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The Confucius Shrine in the Owari Meirindō Domain School

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I

Throughout the Edo period, Chinese-based learning (*Kangaku* 漢学) formed an important component of the education of the warrior class. Early in the period, Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583-1657) founded a school at Shinobugaoka in Ueno according to the pattern of the shrine-school complex, with land and funding for the school building provided by the Bakufu, and the Senseiden 先聖殿 (“Hall of the Former Sage”) shrine for the Sekiten 積奠 offerings to Confucius donated by Tokugawa Yoshinao 徳川義直, the lord of Owari domain. This shrine-school pattern was preserved when the Shōgun Tsunayoshi moved Razan’s school to Yushima, where a new Sage Hall, the Taiseiden 大成殿 (“Hall of Great Perfection”) and school were built, known collectively as the “Yushima Seidō 湯島聖堂” (“Yushima Sage Hall”). It is well known that Tsunayoshi went there in person to observe the Sekiten ceremony, and frequently assembled domain lords to hear him lecture on Confucian teachings. In this way, the Yushima Seidō became a centre for his policies of civil, non-martial teachings. In the domains, meanwhile, many schools began to appear, imitating a similar shrine-school configuration. During the early and middle Edo period, it is fair to say that the presence or absence of a shrine in educational facilities became a mark of political significance.

There is a rich body of previous scholarship on Chinese-based learning in the Owari domain school, the Meirindō 明倫堂. Much of this deals with the Sekiten rite held in the shrine, or the history of Confucianism, or the history of political thought, but there is less on the shrine itself. What little there is considers the design of the shrine from the perspective of history, or of architecture. There is virtually nothing which focuses on the form of the school itself, or the significance of the shrine-school complex. To clarify such questions, it is necessary to consider the Owari domain school, the earliest to take account of the shrine-school configuration, from the early Edo period onward: how it took shape, the reasons why it took the form it did, and later on in the Tenmei period the educational function this particular form was intended to have. In previous studies I have detailed how the Meirindō school was constructed in 1783, and how the less formal Sekisai 積菜 version of the Sekiten ceremony was performed there in 1786 before an actual shrine had been built.

In the current study, I will consider the practical economic and political factors behind the construction of the Meirindō shrine, and why it was that the shrine came to

be added later than the school building itself. I will also consider the purpose and significance of placing a shrine within the school grounds, and contrast this with the combined school and shrine configuration that took shape in China from medieval times.

Toward this end, the current study will focus on the special characteristics of the academic environment around the restoration of the shrine within the school, and compare this with how the shrine-school system formed in medieval China. A particular point of emphasis will be the connections between the construction of the Meirindō school and the reforms in domain administration being enacted at the same time. This investigation will demonstrate more generally how the shift in the form of schools with shrines coincided with the widespread reforms in the domains during the middle Edo period.

II

Tokugawa Yoshinao 徳川義直 (1601-1650; r. 1603-1650), ninth son of Tokugawa Ieyasu and the founding ruler of Owari domain, was the earliest to introduce the shrine-school complex in early modern Japan. This institution, modelled on the earlier educational system in China, combined a teaching hall with a shrine to Confucius, with great importance attached to the Sekiten sacrifice observed to him as “Former Sage and Former Teacher” (Sensei Senshi 先聖先師). Records from the time reveal that even earlier than the noted Confucian Hayashi Razan founded his school, Yoshinao had already investigated the form of the Sage Hall (Seidō 聖堂, the Confucius shrine) and the Sekiten rite, and made preparations for implementing them. In 1629 Razan visited Yoshinao’s Confucius shrine in Owari and composed a prose piece “Hai Biyō Seidō 拜尾陽聖堂” (“Worshipping at the Owari Sage Hall”), in which he gave a detailed account of the event and the deep emotional impact it had on him.⁽¹⁾

In the following year 1630, the Bakufu gave Razan a plot of land at Shinobugaoka in Ueno and the funds to build a school there, and Razan started work on constructing a school and library. In 1632 Yoshinao constructed a Confucius shrine for Razan on the site, and gave him a plaque with “Senseiden 先聖殿” (“Hall of the Former Sage”) in his own calligraphy to display on it. He also provided all the necessary items needed for the Sekiten: statues of Confucius, the Four Correlates (major disciples of Confucius), and ritual vessels. Thanks to this, Razan performed the Sekiten ritual in the following year, on 1633/2/10.⁽²⁾ In this way the earliest shrine-school complex in Edo was established, complete with both teaching building and Sage Hall.⁽³⁾

(1) Hayashi Razan, “Hai Biyō Seidō 拜尾陽聖堂,” *Razan sensei bunshū* 羅山先生文集 vol. 2 (Kyoto: Heian Kōko Gakkai 平安考古学会, 1918), p. 321.

(2) Dates are given year/month/date according to the Japanese calendar, with the years treated as coterminous with their Western equivalents.

