one hand, and the most powerful military commanders in Japan, appointed by the emperor as 'Barbarian-suppressing generalissimo' (*sei-i*

⁴⁶ Tanaka Takeo, *Taigai kankei to bunka kōryū* [Foreign relations and cultural intercourse] (Tokyo: Shibunkaku, 1982). Satō Shin'ichi, *Ashikaga Yoshimitsu* [Ashikaga Yoshimitsu] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1980).

⁴⁷ Takahashi Kōmei, "Muromachi bakufu no taigai shisei" [The diplomatic posture of the Muromachi period], *Rekishi gaku kenkyū* 546 (1985). Murai Shōsuke has criticized this view. See his *Ajia no naka no chūsei Nihon*.

taishōgun 征夷大將軍), on the other. Their diplomatic stance towards Korea was based on 'legitimation by enfeoffment' as leaders of Japan, and their ranking of Korea as one level beneath them did not accord with the traditional diplomatic views or customs of the Court nobility.⁴⁷

What Takahashi's view boils down to is that the Muromachi shoguns "appropriated the diplomatic prerogatives of the *tennō* by exploiting the authority of the Ming emperor"; that the shogun as 'king of Japan' is clearly a case of dual subordination, having sought the prerogative to rule from the Ming Court at the same time as maintaining full authority within the lord-and-retainer system from the [Japanese] emperor. Furthermore, the stance of the Muromachi shoguns may be seen as an extension of the Taira administration which had earlier leant towards a Saigoku (West Country) state. Without doubt, it was heir to the tradition of the 'Kantō-Tōhoku' region, especially that part on the Seto Inland Sea.

Likewise, at the end of the fifteenth century the Ryūkyūan kingdom established in the 'southern Okinawa' region pursued its course of independent evolution while in the 'Hokkaidō-Tōhoku' region, too, rulers took the title of 'kings of Ezo-Chishima'. In the 'Kantō-Tōkai', 'Kinai-Chūgoku' and 'southern Kyūshū' regions, the domains of the various 'warring-states' daimyo were about to take shape, drawing even clearer distinctions between the various regions.

It is not necessary to pursue these points further here. Suffice it to say that the argument that from Jōmon times there has been in Japan a 'single race' and a 'single state' is a baseless fabrication. An appreciation of this makes any simplistic linear periodization of the Japanese archipelago problematic, to say the least. It is also obvious that, historically, views of the emperor and likewise of 'Japan' 日本 have been far from homogeneous throughout the Japanese archipelago.

The present lack of interest in Okinawa prefecture in Japan's national anthem and flag is quite understandable, and the same can be said for Hokkaidō. And, although it may seem superficially that the 'Kantō-Tōkai', 'Kinai-Chūgoku' and 'southern Kyūshū' regions can be treated as one, their intrinsic differences are self-evident and would be further highlighted if ethnographic investigations were pursued along regional lines.

Much remains to be explained about the context and content of the *kimigayo* anthem and the *hinomaru* flag. Their imposition by a centralized state power on the country as a whole, as national anthem and national flag, must be construed as an extremely 'un-Japanese' and authoritarian act, which has stifled and will continue to stifle the history and realities of life as experienced by those inhabiting the country.

Conversely, there is no doubt that villages of outcast minorities existed, though with differences, in these various regions. A refined methodology based on detailed historical and ethnographic investigations in each region will need to be adopted in order to deal successfully with this problem.

