

Interpreting the Establishment of the Confucius Temple and School at Taku in Saga Domain

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1. Introduction

The educational system of early modern Japan mostly took shape from the middle of the Edo period onward, under the control of the Bakufu and the domains. This system, designed for the training of the warrior elite, and implemented within the Bakufu's official Shōheizaka Gakumonjo 昌平坂学問所 school and in the various domain schools, taught mainly Chinese learning (*kangaku* 漢学), centred in particular on Confucianism. But prior to this, in the early Edo period, Chinese learning was already being taught at the forerunner of the Shōheizaka Gakumonjo, the Shinobugaoka 忍岡 family school founded in Edo with Bakufu support by Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583–1657), and also in some domain schools.

Hayashi Razan had established his school on a site at Shinobugaoka in Ueno in 1630, with financial support from the third shogun Iemitsu.⁽¹⁾ In 1633, with the assistance of the lord of Owari 尾張 domain, Tokugawa Yoshinao 徳川義直 (1600–1650), Razan constructed a Hall to the Former Sages (Senseiden 先聖殿) on land adjacent to the school, and carried out the *sekisai* 積菜 sacrificial offerings to Confucius there. After that, there were numerous instances of temples for the worship of Confucius being established in conjunction with domain schools. The current article will examine one of these, the Confucius temple in Taku 多久, which was founded in the early part of the Edo period and later considered to be one of the three most prominent Confucius shrines in Japan, along with the Yushima Seidō 湯島聖堂 and Ashikaga Gakkō 足利学校 temples.

The temple of Taku sub-domain (Taku yū 多久邑) in Saga 佐賀 was established in 1708, and *sekisai* offerings to Confucius were carried out there. This ceremony has been continuously held twice a year in spring and autumn ever since, right up to the present day, remaining largely unchanged for more than three centuries.

Why would the tiny impoverished sub-domain of Taku, whose finances were limited, have undertaken the lengthy and costly process of constructing such a grand temple to Confucius? A few modern scholarly accounts of how and why it was established do exist, but no serious attempt seems to have been made to investigate the establishment of this temple within the wider context of Chinese learning and Confucianism during the

(1) *Shōheishi* 昌平志 (ms. in 5 *kan* dated 1818, in the National Diet Library), *kan* 2, *Jijitsushi* 事実誌, entry dated Kan'ei 寛永7 (1630).

formative period of early modern Japanese education, and the connection between this education and the concerns of those who held political power on how best to govern. The current article will focus on how the establishment of the Taku shrine and school relates to the development of civil (non-martial) education (*bunkyo* 文教) under the Bakufu and domain rulers, through a detailed examination of the circumstances behind the creation of the shrine. In addition, the sub-domain lord (*yūshu* 邑主) Taku Shigefumi 多久茂文 (1669–1711; r. 1686–1711, originally surnamed Nabeshima), who founded the shrine, will be considered. What were the specific political, social, and cultural conditions which led him to do what he did? What were his exact motives?

And, by clarifying the specific instance of the Taku shrine – its causes, the process of its development, and its purpose – it is possible to make wider observations on the adoption of Chinese learning and the inculcation of Confucian virtues in early modern Japanese education more generally.

2. The Establishment of the Taku Confucius Temple and School

2.1 The Plan for the Temple

According to the modern *Takushi shi* 多久市史 (History of Taku City), the fourth sub-domain lord of Taku, Taku Shigefumi, established a ‘sub-domain school’ (*yūkō* 邑校) at Higashinoharu 東原, which was the forerunner of the Tōgen Shōsha 東原庠舎 school. Then, in 1708, he went on to build the Confucius temple.⁽²⁾ The first teacher at the school was one Kawanami Ji’an 河浪自安 (1635–1719). In 1692, when Ji’an was fifty-eight, he relocated to Taku at Shigefumi’s command, and in 1699 started a school in his home, for which he received an annual salary of one hundred *koku* 石.⁽³⁾ Given that Ji’an was brought to Taku by Shigefumi in 1692, it is likely that Shigefumi had by that time already conceived the idea of founding a school and temple.

There are differing accounts of when the Tōgen Shōsha school was actually established. One of these says that this was in the early years of the Genroku 元禄 period (1688–1704):

In the early years of the Genroku period, [Shigefumi] founded a school called the Tōgen Shōsha, also named the Kakuzan Academy (Kakuzan Sho’in 鶴山書院; this was in modern Higashinoharu in Takumachi 多久町 in Taku City), and from China acquired statue images of Confucius and the four worthies Ganshi 顔子 (Chinese Yanzi, or Yan Hui 顔回/ Yan Yuan 淵), Sōshi 曾子 (Ch. Zengzi), Shishi shi 子思子 (Ch. Zi Si [zi]), and Mōshi 孟子 (Ch. Mengzi), and installed them inside the

(2) ‘Takuryō no kyōiku to bunka 多久領の教育と文化’, in *Takushi shi* 多久市史, comp. Takushi shi Hensan linkai 多久市史編さん委員会 (Taku: Takushi, 2002) vol. 2, section 7.