Meanwhile, in Owari domain, on 1633/2/18 Yoshinao also performed the Sekiten in his shrine, the Kinsei Gyokushin Kaku 金声玉振閣 (or Hakkakudō 八角堂), constructed inside the Ninomaru Gardens in Nagoya. This was only eight days after Razan's Sekiten in Shinobugaoka.⁽⁴⁾ Yoshinao was thus the first person in the early Edo period to adopt the shrine-school layout in the pattern of ancient Chinese schools, and this laid the foundation for later school education in Owari domain.

In the years following, the Hayashi family school in Shinobugaoka continued to receive financial backing from the Bakufu. This was particularly conspicuous under the fifth Shōgun Tsunayoshi (1646-1709; r. 1680-1709), who was keen on reducing the culture of violence across society through cultural education, and formulated policies based on Confucian principles. In 1690, in order to spread Confucian teachings more widely, Tsunayoshi moved the Hayashi school and the Senseiden shrine originally donated by Yoshinao to a new location at Yushima in Kanda. The newly constructed teaching buildings were renamed the Gakumonjo 学問所, and the shrine was renamed Taiseiden 大成殿 (“Hall of Great Perfection”). The shrine was much enlarged and enhanced, the entire complex now named Yushima Seidō 湯島聖堂 (“Yushima Sage Hall”), and the shrine-school pattern of the Hayashi family school was continued in the form of an academy which now had official status.⁽⁵⁾

In Owari, by contrast, after Yoshinao's death the school and shrine he founded were regarded as purely a personal enterprise on his part rather than any sort of domain institution. The standard narrative is that when he died the school ceased operations, the shrine was demolished, and, in the absence of studious rulers among his descendants, education in general lapsed.⁽⁶⁾ However, as I have previously shown, a school and shrine did continue after Yoshinao, albeit on a very small scale. This was due to Namikawa Rozan 並河魯山 (1629-1711), a student of Hayashi Razan's fellow-student Hori Kyō'an 堀杏庵 (1585-1643), Kyō'an having been appointed by Yoshinao as Owari domain Confucian scholar. Namikawa himself later also became domain Confucian scholar, and at the behest of Yoshinao's son and successor Mitsutomo 光友 (1625-1700;

(3) For a more detailed account see Zenan Shu, “The Transformation of the Temple-School Complex in the Mid-Edo Period: The Example of the Owari Domain Meirindō School,” *Chiba Shōdai Kiyō* 千葉商大紀要 57.1 (2019), pp. 11-20.

(4) An image of the Kinsei Gyokushin Kaku appears in one corner of a large-scale painting, dating from the 1620s, of the northern garden grounds of Yoshinao's Ninomaru palace in Nagoya, preserved in the Hosa Bunko 蓮左文庫 archive. In 1620 Yoshinao moved from the main compound to Ninomaru, which became his normal residence. See the reproductions of the painting in *Hosa* 61 (Nagoya-shi Hosa Bunko 名古屋市蓮左文庫, 2 October 1999), entire painting on p. 1, closeup of the Kinsei Gyokushin Kaku building on p. 8.

(5) For a more detailed account see Zenan Shu, “Edo shoki Bakufu no bunkyō taisei ni okeru Rinke no yakuwari: Rinke to Daimyō, Bakkaku to no kōsai o tōshite 江戸初期幕府の文教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 48. 2 (2011), pp. 1-11.

(6) See for example Takahashi Shunjō 高橋俊乗, “Gakumonjo no genryū to sono tenkai 学問所の源流とその展開” (continued), *Kyōikugaku Kenkyū* 教育学研究 11: 5 (Nihon Kyōiku Gakkai 日本教育学会, 1942), p. 344.

r. 1650-1700) he started a private school in his home where he built a Sage Hall and performed the Sekiten rite. After Namikawa's death the Sekiten was continued by his student Adachi Motonaga 安達元長.⁽⁷⁾

In 1739 Tokugawa Munekatsu 宗勝 (1705-1761; r. 1739-1761) succeeded as the eighth lord of Owari, and in 1743 he performed the less formal Sekisai ceremony. At this time only a tiny hastily-constructed Confucius shrine was available, and the rite was performed outside it.⁽⁸⁾ In the second month of 1748, in response to a proposal by a scholar of Chinese learning, Kani Yōsai 蟹養齋, Munekatsu gave permission for him to establish the Habashita School (Habashita Gakumonjo 巾下学問所). The school building was finished on 1748/9/4, and on 9/10 it was formally opened with the Sekisai. In the following year Munekatsu wrote out a plaque with a new name for the school, "Meirindō". Clearly he intended to use this new name, but had not done so when the school was closed in 1751 because of financial pressures. The move to start the official domain Meirindō in earnest would have to wait until the Tenmei period (1781-1789).⁽⁹⁾

III

After the Habashita School was closed, there were no domain educational establishments in Owari for a long interval. The eighth lord Munekatsu 宗勝 (1705-1761; r. 1739-1761) died on 1761/6/24, and his designated heir Munechika 宗陸 (1733-1800; r. 1761-1799) was confirmed as the new lord by order of the Shōgun on 8/5.⁽¹⁰⁾ As the ninth ruler of Owari, Munechika vowed to continue the administrative policies his father had followed since 1739, and dedicated himself to vigorous governmental reform. He was later characterized as a ruler who led a successful restoration (*Chūkō no so* 中興の祖), but he faced considerable difficulties.