Figure 9

The boundaries of 'Japan' according to historical materials

	<u>Source Material</u>	<u>East</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>Period</u>
1.	<i>Engishiki</i> (vol.16) <i>Onmyōryō</i>	Mutsu 陸奥		Tosa	Sado	927
2.	<i>Shin Sarugaku Ki</i>	Hoshū no chi 俘囚之地 [Exile Country]	Kiganoshima 貴賀之島			beginning 11th century
3.	<i>Hōgen Monogatari (chū)</i>	Akoru, Tsugaru, Hoshūga, Chishima	Kikai, Kōrai 鬼海 高麗			c. Jōkyū [1219–20]
4.	<i>Jikyōji Hon Jokyūki</i> (vol.1)	Akuro, Tsukaku, Ezogashima <i>mmmm</i>	Kyūoku, Nishima 九国 二島			mid-Kamakura [13th century]
5.	<i>Nichiren Ibun</i>	Inoshima	Tsukushi 築紫			1265
6.	<i>Nyūraibunsho</i> 入隸文書	Esokashima	Yuhawonoshima			1277
7.	<i>Hachimangū-dokun</i>	Sotonohama	Kikaijima 鬼海島			end Kamakura [early 14th century]
8.	<i>Nōhonji Hon Sogamo Mongatari</i> (vol.9) 妙本寺 本曾我物語	Akuru, Tsugaru, Hesokajima	Kikai, Kōrai, Iwojima	Kumano-miyama	Sadoshima	end Kamakura
9.	" (vol.3)	Sotohama	Kikaijima 鬼界島			"
10.	" (vol.5)	Akuru, Tsugaru, Sotohama	Iki, Tsushima	Tosahata	Sado Kitayama	"
11.	<i>Yuzu Nenbutsu Engi</i>	Eso	Ihaukajima			Shitoku [1384–7]
12.	<i>Yosbitsune-Ki</i> (vol.5)	Ezonoichishima	Hakatazu		Kitayama Sadoshima	Muromachi [1338–1573]
13.	<i>Himeyuri</i>	Esokajima	Kikai, Kōrai			"
14.	<i>Imabori Hiyosbi Jinja Bunsbo</i>	Hinomoto 日本	Chinzei	Kumano-michi	Sadoshima	"

⁴⁸ Ōishi Naomasa, “Sotogahama Ezojima kō”; Murai, “Chūsei Nihon rettō no chiiki kūkan to kokka.”

⁴⁹ Nakamura Ken, ed., *Imabori Hiyoshi jinja bunsbo sbūsei* [Compilation of Imabori Hiyoshi shrine documents], doc. no.313 (Tokyo: Yūzankaku Shuppan, 1981).

⁵⁰ For a detailed study of the process of drafting this forged document, see Nakamura Ken, *Chūsei Sōsonshi no kenkyū* [Studies in the medieval history of Sōson] (Tokyo: Hōsei Daigaku Shuppanyoku, 1984), chap.7. According to Nakamura, the original text of the Edict was lost in Ōei 33 (1426), but was said to have been in existence again in Tenbun 20 (1551), and must have been drawn up in this period.

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It is clear from these observations, then, that it is erroneous to regard the Japanese people as a homogeneous group, although Japanese society today is highly homogenous when compared with most other modern states. Because in the past people simply relied on crude notions such as the ‘island-country theory’, virtually no serious analysis has been made of how this perception came about.

A noteworthy exception to this are the recent efforts of Ōishi Naomasa and Murai Shōsuke to explore the ‘mental’ borders of ‘Nihonkoku’ by studying literary sources from the early tenth to the late sixteenth centuries.⁴⁸ It would appear that around the fourteenth century a consciousness developed among ordinary people of the boundaries of ‘Nihonkoku’ on four sides. Murai has represented this graphically (see Figure 9).

One further example may be added: it will be seen in the Edict (*senji* 宣旨) of Emperor Goshirakawa, dated the 11th day, 11th month, 2nd year of Hōgen (1157) (many forged replicas of which were in circulation during the Warring States period),⁴⁹ which confirms the privilege granted to the Hōnai merchants of Ōmi of access to three thousand horses to enable them to travel freely throughout other domains, reference is made to “to the east, Hinomoto 日下; to the south, Kumano; to the west, Chinzei [Hakata]; to the north, Sado island.”

This eastern ‘Hinomoto’ 日下 almost certainly meant northern Tōhoku/southern Hokkaidō, as is suggested by its use in phrases such as ‘the Hinomoto shogun’ (Hinomoto 日下 no shōgun), ‘the Hinomoto shogun from Ōshū Tosaminato (Ōshū Tosa Minato 奥州十三湊 Hinomoto shōgun), and ‘the Hinomoto shogun’ (Hinomoto 日下 no shōgun).⁵⁰ It indicates that beyond the eastern frontier of ‘Nihonkoku’ 日本国 lay another region, called Hinomoto 日本.