(3) *Takushi shi* 多久市史, ‘Jinbutsu-hen 人物編’, comp. Takushi shi Hensan linkai 多久市史編さん委員会 (Taku: 2008), pp. 35–7.

school.⁽⁴⁾

However, elsewhere we find that Shigefumi asked the Kyoto Confucian Nakamura Tekisai 中村惕齋 (1629–1702) to make the statue of Confucius for him in 1700.⁽⁵⁾ Yet another source states that Shigefumi had ordered the statue images of Ganshi, Sōshi, Shishi shi, and Mōshi (but not of Confucius) during the Jōkyō 貞享 period (1684–1687), which must have been in preparation for performing the *sekiten* 稷奠 sacrifices to Confucius.⁽⁶⁾

2.2 How the Temple was Established

The exact time that the construction of the Taku temple and school began is significant. It was precisely during the period that Confucianism in Japan was rising in influence, as was evident in the Bakufu's relocating the Hayashi family school and associated Hall of the Former Sages to their new site in Yushima in 1690, and when, as a result of this, Confucian education began to develop in the domains, and many new schools and Confucius temples came to be built.

Plans for the Taku Confucius temple had already been made somewhat before this, but initiating the actual construction was far from straightforward. One of the modern Taku accounts explains the reasons for this as follows:

In these feudal times, procedures for securing permission to construct a building were complex in the extreme. It was necessary first [for Shigefumi] to announce his wishes to his overlord in the domain of Saga, and then for Saga to pass this on in personal audience with the Bakufu. For the Bakufu to be pre-empted by a tiny sub-domain of Saga would have been an affront to dignity, so it was necessary for the Bakufu first to build its Confucius temple at Yushima in 1690 before Taku's wish could be approved. By the same principle, Saga also had first to build its Confucius temple at Onimaru 鬼丸 (modern Onimaru in Saga City) for the preservation of

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- (4) *Jūyō bunkazai Taku seibyō* 重要文化財多久聖廟, comp. Takushi Kyōiku Inkai 多久市教育委員会 (Taku: Taku Shichō Yoshitsugi Masami 多久市長吉次正美, 1983), p. 1. This is a modern publication, and unfortunately it does not cite any original sources for this account. However, the compilation committee included one Hosokawa Akira 細川章 (1924–2013), archivist in the Taku archives (Takushi Kyōdo Shiryōkan 多久市郷土資料館), who undertook extensive research in primary sources related to the Taku shrine. I have elsewhere found her to be reliable, despite her not citing sources, and believe that the passage here is likely informed by manuscript materials in the Taku archive where she worked, though I have not yet found the exact source. See also Hosokawa, 'Hizen Taku Seibyō no sōshisha Taku Shigefumi no ningenzō 肥前多久聖廟の創始者, 多久茂文の人間像', *Seinan chiikishi kenkyū* 西南地域史研究 7 (1992), pp. 555–72.
- (5) See the photograph in *Jūyō bunkazai Taku seibyō* 重要文化財多久聖廟 (Taku: Takushi Kyōiku Inkai 多久市教育委員会, 1991). This is a small collection of photographs related to the Taku temple, a separate publication from the 1983 book cited in the previous footnote, though it bears the same title.
- (6) *Jūyō bunkazai Taku seibyō hozon shūri kōji hōkokusho* 重要文化財多久聖廟保存修理工事報告書, comp. Zaidan Hōjin Bunkazai Kenzōbutsu Hozon Gijutsu Kyōkai 財団法人文化財建造物保存技術協会 (Taku: Takushi, 1991), p. 3.

its own dignity, before, after an interval, they could give permission [for the Taku temple].⁽⁷⁾

And so:

It was not until the fifth year of the Genroku period (1692) that a site was chosen in the foothills of Mount Shiiharu 椎原山 and work began. After an expenditure of sixteen years, the project was finally completed in the fifth year of the Hōei 宝永 period (1708).⁽⁸⁾

The claim is that Taku's proposal served as a catalyst for the construction of the Bakufu and Saga shrines, causing them to be completed earlier than they might have been for the sake of maintaining their own dignity. This point will be considered further below.

2.3 Chinese Learning in Saga Domain

Other influences are likely to have been relevant to Taku Shigefumi's project. Contemporaneous developments in Chinese education in Saga present a clearer picture of the overall historical background, and one specific example from the small neighbouring Nabeshima domain of Ogi 小城 is particularly revealing.