Munekatsu had succeeded his father Muneharu 宗春 (1696-1664; r. 1730-1739) after the latter had come into conflict with the Shōgun Yoshimune and was ordered by him into retirement. When Munekatsu took over, the domain finances were in a perilous state, to the extent that in 1738 there was a deficit of 74,607 *ryō* of gold and 36,489 *koku*

(7) For a more detailed account of this see the article cited in note 3 above, and also Zenan Shu, "Before the Meirindō: Investigating the Early History of Education in Owari Domain," *Chiba Shōdai Kiyō* 千葉商大紀要 56.2 (2018), pp. 41-54.

(8) Kitō Yūichi 鬼頭有一, "Owari-hankō Meirindō nenpyō 尾張藩蒙明倫堂年表," *Tōyō Bunka* 東洋文化 (Komaki: Tōyō Bunka Shinkōkai 東洋文化振興会) 26 (1983), p. 38.

(9) For more details on the Habashita school see the article cited in note 2, pp. 15-16.

(10) As recorded in *Bihan seiki* 尾藩世紀, in Nagoyashi Hōsa Bunko 名古屋市蓬左文庫 comp., *Nagoya sōsho sanpen* 名古屋叢書三編 vol. 2 (Nagoya: Nagoyashi Kyōiku Inkai 名古屋市教育委員会, 1987), pp. 393-394. The current article focuses on the foundation of the Meirindō school as one component of the programme of domain reforms, leaving aside aspects of the story not relevant to the reforms. These have already been covered in my earlier study cited in note 3 above.

of rice. To overcome these dire economic circumstances, Munekatsu had issued a series of austerity orders.⁽¹¹⁾

Munechika's reign lasted for thirty-nine years, from 1761 (year 11 of the Hōreki 宝曆 period) to 1799 (year 11 of the Kansei 寛政 period). This coincided with the reigns of the Shōguns Ieharu 家治 (r. 1760-1786) and Ienari 家斉 (1787-1837), when the Senior counsellor (*rōjū* 老中) Tanuma Okitsugu 田沼意次 (1719-1788) made use of the economic power of merchants to restore the Bakufu's finances. Merchants and others, who were now enjoying new privileges as a result of the burgeoning money economy and special powers resulting from the priority given to financial policies, engaged in open bribery and corruption, arousing increasing resentment among the ordinary population. Circumstances were further aggravated in 1783 by a major eruption of Mount Asama, which continued for ninety days. During the same period adverse climactic conditions precipitated the Tenmei famine centred in the Northeast, in which large numbers of people died of starvation.⁽¹²⁾ Social unrest arising from these natural disasters was increasingly severe. Such were the conditions Munechika faced, and he was deeply committed to reforming Owari domain governance.

In his personal diary under the second month of 1775, Munechika recorded a list of twenty-four headings for the reform of governance, which reveal the practical tasks he intended to complete. Among these were various measures such as “the task of the school” (*gakkō no koto* 学校之事), “the task of the public granaries” (*gisō no koto* 義倉之事), and the “task of promulgation tours to the villages” (*junson no koto* 巡村之事). In this, we should note the fact that the school in particular came at the top of his list. Characteristic of Munechika's reforms was the intent to counter the crisis of his times with policies for restoring stability in people's livelihoods and a recovery of social order in the villages, for which the moral education of the people was accorded the highest priority.⁽¹³⁾ Munechika's school, conceived with the same aim of effecting moral transformation, was to be realized eight years after his diary entry with the founding of the Meirindō domain school in 1783.

For his administrative reforms, and in particular his plan to promote cultural education, Munechika appointed a talented native of Owari, Hitomi Kiyū 人見璣邑 (1729-1797), descended from a long line of Bakufu Confucian scholars, to the post of Steward (*yōnin* 用人) to take responsibility for carrying them out.⁽¹⁴⁾ Hitomi played a

(11) See Nagoyashi 名古屋市, *Nagoya shishi* 名古屋市史 (Nagoya: Nagoyashi, 1915) vol. 1, pp. 166-167, with the exact statistics given in vol. 2, p. 134.