Translated by Gavan McCormack

GLOSSARY

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Amaterasu Ōmikami | Legendary founder goddess. |
| Ashikaga | Powerful family in medieval Japan, especially in the Kamakura period.
Mitsukane (1378–1409)
Takauji (1305–1358), first Muromachi shogun
Tadafuyu (?1326–1400)
Yoshimitsu (1358–1408). |
| <i>Daijōsai</i> | One of a series of rites marking the accession of a new emperor. In the case of the Heisei emperor, who succeeded his Shōwa father (Hirohito) on 7 January 1989, the appropriation of public funds to defray the cost of these Shinto rituals was controversial. At the centre of the <i>Daijōsai</i> is a mysterious ritual which is said to involve the new emperor ‘receiving’ the spirit of the sun goddess, Amaterasu, during a solitary late-night vigil. |

Villages where people of discriminated castes lived.	Discriminated villages
[?]-941. Aristocratic family scion, who rebelled in the mid-Heian period in the Seto Inland Sea area.	Fujiwara Sumitomo
Also Ebisu or Emisu, one of the peoples originally occupying the Hokuriku region of northern Japan.	Ezo
Period when Kyoto was capital, 794-c.1185.	Heian period
Design of red sun on white ground, origins unknown, but adopted as a merchant shipping identification symbol in the late nineteenth century; came to be used as a virtual national flag.	<i>Hinomaru</i>
Archaeological period (c. BC 7000-300) characterized by coiled earthenware pottery.	Jōmon
1185-1333.	Kamakura period
Provinces adjacent to the capital, Kyoto.	Kinai
Tumulus burial-mounds of the period from Yayoi to Nara.	<i>Kofun</i>
National Foundation Day (6 February); a national holiday—celebrating the divine origins of Japan—which till 1945 known as <i>Kigensetsu</i> , and was revived under this name in the late 1960s.	<i>Kenkoku kinen no hi</i>
A hymn of praise to the emperor, composed in 1893 to the words of an ancient poem, which came to serve as a national anthem.	<i>Kimigayo</i>
Code adopted between 681 and 689.	Kiyomihara
District of southern Hokkaidō.	Matsumae
1147-99, founder of the Kamakura shogunate.	Minamoto no Yoritomo
1336-1573, also known as the Ashikaga shogunate.	Muromachi period
Time of division between northern and southern courts which lasted for much of the fourteenth century.	Nanbokuchō disturbances
710-84	Nara period
See <i>Kenkoku kinen no hi</i> .	National Foundation Day
First officially-commissioned history of Japan, compiled in the Nara period.	<i>Nihon Shoki</i>
See Nanbokuchō.	Northern and Southern Courts
Present-day Shiga prefecture.	Ōmi
The region of north-eastern Honshū.	Ōshū
Present-day northern Honshū.	Ōu
Temple outside Kyoto, established in the time of Emperor Tenchō (824-33), where emperors from Gomizunoō (1611-29) onwards were buried.	Sennyūji
State system modelled on Chinese centralized institutions adopted in the seventh century, especially during the Taika reform.	<i>Ritsuryō</i>
Shōtoku Taishi (574-622); vigorous in introducing Chinese learning and philosophy to Japan.	Prince Shōtoku
Official Chinese dynastic history of the Sui dynasty (589-618).	<i>Sui Shu</i>
Attempted introduction in 646 by Emperor Kōtoku of the centralized code of Tang China.	Taika reform

- Yamataikoku Japanese kingdom known from Chinese sources to have existed from about the third century in the Kyūshū or Ōmi regions.
- Taira Also Heike. A powerful family, originally a branch of the imperial family, which rose to its greatest power during the Kamakura shogunate; it suffered a major defeat in 1183.
- Taira no Masakado Mid-Heian-period rebel chieftain in the Kantō area (the vicinity of present-day Chiba); most active from 935 till his defeat and execution in 940.
- Yayoi Archaeological period (c. BC 300–300 AD) characterized by patterned earthenware pottery and the introduction of agriculture.

—G. McC.

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ERRATUM

The editors wish to apologise to Dr Virgil Ho for the garbled passage (an undetected computer mishap)—the last four lines of page 97 and the first six lines of page 98—in his article, “The limits of hatred,” which appeared in the previous issue of this journal.

The passage should read as follows:

likely that before long Cantonese children would be found to have become “rude, stupid and slothful.”⁶⁶ A concerned writer advocated the establishment of a municipal symphony orchestra in Canton because he believed Western classical music to be a cultural weapon with “magical” efficacy for rejuvenating the declining Chinese nation. In his view, a symphony orchestra was the *only* means to “music-ize” (*yin-yueh-hua* 音樂化) the lower-class citizens so as to dispel the dull, unmusical, and suffocating atmosphere of life in the city.⁶⁷ Perhaps influenced by such views, the Municipal Radio of Canton spent on average twenty percent of its broadcasting time playing Western music.⁶⁸