During the Jōkyō period (1684–1687), at the time that Shigefumi was acquiring the four statue images of the disciples and successors of Confucius from China for his temple, in the neighbouring domain of Ogi, Shimokawa Sansei 下川三省 (1650–?), pupil of the Chinese émigré Zhu Shunshui 朱舜水 (1600–1682), who, having left Edo when Zhu died, returned to Ogi and began teaching Confucianism there. Sansei had been sent to Nagasaki to study with Zhu in 1664 by the then lord of Ogi, Nabeshima Naoyoshi 鍋島直能 (1623–1689; r. 1654–1679). In the next year, Zhu Shunshui was offered an appointment by Tokugawa Mitsukuni 徳川光圀 (1628–1701; r. 1661–1690), lord of Mito domain, and when Zhu went to Edo to take up his position, Sansei accompanied him there. Sansei spent approximately eighteen years studying Confucianism with Zhu, eventually maturing into a scholar noted for his talent and wide learning. When Zhu died in 1682, Sansei returned to Ogi, where the third lord of Ogi, Nabeshima Mototake 鍋島元武 (1662–1713; r. 1679–1713) bestowed on him a fief with an annual income of fifteen *koku* and appointed him domain Confucian scholar. The details of this may be found in an earlier article.⁽⁹⁾ It appears that Chinese learning was well developed in Ogi during the early Edo period. At

(7) *Jūyō bunkazai Taku seibyō* 重要文化財多久聖廟, p. 1.

(8) *Ibid.*

(9) Shu Zenan 朱全安, 'Hanju Shimokawa Sansei no tōyō ni miru Ogi-han kangaku kyōiku no tansho 藩儒下川三省の登用にみる小城藩漢学教育の端緒' (The Elevation of the Confucian Scholar Shimokawa Sansei as a Starting Point for Sinological Education in Ogi Domain), *Chiba Shōdai Kiyō* 千葉商大紀要 (The Journal of Chiba University of Commerce) 52:1 (Chiba Shōka Daigaku 千葉商科大学, Sept. 2014), pp. 47–63.

the time Sansei first arrived in Nagasaki at the age of fourteen to become Zhu Shunshui's pupil in 1664, he had already studied the basic texts of Confucianism in Ogi: the Four Books (*si shu* 四書), the Five Classics (*wujing* 五經), the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳, the *Santishi* 三體詩 poetry collection, and others, to an extent which surprised Zhu.

Another Confucian who was active at around this same time was Taketomi Tomosuke 武富咸亮 (1637–1718). Born in Hakusancho 白山町 near Saga city, he was the great-grandson of Jūsankan 十三官, the son of an official in Ming China. On his father's advice, Tomosuke had studied Confucianism from an early age, and at the age of fourteen and fifteen accompanied his father on a trip to Kyoto, where he met the Confucian Nakamura Tekisai and studied Chinese learning under him.⁽¹⁰⁾ Tomosuke's father ran a kimono shop, and Tekisai's father was a kimono merchant, and it is said that they came to know each other through this connection.⁽¹¹⁾ Tomosuke from the time he was young operated the family business, and at the same time ran a family school at which he taught Confucianism. At just this time another Saga Confucian, Sanematsu Genrin 実松元琳 (1639–1726), a man who from childhood had suffered an ailment in his eyes, was also dedicated to study. On account of his family's poverty, he found himself in a position where he was unable to continue his studies, and so went to sit outside Tomosuke's school to eavesdrop on the lectures going on inside. Moved by Genrin's dedication, Tomosuke allowed him inside to study, and further provided him the funds to seek treatment for his eyes.⁽¹²⁾ Since Genrin was two years younger than Tomosuke, we know that Tomosuke was also little more than twenty years old when Genrin began studying with him.

In 1692 Tomosuke used personal funds to construct a temple to Confucius, the Ootakara Sage Hall (Ootakara Seidō 大寶聖堂). More than twenty years after completing this, he erected the Ootakara 'Forest of Sages' inscription stone (Ootakara seirinhi 大寶聖林碑) with an account of the temple's foundation.⁽¹³⁾ According to this inscription, Tomosuke had first conceived the idea of building a Confucius temple in 1690, and he had sent a proposal to build it through the samurai Harada Tanefumi 原田種文 to Nabeshima Tsunashige 鍋島綱茂 (1652–1706), who at that time had not yet become the third lord of Saga.⁽¹⁴⁾ Tsunashige's chronological biography (Tsunashige kō go-nenpu 綱茂公御年譜) contains an entry dated the 26th day of the 12th month of Genroku 3 (early 1692) recording the construction of Tomosuke's Confucius temple.⁽¹⁵⁾ The exact date that

(10) 'Taketomi Rensai sensei 武富廉斎先生', in Nakajima Yoshirō 中島吉郎, *Saga sentetsu sōwa* 佐賀先哲叢話 (Kinoshita Taizandō 木下泰山堂, 1902), pp. 9–20; *Taketomi-ke denki* 武富家伝記, held in the Saga Prefectural Library (Saga Kenritsu Toshokan 佐賀県立図書館).

(11) 'Takuryō no kyōiku to bunka', *Takushi shi* vol. 2, section 7, p. 809.

(12) 'Sanematsu Genrin 実松元琳', in *Kanzaki no ijin 35* 神埼の偉人35, comp. Kanzakishi Kyōdo Kenkyūkai 神埼郷土研究会 (rev. ed. Kanzaki: Kanzakishi Kyōiku Iinkai 神埼市教育委員会, 2015), pp. 34–5.