(12) For a detailed account of the famine see Kikuchi Isao 菊池勇夫, “Kitatōhoku no jinkō shiryō ni miru Tenmei Tenpō no kikin 北東北の人口史料にみる天明・天保の飢饉,” *Kirisutokuyō Bunka Kenkyūjo kenkyū nenpō: minzoku to shūkyō* キリスト教文化研究所研究年報：民族と宗教 (*Christianity and Culture*) 51 (Miyagi Gakuin Joshi Daigaku 宮城学院女子大学, March 2018).

(13) See the account in Aichi-ken Kyōiku Iinkai 愛知県教育委員会, *Aichi-ken kyōiku shi* 愛知県教育史 vol. 1 (Tokyo: Daiichi Hōki Shuppan, 1973), pp. 139-140.

crucial role in effecting the reforms as a whole, and it was his vigorous promotion that made the establishment of the domain school Meirindō possible in the first place.

In the foundation of the school, the first important issue facing Hitomi was the selection of scholars able to teach students and develop the talents needed for domain administration.

In his Tenmei period reforms, Munechika was concerned with restoring social order among the ruling warrior class, and at the same time among the peasants, craftsmen, and merchants who comprised the classes of ordinary people. Measures for both these groups formed the central pillar of his reforms. However, these two aspects were not defined solely for improving order in the social structure, nor were they limited to necessarily achieving narrowly-defined results from their implementation. They were of course aimed at bringing about stability of livelihoods and social order in the first instance, but for this something wider was envisaged. This was a wider policy of moral transformation among both warriors and ordinary people. In order for the reforms to sink in fully, relying purely on legal compulsion would not be enough. In the view of Munechika and his followers, inculcating individuals with internal moral restraint was also necessary, and this was the function of the school.

Hitomi Kiyū was keenly convinced of the necessity of policies for moral transformation among warriors and ordinary people. To help him achieve this goal, he had in mind recruiting the Owari native Hosoi Heishū 細井平洲 (1728-1801), a man who had already played a role in governmental reforms in Yonezawa domain through educational work. Heishū had been teacher to the Yonezawa lord Uesugi Harunori 上杉治憲 (or Yōzan 鷹山, 1751-1822; r. 1767-1785) and his supporters. Harunori had achieved renown as an ideal ruler (*meikun* 名君) on account of his successful reforms, and Heishū had in 1776 overseen the foundation of the Yonezawa domain school, the Kōjōkan 興讓館. For this reason Heishū was the person Kiyū selected as most suitable to lead the establishment of the new Owari school, and he therefore recommended him to Munechika.

In order to persuade Heishū to accept appointment as head of the new domain school, Kiyū first sought out the Owari domain physician Hattori Sōgen 服部艸玄, a friend of Heishū's, to intercede on his behalf.⁽¹⁵⁾ In 1780 Munechika invited Heishū to come and deliver a lecture at the domain residence in Edo, which he did, which so astonished and impressed the lord that he appointed him as personal tutor.⁽¹⁶⁾

In 1780 (year 1 of the Tenmei period), Heishū accompanied Munechika to Owari, and in the tenth month he lectured at length in a venue on a street called Katawa Dōri

(14) *Nagoya shishi* vol. 10, pp. 397-9, and Hitomi Kiyū's grave inscription in *Bihan seiki, Nagoya sōsho sanpen* vol. 2, p. 426.

(15) Takase Daijirō 高瀬代次郎, *Hosoi Heishū* 細井平洲 (Tokyo: Matsuoka Tatsu 松岡達, 1913), p. 585.

(16) *Aichi-ken kyōiku shi* vol. 1, p. 151.

片端通り, attracting a large audience of both domain officials and ordinary people, all of whom stayed to listen to the end. Munechika therefore ordered the preparation of an outdoor lecture space 150 *jō* 畳 in extent outside the southern gates of the domain castle. Even there such a large and varied crowd assembled to hear Heishū, “noble and base, wise and foolish alike”, that it was said there was not an inch of ground left to stand on.

In 1782 construction began on a school building at Moto Okuni Kata Yakusho Ato 元御国方役所跡 on the eastern edge of Nakashima chō 長島町 at Katawa 片端 to the south of the castle. The work was completed in the fourth month of 1783. On 1783/4/21 the names of the school head and various officers were announced. On 4/25 Munechika went in person to visit the school, and on the following day he bestowed the plaque reading “Meirindō” written years before by his father, the previous lord Munekatsu. On 5/1 formal teaching began, with the school head Heishū delivering an explication of the *Kōkyō* 孝経 (Chinese *Xiaojing*, “Classic of Filial Piety”). With this the domain school Meirindō was established, but the Sage Hall was not constructed at the same time as the lecture hall, but only several years later.⁽¹⁷⁾

At Munechika’s request, Heishū also went on “promulgation tours” through villages (*junson* 巡村) throughout Owari to give inspirational talks, thus contributing still further to the reform effort.