(13) 'Takuryō no kyōiku to bunka', *Takushi shi* vol. 2, section 7, p. 810.

(14) 'Ootakara seirinhi 大寶聖林碑', in Kinoshita Kisaku 木下喜作, 'Taku no chi to Taketomi Ichirōemon 多久の地と武富一郎右衛門', *Nishi Nihon bunka* 西日本文化 195 (Oct. 1983).

(15) *Tsunashige kō go-nenpu* 綱茂公御年譜, in *Saga-ken kinsei shiryō* 佐賀県近世史料 series 1, vol. 3 (Saga:

Tomosuke submitted his proposal for his Confucius temple is not given, but it would have been close to the time that the Bakufu made the decision to build the Yushima Confucius temple. And, it was on the 11th day of the second month of the very next year, Genroku 4 (1692) that the Bakufu held the first *sekiten* sacrifice to Confucius in the newly-completed Yushima shrine, with the fifth shogun Tsunayoshi 綱吉 (1646–1709; r. 1680–1709), the Council of Elders (*rōjū* 老中), and others in attendance. In the fifth year of Genroku (1693), Tomosuke received an image of the Most Sagely First Teacher (*shisei senshi* 至聖先師, i.e. Confucius) drawn personally by Tsunashige; one of Ganshi (Yan Hui) by Nabeshima Naoyuki 直之, lord of Hasuike 蓮池; and one of Sōshi (Zengzi) by Murata Masamori 村田政盛, lord of Kubota 久保田. Tomosuke built a shrine and installed the three sages there, and from that time performed both the spring and autumn *sekisai* sacrifices each year.⁽¹⁶⁾

Next to the Ootakara Sage Hall Tomosuke constructed the Engyosai 鳶魚齋 lecture hall and the Ijintei 依仁亭 family school. In the family school he taught Confucianism, and allowed anyone to study there regardless of social status.⁽¹⁷⁾

On the 20th day of the 9th month of 1696, Tsunashige, who had now become the third lord of Saga, appointed Tomosuke as domain Confucian scholar. He also took Tomosuke's eldest son Hidesuke 英亮 into his service.⁽¹⁸⁾ Subsequently, when the Taku Confucius temple was built, it was Tomosuke who was given responsibility for overseeing its construction.

As an aside, we may note that Sanematsu Genrin himself also began lecturing in poetry and the Confucian canons, and subsequently went to Kyoto to study with masters of Confucian learning. In 1691 he was appointed to teach Confucianism by the second lord of Saga, Mitsushige 光茂 (1632–1700; r. 1657–1695), to teach Confucianism, particularly the text *Daxue* 大學. Subsequently, Genrin founded a school called the Kōshūdō 講習堂, in which he educated domain samurai and ordinary people. And, in 1707 he became the chief officiator at the Saga domain Onimaru Confucius temple.⁽¹⁹⁾

The two examples above were close in time to the construction of the Taku temple, and both took place in different parts of Saga. Considering the three cases together, we find points of similarity: the ruler (or sub-ruler) was personally fond of study, and his attainment in Chinese learning and Confucianism in particular was of a high order. Nabeshima Naoyoshi, the lord of Ogi, interacted with the second head of the Hayashi family, Hayashi Gahō 鶯峰 (1618–1680), on a frequent basis whenever he was in Edo; Naoyoshi's name appears many times in Gahō's diary *Kokushikan nichiroku* 国史館日録 and in various of his other writings. Mitsushige, second lord of Saga, also interacted closely with Gahō,

Saga Kenritsu Toshokan, 1995), p. 573.

(16) 'Takuryō no kyōiku to bunka', *Takushi shi* vol. 2, section 7, p. 810.

(17) 'Ootakara seirinhi', Kinoshita Kisaku 木下喜作, 'Taku no chi to Taketomi Ichirōemon', p. 10.

(18) *Tsunashige kō go-nenpu*, p. 573.

(19) 'Sanematsu Genrin', *Kanzaki no ijin 35* 神崎の偉人 35, pp. 34–5.

and the third lord Tsunashige was an intimate friend of the third Hayashi family head, Hayashi Hōkō 鳳岡 (1645–1732).⁽²⁰⁾ The sub-lord Shigefumi of Taku, while still in his home domain of Saga had been much influenced by his father and brothers, and had learned much of the Confucianism of Taketomi Tomosuke and Sanematsu Genrin. For anyone involved in governing who had Confucian training, it was only natural that they would actively promote Confucian education in the regions they governed.

It is striking that similar phenomena were taking place at much the same time: the proposals for the Ootakara and Taku Confucius temples, the establishment of the Bakufu's Yushima shrine, and the shogun Tsunayoshi's lectures on Confucianism. Whether or not there was a direct link between founding of the Taku and Yushima shrines, and if so how that link came about, are interesting but difficult questions.

3. The Purpose of the Temple and School

What was the purpose behind the creation of the Taku temple, and what effect was it intended to have?