IV

The shrine-school complex in Japan was modelled on a system which had earlier developed in medieval China. A brief account of the Chinese antecedent is helpful to understanding the significance of the Confucius shrine and why it was adopted in Owari and elsewhere in Edo-period Japan.⁽¹⁸⁾

In China, the earliest shrine to Confucius was located in his native place near modern Qufu in Shandong Province, where, according to the Han-dynasty historian Sima Qian 司馬遷 (?145-?86 BC), generation after generation regular sacrifices were made at Confucius’s tomb down to Sima’s own time. He also said that there was a shrine (*miao* 廟) at the location of Confucius’s house where his clothing, chariot, books, and zither were kept. The sacrifices were maintained by Confucius’s descendants and a community of Confucian followers who gathered there, and they made it a centre of ritual activity, probably from before the Han dynasty (202 BC – AD 220).

(17) *Ibid.*, pp. 146–151. Detailed accounts of Heishū’s activities and the founding of the Meirindō also appear in *Nagoya shishi* vol. 10 and Takase, *Hosoi Heishū*.

(18) See the account of the evolution of the Chinese Confucius shrine in Thomas Wilson ed., *On Sacred Grounds: Culture, Society, Politics, and the Formation of the Cult of Confucius* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), pp. 72–79.

Sima Qian also says that at the start of the Han dynasty, the period in history when Confucian learning would eventually become the dominant ideology of the governing elite, the dynastic founder Liu Bang 劉邦, or Emperor Gaozu 高祖 (r. 202–195 BC), made the “Great Pen” sacrifice (*tailao* 太牢, a cow, sheep, and pig) at the Qufu site in 195 BC. Sima describes visiting the shrine hall himself many decades later, where he viewed the ritual implements and the ceremonies being performed there.⁽¹⁹⁾ It should be emphasized that these sacrifices performed to Confucius were in the form of an ancestral cult, and there was only the one site, not replicated elsewhere. Also, the offerings to Confucius there were not at that time ever called Shidian 釋奠 (same as Japanese “Sekiten”).

Although a shrine at Confucius’s native place remained a centre for observances to Confucius throughout Chinese history, and to some extent even today, the shrines combined with schools had a separate – and later – origin, characterized by observance of the Shidian 釋奠, or Shicai 釋菜 (the same as “Sekiten” and “Sekisai” respectively in Japanese). Records of a Shidian to Confucius appear for the first time in the third century AD under the Wei and Jin dynasties, against a background of increasing influence of Confucian teachings in government. During this time the Shidian was held at irregular intervals in the imperial academy, consisting of sacrifices to Confucius and his closest disciple Yan Hui 顏回 accompanying as correlate (*pei* 配).⁽²⁰⁾

The origins of this seem to be based on the authority of texts of the *Li ji* 禮記, principally the “Wen Wang shi zi” 文王世子 (“King Wen as Heir Apparent”, Wen being the pre-dynastic King of the Zhou Dynasty in the eleventh century BC). This text says that the Shidian should be offered in schools to the “First Teacher(s)” or “Former Teacher(s)” (Xian shi 先師). The rite is said to have been accompanied by music and dancing, though a separate entry on the less formal Shicai says that dances are not included.⁽²¹⁾ There is also one mention of the Shicai in another text of the *Li ji*, the “Yue ling” 月令 (“Monthly Ordinances”), where in the second month the King orders his Director of Music to rehearse dances and perform the Shicai.⁽²²⁾ These texts most likely originate early, before the Han dynasty, but cannot be taken as evidence of actual practice in ancient China, and the “First Teacher(s)” would not have been Confucius. Nonetheless they did provide a canonical basis for the Shidian rituals performed by Chinese emperors or the crown prince from the third century onward, and Confucius could quite naturally be identified as the “First Teacher”. The sacrifices were observed in the imperial academy after the emperor or his crown prince had completed the

(19) *Shi ji* 史記 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1959) 47.1945–1947.

(20) *Jin shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1974) 19.599 and *Song shu* 宋書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1974) 17.485

(21) *Li ji zheng yi* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Daxue Chubanshe, 2019) 28.544, 545–547.

(22) *Li ji zheng yi* 22.413.

study of one or another of the Confucian canonical texts. They were thus linked to education, though were observed in a temporary venue prepared specially for the occasion rather than a permanent shrine, as would be the case in later times.⁽²³⁾ An important point is that the rituals held in this space were not addressed to Confucius as an ancestor as they were in his native place, but rather as a symbolic representation of the archetypal teacher, as an object of respect and veneration within the context of study.