In 1692, before Shigefumi built the temple, he had received a plaque from his older brother Nabeshima Tsunashige bearing the inscription Gakumonjo 学問所 ('school'). In the same year the Confucian teacher Kawanami Ji'an came to Taku, and so we may deduce that Shigefumi had before then already conceived the idea of founding a school. In fact, the foundation of the school was in 1699, when the school (later to become the Tōgen Shōsha) was established in Ji'an's home, and he became its first teacher.⁽²¹⁾ On the 12th day of the 12th month of the same year, the domain retainer (*karō* 家老) Mokunosuke 杵之允 (Taku Yasunari 多久安成)⁽²²⁾ was named the Kokorozukaiyaku 心遣役 of the school.⁽²³⁾ In 1700, the following year, Shigefumi asked Nakamura Tekisai to

(20) The Hayashi family increasingly gained the trust of the Bakufu from the Kanbun period (1661–1673) onward. For accounts of how they campaigned for their success, see Shu Zenan 朱全安, 'Edo zenki ni okeru Bakufu no kyōiku taisei ni tsuite: Rinke "Shinobugaoka kajuku kishiki" no seitei o megutte 江戸前期における幕府の教育態勢について——林家「忍岡家塾規式」の制定をめぐって', in Chiba Shōka Daigaku Seisaku Jōhō Gakubu Jisshūnen Kinen Ronshū Kankōkai 千葉商科大学政策情報学部10周年記念論集刊行会 comp., *Seisaku Jōhōgaku no shiza: aratanaru 'chi to hōhō' o motomete* 政策情報学の視座——新たなる「知と方法」を求めて (Tokyo: Nikkei Jigyō Shuppan Sentai, 2011), pp. 335–71; Shu Zenan, 'Edo shoki Bakufu no kyōiku taisei ni okeru Rinke no yakuwari: Rinke to daimyo, makukaku to no kyōsai o tōshite 江戸初期幕府の教育態勢における林家の役割——林家と大名・幕閣との交際を通して', *Chiba Shōdai Kiyō* 千葉商大紀要 (The Journal of Chiba University of Commerce) 48:2 (Chiba Shōka Daigaku 千葉商科大学, March 2011), pp. 1–12; Shu Zenan, 'Kōbun'in Gakushi gō shutoku ni miru Rinke no taimō: Bakufu bunkyō shisaku to no kanrensei no shiten kara 弘文院学士号取得にみる林家の大望——幕府文教施策との関連性の視点から', *Chiba Shōdai Kiyō* 千葉商大紀要 (The Journal of Chiba University of Commerce) 50:1 (Chiba Shōka Daigaku 千葉商科大学, Sept. 2012), pp. 21–35.

(21) 'Takuryō no kyōiku to bunka', *Takushi shi* vol. 2, section 7, pp. 737–41.

(22) 'Takuryō no kyōiku to bunka', *Takushi shi* vol. 2, section 7, p. 814.

(23) *Jūyō bunkazai Taku seibyō*, p. 53. 'Kokorozukaiyaku' is clearly a title, but I have not been able to find any other examples of its use.

arrange the casting of a statue of Confucius. When this was completed in 1701, Shigefumi was delighted, and composed the ‘Bunbyōki’ 文廟記 (Commemorating the Temple of Confucius), in which he discussed his purpose in founding the temple and school.⁽²⁴⁾

3.1 The Social Function of the Temple

In regard to the temple’s social function, Shigefumi wrote, ‘The ancients said, “When one looks at the temple and earth altar, one thinks of veneration.” There is extremely deep significance in these words’ 古人曰、視廟社則思敬、此言極有深意。In Shigefumi’s eyes, when people looked at a temple, feelings of veneration naturally arose, and he felt that this saying carried deep meaning. He goes on to say:

If people are able to maintain feelings of veneration towards the temple and earth altar, keeping [these feelings] always in their thoughts without forgetting, never losing them in all their affairs, never departing from veneration for an instant, then a myriad of virtues accumulate within, and they become wise ones, become sages — then all that the Way of Humanity can do is complete.

人能執敬廟社之心、念々不忘、事々不失、須臾不離敬、則萬善聚焉、為賢為聖、而人道之能事畢矣。

In this way he emphasizes the importance of maintaining veneration for the temple, and, at the same time, offers severe criticism of those who fail to do so: ‘If one loses the feelings of veneration, then one becomes stupid and unworthy, and shares one’s dispositions with the birds and the beasts’ 苟失思敬之心、則為愚為不肖、而同趣於禽獸矣。

In Shigefumi’s view: ‘In general, people are not fond of study because their faith in the [Confucian] Way is not strong. Their faith in the [Confucian] Way is not strong because they have not looked upon the Temple of the Sage’ 大概人之所以不好學者、信道不篤也、所以信道不篤者、未視聖廟也。

He believes that it is clearly defined that ‘[Human beings] have only two principles, respect and disrespect’ 道二、敬与不敬而已。He explains the importance of feelings of veneration as follows: ‘Veneration is the controller of the entire heart, the root of all affairs, and is the foundation of the Sagely Learning through ten thousand generations’ 敬一心之主宰、萬事之根本、而為萬世聖學之基本也。In other words, veneration is what all else depends on, and is the foundation of Confucianism.