There is one possible mention of a permanent shrine to Confucius in the imperial academy as early as in the fourth century under the Eastern Jin dynasty, but it cannot be corroborated in any other source, and clear evidence that such shrines were genuinely institutionalised does not appear until the start of the Tang Dynasty (618–906).⁽²⁴⁾ The first Tang emperor Gaozu 高祖 (r. 618–626) is recorded in 619 as having ordered the establishment of shrines to the Duke of Zhou (Zhou Gong 周公) and to Confucius in the imperial school (Guozi xue 國子學) that he had established, with regular sacrifices to be held once in each season of the year. In 624 he went to the school and observed the Shidian ceremony in person.⁽²⁵⁾ His successor, emperor Taizong 太宗 (r. 626–649), in the year 626 when he ascended the throne he established a new academy for educating sons of the elite in preparation for the official examinations, the Hongwen guan 弘文館.⁽²⁶⁾ In 628 he removed the Duke of Zhou from the shrine in the Guozi xue imperial school, and offerings were made only to Confucius and Yan Hui.⁽²⁷⁾ Both emperors are recorded as having gone in person to view the Shidian sacrifices, and after the end of the rite they ordered scholars to lecture on specific texts, and hold discussions on them.⁽²⁸⁾ Their promotion of the Confucius shrine and the Shidian ceremony in official schools was a symbolic expression of their wider support for Confucian education as a means for the moral transformation of society, and a sign of

(23) The preparation of the venue for the rite in the Imperial Academy is described in the preface to a poem on the event, the “Paean to the Shidian” (“Shi dian song” 釋奠頌) by Pan Ni 潘尼 (c. 250–311). His description makes clear that the venue, although temporary, had spaces corresponding to the architectural features of a “shrine” (*miao* 廟). The poem and preface are preserved in the *Jin shu* 55. 1510–1511.

(24) For a more detailed account of the Confucius shrines in the Tang imperial and regional schools see David McMullen, *State and Scholars in T'ang China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 32–47. The ritual treatise in the late fifth-century *Song shu* records that Emperor Xiao Wu 孝武 (r. 372–396) of the Eastern Jin (317–420) added a large “Shrine Building” (*miao wu* 廟屋) to the imperial academy in 385, though there is no other record of any such structure then or surviving into later times; *Song shu* 14.364.

(25) This is recorded at various points, for example *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1975) 1.9, 24. 916, and 189 A. 4940. The last of these says “shrines to the Duke of Zhou and to Confucius were established, one for each” (*li Zhou Gong Kongzi miao ge yi suo* 立周公、孔子廟各一所), making clear that there were two separate buildings. See also *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1975) 198.5635.

(26) *Xin Tang shu* 44.1163; see also McMullen, *State and Scholars*, p. 15.

(27) *Jiu Tang shu* 189A.4940, *Xin Tang shu* 198.5636.

(28) *Jiu Tang shu* 24.916–917, 189A.4941; *Xin Tang shu* 15.373, 198.5636.

their legitimate rule.

The most significant development came in 630, when Taizong “decreed that shrines to Confucius be constructed in all the the prefecture and county schools” (*zhao zhou xian xue jie zuo Kongzi miao* 詔州縣學皆作孔子廟).⁽²⁹⁾ The Tang-dynasty specialist David McMullen notes that this was one of two official cults mandated in all local jurisdictions, the only other being the altars of Soil and Grain (She Ji 社稷). He also argues that these local schools and shrines were in fact implemented, and that at one point during the Tang Dynasty there were as many as 60,000 people studying in them.⁽³⁰⁾ The system of official schools declined as the Tang weakened, but the pattern of Confucius shrines in schools generally was now established, and remained the standard pattern in China thereafter.

The above account shows that in China the shrines where Confucius was worshipped existed in two quite distinct types. One was in the locale of Confucius’s native place, where his descendants and his disciples’ successors made sacrifices to him as an ancestor, which is to say that it was in nature a family ancestral shrine. The other shrine type was a space universally added to schools, where Confucius was venerated as a teacher through sacrifice, in nature a school-shrine configuration with educational significance. The latter was the form that became institutionalized in schools, and this configuration was called the “shrine-school” (*miao xue* 廟學), or the “shrine-school system” (*miao xue zhi* 廟學制).

The Sekiten ritual in Japan was introduced from China, but it is not yet clear whether a Sage Hall was included as an integral part of the school buildings in earlier times. Regarding the Sekiten ritual itself, the research by the specialist Sudō Toshio 須藤敏夫 is particularly detailed. According to him, the earliest record of the Sekiten in Japan comes in 701, in the *Shoku Nihon gi* 続日本紀 passage reading: “The Sekiten: (commentary) the ritual of the Sekiten was then seen for the first time” (積奠 注積奠之礼、於是始見矣). It cannot be confirmed that the Sekiten rite existed in Japan before this.⁽³¹⁾ The early Sekiten was performed in the Daigakuryō 大学寮 imperial school, but in his section dealing with the earlier period Sudō makes no mention of a specific venue for the rite. It is thus unclear what sort of facility inside the Daigakuryō was used for this. Subsequently, up to the end of the Heian period considerable changes took place in the Sekiten. At the very end of the Heian, on 1171/4/28 on the eve of the Kamakura period, the Daigakuryō was destroyed in a major fire in Kyoto. After that, for more than 450 years through the turmoils of the Nanbokuchō period up to the time when it was restored in the schools of the Early Modern period, the Sekiten almost entirely

(29) *Xin Tang shu* 15.373.

(30) McMullen, *State and Scholars*, pp. 32, 36.

(31) Sudō Toshio 須藤敏夫, *Kinsei Nihon Sekiten no kenkyū* 近世日本積奠の研究 (Kyōto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2001), p. 7.

disappeared.⁽³²⁾

V

In the case of the Owari Meirindō school, even though the Sekiten was performed in the teaching hall at the time the school was opened in 1783, it was not until more than three years later that the Sage Hall was constructed.⁽³³⁾ Why this delay occurred needs to be explained by comparing the ideas behind the design of schools in the Edo period with those of the Chinese institution of the shrine-school, particularly within the context of the social and cultural conditions in the Bakufu and domains at the time the Meirindō was first built.

There had been a long interval between the destruction of the Heian-period Daigakuryō by fire, during which the Sekiten was almost entirely cut off, and the time that schools equipped with both teaching halls and Sage Halls for sacrifices to teachers eventually reappeared in the Edo period. As described above, this first came about with the establishment of Hayashi Razan's private school at Shinobugaoka in 1632, augmented by the Sage Hall (Senseiden, "Hall of the Former Sage") donated by Yoshinao, lord of Owari, where the Sekiten was once more performed in 1633. This was the harbinger of Edo-period schools in general, and, significantly, it adopted the shrine-school model.

From this time, the Hayashi school continued to receive funds from the Bakufu for maintenance and rebuilding, until Tsunayoshi moved the school and Sage Hall to the new site at Yushima, where the shrine-school pattern of venues for teaching and sacrificial offering was maintained in the Yushima Seidō. This was a model imitated in many domains, who adopted the same pattern in their own schools.⁽³⁴⁾

We have seen that in Owari the Sage Hall and the Sekiten already existed in the time of the domain founder Yoshinao, and by order of his successor they were continued in a private school thereafter. The institution reemerged briefly in the three years of the existence of the Habashita Gakumonjo, but the largest Sekiten since the time of Yoshinao was held at the time the Meirindō was opened in 1783. From this we can surmise that the school was always intended to be in the shrine-school configuration, though the construction of the actual sage hall came afterwards.

There were many reasons why this delay came about, but first let us consider the rather different circumstances in which the original shrine-school configuration was

(32) After the Daigakuryō was destroyed, it appears that the Sekiten was for a time held in a temporary venue, see Sudō, *Kinsei Nihon Sekiten no kenkyū*, p. 10.

(33) See the article cited in note 3 above.

(34) One example of this is Hagi 萩 domain, which requested diagrams of the Yushima Seidō when they were designing their own domain school, the Meirinkan 明倫館.

formed in China.

In the account of the origins of the shrine-school institution above, we noted that the amalgamation of the two elements of shrine and school came about as a result of the needs of the imperial political system and the dominance of Confucianism in medieval China. The shrine-school configuration was institutionalized by direct order of the emperor, who commanded the establishment of Sage Halls for the worship of Confucius in official schools throughout the empire. For this reason, as time went on both official and private schools continued to follow this pattern.

However, in the case of the Owari domain school in Japan, no such official shrine-school configuration ever existed. The amalgamation of shrine and school in the specific political and cultural environment of medieval China obviously did not coincide with the requirements of Japanese society in the mid-Edo period. How it came about that Yoshinao, a man deeply learned in Confucian teachings, would have contributed the Sage Hall to the Hayashi Shinobugaoka school – which itself had been founded in the context of contemporary Japanese rulers' understanding of governance and how it related to the function of educational institutions – can be explained in terms of the needs of his time. But how do we explain the case of the Meirindō established later on in the Tenmei period? Here the configuration of the school needs to be considered in the light of the social and political needs in Owari domain at the time.

As we saw in Section II above, the Meirindō school was at the top of the list of Munechika's planned domain reforms. Specifically, the moral transformation of both the warrior class and ordinary people was deemed to be of high importance in achieving the reforms. This transformation could not be effected purely through legal strictures, but also by inculcating inner moral values. The task of achieving this through educating the domain population fell to Hosoi Heishū, the man placed in charge of the Meirindō. We can speculate that because the task of moral transformation was paramount for Heishū and the Meirindō, it is quite possible that they would have intended to resurrect the form of the school as it had existed since the start of the Edo period, namely the shrine-school configuration.

The eighth Owari lord Munechika had worked hard to overcome the severe financial troubles of his time, and the same adverse conditions persisted at the time Munechika succeeded him. Heishū arrived in Edo to take up his appointment as Owari domain Confucian scholar in 1780. The following year he accompanied Munechika to Owari itself, and in the tenth and eleventh months of 1781 he delivered lectures to the people there. Starting in the next year 1782 climactic conditions worsened, precipitating the Tenmei Famine (*Tenmei no dai kikin* 天明の大飢饉), one of the three great famines of the Edo period, which was to last until 1788. The Meirindō was completed and instruction began in 1783, the year after the famine started. In that same year Mount Asama underwent a major eruption, with devastating effects across the whole of Northeast Japan. With the Meirindō opening coinciding with such disasters it was

inevitable that the domain finances would be in a severe state. For that reason constructing the school and the shrine simultaneously would likely have imposed an excess burden.