With regard to how people should acquire feelings of veneration, Shigefumi says: ‘This veneration is expressed when people look at the temple and the earth altar. If they do not look at it, it is not expressed’ 此敬也、視廟社則發、不視則不發。In this, the significant effect of the visibility of the temple is striking. Thus, Shigefumi was making use of this effect,

(24) Taku Shigefumi, ‘Bunbyōki’ 文廟記, composed 1701, manuscript scroll held in the Takushi Kyōdo Shiryōkan 多久市郷土資料館。All passages presented below are from this scroll except where otherwise noted.

of which he said: 'First one establishes the temple to the Sage, causing people to know what it is they should venerate, then lead them on from this. In this way, the effort one expends is minor, but the results achieved are very great' 先設聖廟、而使人知所敬、而後由是道之、則用力少、就効甚衆矣. From this we see how he conceived the substantial benefits of utilizing this visual effect and establishing the Confucius shrine as early as possible.

3.2 Understanding Confucianism as 'Virtue' *toku* 德 (A System of Virtues)

Shigefumi regarded Confucian ethics, and faith in Confucianism, as a force capable of effecting the moral transformation of human beings so that they would possess 'virtue' (*toku*), a word ultimately of Chinese origin. In his view, the Confucian temple had the important function of conveying Confucian ethics and belief in Confucianism to people. As he put it:

With the Temple to the Sage standing here in such grandeur, those who look upon it will turn to one another in surprise and say, 'What god is this?' 'It is the god Confucius.' 'What is this Confucius in charge of?' 'He is the human god in charge of filial piety, fraternal devotion, loyalty, and fidelity.' Whenever they look on it they think of respect, and, all unknowing, feelings of filial piety, fraternal devotion, loyalty, and fidelity will naturally arise. Those who were virtuous to begin with will prize it and revere it, and the sense of improving themselves will grow ever more keen. Those who are inherently not virtuous will feel awe and fear towards it, and a sense of guarding against evil will naturally arise. Encouragement to good will stem from this; guarding against evil will stem from this.

若夫聖廟巖然于茲、視者訝相謂曰、是曷神也、曰是孔子神也、曰孔子者曷守之神也、曰守孝悌忠信之人神也、人々知孝悌忠信之神、而每視思敬、則不識不知、孝悌忠信之心、油然而生焉、素善良者、貴之敬之、弥興改善之心、素不善者、畏之憚之、自起懲惡之心矣、勸善必於是、懲惡必於是。

Shigefumi had a keen awareness of his own status as a ruler, and felt that to become virtuous his descendants, subordinates, and subjects would have to venerate and believe in 'sagely virtue' (*seitoku* 聖德), by which he meant the Confucian virtues of filial piety, fraternal devotion, loyalty, and fidelity:

My intent in installing the venerable image [of Confucius] here today is that, as a parent and as a ruler, I have always hoped that my sons and grandsons, my ministers and people, will aspire to virtue. If they really are to aspire to virtue, then they cannot but venerate and believe in sagely virtue.

而僕今日所以奉安尊像之旨趣也、且夫為人之父母、為人之君長者、未嘗有不願子孫臣民

向於善者也、實願向於善、不得不尊信聖德矣。

At around the same time that Shigefumi composed his ‘Bunbyōki’, Taketomi Hidesuke 武富英亮, the son of Taketomi Tomosuke, by then domain Confucian scholar in Saga and in charge of designing the Taku temple, composed a piece titled ‘Kakuzan Shoin senza ki 鶴山書院遷座記’, (Commemoration of the Transferral of the Kakuzan School).⁽²⁵⁾ In this he notes that Shigefumi constructed the school and temple out of veneration for the Confucian virtues, the Three Guiding Principles and Five Constants (*san gang*, ruler guiding subject, father guiding son, husband guiding wife; *wu chang*, humanity, righteousness, ritual propriety, [moral] discernment, and fidelity), in order to induce the officials and the people of Taku domain to study Confucian morality and become virtuous people capable of self-regulation. Hidesuke writes:

At present, Taku Shigefumi Tōkō (藤公, ‘Lord Fujiwara’) is one of the wisest of grandees ... He was born of a collateral line of a domain lord, and was adopted to continue the line of a senior domain counsellor (*kokurō*, here referring to the Taku lordship). From childhood he loved studying the books of the sages and the wise. He eschewed the detailed examination of words and phrases, concentrating rather on the Way of the [Three] Guiding Principles and [Five] Constants. Into adulthood he never slackened, and he installed a Shrine to the Sage (Confucius) in the inner precincts of his residence, where in spring and autumn he performed magnificent sacrifices with performances of music and song. He has now constructed a new school in the fine precinct of Kakuzan, wishing that the officials and commoners of the sub-domain will set their hearts on the Way, and thereby perfect themselves.

方今多久茂文藤公者、大夫之賢者、……、藤公本出邦君之連枝、而嗣国老之緒、自少好讀聖賢之書、棄詞章之學、而重綱常之道、及壯無怠、安聖堂於宅奧、而修春秋之藻祭、奏樂獻章、……鶴山之佳境、新營書院、欲使邑之臣庶、讀書志道而以成其身。⁽²⁶⁾

Both documents make clear that the Taku temple and school were built in accordance with Shigefumi’s views on the implementation of Confucian ethics: the Confucian virtues embodied in the ‘Guiding Principles’ and ‘Constants’ would cause people to be morally transformed from within, as summed up in Shigefumi’s phrase ‘encouragement toward good and guarding against evil’.

(25) Shigefumi’s ‘Bunbyōki’ is dated the 7th day of the 9th month of the year Genroku 14 (1701 according to the Western calendar). Hidesuke’s ‘Kakuzan Shoin senza ki’ (also a manuscript scroll held in the Takushi Kyōdo Shiryōkan archives) bears the date 16th day of the 9th month of the same year, only a few days later.

(26) ‘Kakuzan Shoin senza ki’.

3.3 The Concept of Governance by Virtue

Shigefumi was keenly conscious of his own role as ruler. He described his responsibility thus:

To be sure I am unworthy, but in the role of family head the way of the majestic sovereign is contained in its entirety. All the more so since in my sub-domain, however small, the responsibility for ruling over others falls on me. Of the two responsibilities of administering and teaching, neither may be neglected.

僕雖不肖、為一家之長、則蔽君之道備焉、況僕封邑雖偏小、而君人之責在僕身、則治教之二、不可偏廢也。⁽²⁷⁾

In this statement he expresses his intention to rule both by administering and teaching his subjects.

As a ruler, Shigefumi thought long and hard about the principles he should follow in governing his domain. As described above, he believed that when people felt respect, 'then a myriad of virtues accumulate in them, they become wise ones, become sages' 則萬善聚焉、為賢為聖. Through the study of Confucian morality, feelings of filial piety, fraternal devotion, loyalty, and fidelity would arise naturally, and they would become virtuous people of their own accord. He concluded that, 'The Temple of the Sage strengthens governance and teaching' 聖廟有補于治教. It is quite evident that that both temple and school were founded with the practical administration of the domain in mind.

Shigefumi also drew comparisons between the 'civil teachings' (*bunkyō* 文教) in China and in Japan. In China:

The true [Confucius] temple of Qufu spread to all the provinces, so that on the Ding 丁 days of spring and autumn there were more than one thousand five hundred sixty places in which the three-animal offering (*tailao*) was used to sacrifice at the Temple to the Sage, with innumerable further village and local rites in small shrines. Small wonder that the Civil Way was so predominant in China, and that the names of loyal ministers listed in the historical records are too numerous to be mentioned one by one. This was entirely because the Temple of the Sage appeared everywhere in the hamlets and alleyways; all that was needed to induce people to follow the Confucian teachings was everywhere provided.

曲阜之真廟、達郡國、春秋二丁、以大牢之禮祭聖廟者、一千五百六十餘處、閭里小社不可勝計、中華文道之盛良有以也、而忠臣義士、列名於載籍者、不可枚舉矣、是無他、聖廟充于里巷、而師儒之教誘備也。

(27) This and all quotes below are from the 'Bunbyōki'.

But, as he continues on to say, matters were different in Japan, where the decline in civil learning had precipitated a breakdown in morality:

In the antiquity of our own land of the gods, the regulations for the *sekiten* sacrifices to Confucius in the Daigakuryō (imperial academy) and the sacrificial canons of the domains can be traced in our histories, and for sumptuousness it was fully the equal of China, and our men of learning and talent had nothing to be ashamed of in comparison to them. But later we came to an age when the civil teachings went into steady decline, and in all the domains not a single Confucius temple was to be found anywhere. What could people rely on to learn how to venerate the Sage and study the Way? ... That none knew the Way of humanity and righteousness was because the system of schools was no longer practiced.

我神州古昔、大学寮釋奠格式、暨諸国之祠典、考之国史、其盛与中華齐、文人才子、又不耻彼也、其后暨文教日衰、諸国聖廟拂地無一字矣、據何知敬聖学道乎、……彼所以不知仁義之道者、又此濫觴于学校之政不脩。

Shigefumi also offers his account of the Bakufu's new Yushima temple in Edo, and the changes brought about by the shogun Tsunayoshi's encouragement of Confucianism:

When the new Hall of Great Completion (the Yushima temple) was completed, he (Tsunayoshi) went to the Apricot Podium (place of Confucian teaching), bowed down before the steps, rewarded the sacrificial officiants, and encouraged the students... As a result of this, the world knew that it was unacceptable to be disrespectful toward the sages and the wise. He (Tsunayoshi) also held lectures, at which he personally explicated the meaning of the [Confucian] canons... As a result of this, the world knew that it was unacceptable not to study the Way of the Sages. Thereupon the light of the sages spread once more, and the Six Arts (branches of ancient Confucian learning) were in their proper sequence. From this we can see with what miraculous speed it is possible for a single Confucian temple to transform social customs.