In this connection, it is worth mentioning the circumstances of the Hayashi school in Edo at around this same time. After Tsunayoshi's death, later Shōguns made no personal visits to the school to view the Sekiten in the Sage Hall as he had done, and after the Kyōhō period (1716-1736) the Bakufu's special financial support for the Yushima Seidō ceased. The school finances fell into difficulty, and the Sekiten was often neglected. In the third month of 1772 the Taiseiden Sage Hall was caught in a major fire and destroyed, to be reconstructed on a much reduced scale in 1774. In the first month of 1786 both the Taiseiden and the teaching hall were destroyed together in another major fire. In 1787 the Taiseiden was partially restored on an even smaller scale, having become "an extremely crude shrine building in which the burned remains of the foundation and burned sections were used as is".⁽³⁵⁾ The miserable state of the Yushima Seidō in the Tenmei period was a stark reflection of the decline of Zhu Xi Neo-Confucian learning at that time. So ineffectual had the Yushima Seidō become that it ceased to have much influence on domain schools. Thus at the time the Meirindō was constructed the decision of when to build the Sage Hall would likely have been taken without regard for the Yushima Seidō as a model for the shrine-school configuration.

VI

Early in the Edo period, Hayashi Razan's private school at Shinobugaoka, founded with financial support from the Bakufu, conformed to the shrine-school configuration, the school buildings being augmented by the Sage Hall donated by the Owari domain ruler Tokugawa Yoshinao.

Almost all the schools founded in the early Edo period, particularly domain schools, had this shrine-school configuration. Yet in the mid-Edo period the Owari domain school Meirindō founded anew in 1783 differed from the shrine-school configuration and Sekiten rite advocated by Yoshinao in having only a teaching hall. After that, a Sekiten ritual was held in 1786, but since at that time a Sage Hall had not been completed the rite was conducted in the teaching hall. The current study considers the question of why this delay in constructing the Sage Hall might have occurred by explaining the quite different process by which the shrine-school institution developed in medieval China, and also by considering the social and cultural circumstances in the Bakufu and domains at the time the Meirindō was built.

When the Owari domain lord Munechika established his school as one part of his

(35) Sudō, *Kinsei Nihon Sekiten no kenkyū*, p. 60.

reforms of domain governance, he had in mind the two aims of restoring social order among the warrior class responsible for administering the domain, and also restoring order among the wider population. This was to be achieved by inducing people to internalise moral values by which they would control their own behaviour. This transformation of the people was the role in domain governance Munechika intended the Meirindō to fulfil. It is possible to speculate that for this reason the teaching hall used for education took precedence, and the construction of the Sage Hall used to worship Confucius, who as “Former Teacher” was accorded the highest importance within Confucianism, was given second place.

We have here also considered the delay in constructing the Sage Hall in connection with the financial circumstances in Owari at the time the Meirindō was opened. The Tenmei Famine and the major eruption of Mount Asama both occurred at exactly this time, such that the domain finances fell into severe crisis. From this it is clear that the simultaneous construction of school and Sage Hall would have been too much for the funds available.

Chinese-based learning (*Kangaku*) lay at the centre of school education in the Edo period, but there has been almost no research done on the design of the school facilities in which this education actually took place. The current study has given an account of how education in Chinese-based learning actually worked in the mid-Edo period by examining the timing of the construction of the Meirindō Sage Hall.

(2022.9.30 受稿, 2022.11.16 受理)

—Abstract—

This study examines aspects of the founding of the Confucius shrine (Seidō) in the Owari domain school Meirindō during the Tenmei period (1781-1789), in order to illuminate practical aspects of education in the mid-Edo period. In 1632 the first Owari lord Tokugawa Yoshinao had donated the shrine for Hayashi Razan's Shinobugaoka school in Edo (which later became the Yushima Seidō), yet the Meirindō school proper established by the ninth Owari lord Munechika in 1783 did not at first have a shrine, which was added only after a delay of several years. This study considers the reasons for this delay. The first is the origins of the shrine-school configuration in China, where in the early Tang Dynasty all official schools were required by imperial decree to have a shrine, so that it became institutionalized. In Edo Japan this did not happen – adding a shrine, or not, was based on the governing and educational aims of individual domain lords. The second reason for the delay was the adverse social, political, and economic circumstances in Owari around the time the Meirindō was built, which also coincided with a period of severe natural disasters and famine. As the Meirindō was intended as a centre for moral education, teaching activities received higher priority than the shrine.