新作大成殿于城頭、(綱吉)自詣杏壇、拜于階下、賞獻官、勞書生、……依是、天下皆知不可聖賢不敬也、又大開講筵、自解經義、……依是、天下皆知不可聖道不学也、於是、聖光再張、六芸就緒……抑知一字聖廟移風變俗之神速如此。

Shigefumi also praises the lord of Saga, Nabeshima Mitsushige, in fulsome terms: 'Our great lord, and his officials, ... built the Hall of the Sage and instituted the great sacrifices there. All within the domain aspired to moral transformation, to a degree we might say even surpassed Edo' 我尊大君官下、……營聖殿、脩大祭矣、而邦内向化、恰超乎東武。

In his conclusion to the 'Bunbyōki', Shigefumi offers the following prayer expressing his desires for the outcome of the temple construction:

It is my personal wish that some lingering trace of [Confucian] learning will persist in this tiny sub-domain. It is not at all a matter of creating a magnificent spectacle... I humbly hope that the light of the most sagely deity will forever descend on this place, on everyone, from me to the countless numbers, from now into the limitless future, so that the understanding of shining virtue brings radiance to all living things. I humbly beg that [you] send down your bright radiance [on us].

私欲学餘風於区々小邑、全非為美為觀也、……仰冀至聖之神明、永光降於此地、自僕一身、至無數、自当今、至無窮、以明々之德、教萬生明明、伏乞垂昭明。

'Sagely' refers to Confucius, and 'understanding of shining virtue' is a phrase drawn from the text *Daxue* 大學 (Great Learning), where it signifies achieving understanding of shining virtue. In his prayer Shigefumi expresses the wish that the people will come to understand 'shining virtue' through the teachings of Confucius and Confucianism, which clearly reflects his intention to govern his people through Confucian virtue.

4. Conclusion

The formal request to Saga for permission to construct the Taku temple was made in the early years of the Genroku period (1688–1704), though it is clear that Shigefumi had already conceived the idea of founding a school and temple in the middle years of the Jōkyō period (1684–1687). When he submitted his proposal to his overlord domain of Saga, the latter was unable to come to a decision, and referred the matter on to the Bakufu. As discussed above, it has been suggested that it would have been a loss of dignity for a small sub-fief of Saga domain to build a Confucius temple before the Bakufu had built its own, and for this reason the Bakufu first built its own Yushima temple in the 3rd year of Genroku (1690) before granting Taku's request. However, as the current study of the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the Taku temple has shown, the Bakufu had since the 1630s extended continuous protection and support to the Hayashi family school and Confucius temple at Shinobugaoka, which reflects a much earlier interest in supporting Confucianism as a form of civil education. This makes it difficult to argue with any certainty that the proposal to build the Taku temple in fact triggered the construction of the Yushima temple.

However, the foundation of the Taku temple remains a significant historical event. The sources presented in the current study, particularly Shigefumi's own thoughts on the temple as set out in the 'Bunbyōki', reflect something of his motives for building it. First, there was his own perception of himself as a ruler, and his responsibilities in that

role; second, there was his understanding of Confucian virtues such as the Three Guiding Principles, the Five Constants, and veneration or respect (*kei* 敬); and third, the utilization of the Confucius temple's visual grandeur and imposing power to effect the moral transformation of the people of Taku.

Shigefumi's conception of transformation through the inculcation of Confucian virtues was to bring about moral change not through external strictures but by encouraging the people to become virtuous of their own accord, through a process of inner cultivation and moulding of their moral sense. He intended that moral education through the physical, visible presence of the temple and school would play a role in the transformation of the people. Because he believed that education based on the concepts of Confucianism, namely 'virtue' (*toku* 徳), was the best way to govern society, he spared no effort to bring this about in the real world, successfully constructing the Taku temple despite his sub-domain's limited financial resources.

The Bakufu's veneration of Confucians and Confucian learning was of course one influence behind the establishment of the Taku temple, but it is clear that the more immediate political and regional needs of the time, and the sub-domain lord Shigefumi's cultural and personal views, above all his aspiration to govern by virtue, were the deciding factors.

(2015.7.20受稿,2015.9.14受理)

—Abstract—

This study explores the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the Taku Confucius temple and school in 1701, with a view to interpreting its significance and function as perceived at the time. The analysis takes into account the temple's position in the light of relevant developments within Confucianism in Japan prior to this; its construction must be viewed as part of the general rise in Confucianism both nationally (promoted by the Bakufu) and locally (the neighbouring domains of Saga and Ogi had by this time already become centres of Confucian learning). At the same time, the analysis draws on local circumstances specific to the Taku temple itself, most importantly as reflected in a primary commemorative document composed by the temple founder, Taku Shigefumi, lord of Taku. This makes clear that the temple was a part of Shigefumi's vision of 'government by virtue' in his domain, and was intended as an imposing visual manifestation of Confucianism which would inspire the people to cultivate Confucian virtues and regulate themselves.