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# The Successors of Hirata Theology

This paper will survey the current state of research on the influence of Hirata Atsutane's nativism (Hirata Kokugaku) on the Meiji Restoration. The three main points are summarized below:

- 1. Postwar researchers favored viewing Hirata Atsutane as a spiritualist and avoided examining the nationalistic side of the Hirata school. However, it is difficult to negate his influence on nationalistic movements during the Restoration.
- 2. Hirata's writings and other related artifacts in the National Museum of Japanese History have provided us with rich information on him, his family, and his disciples, greatly raising the standard of research. Consequently, research without the aid of these materials has lost much of its validity.
- 3. We should remain cautious against the popular understanding of the failure of Hirata's nativism in the first year of the Meiji era. Nativist scholars from the Tsuwano and Satsuma groups were also influenced by Atsutane, so the downfall of Hirata's direct disciples alone does not signify the decline of his influence on the Meiji administration.

KEYWORDS: Kokugaku (nativism)—Hirata school—Tsuwano school—Satsuma school—Meiji Restoration

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ANY discussions in the past have placed the nativism of Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤 (1776–1843) as the intellectual origin of the Meiji Restoration. The following passages are rather extreme examples from during and after the war:

The doctrines of Atsutane—who advocated his views for about thirty years from Bunka 文化 to Bunsei 文政 to Tenpō 天保—were succeeded by Kanetane and Nobutane, and became the driving force to fulfill the great visions of the Meiji Restoration. This is now an established historical understanding. Even Atsutane himself probably did not expect his teachings—which were mistreated and repressed so much during his lifetime—would be revived after only twenty to thirty years and make such a great impact. Although the Meiji Restoration was an inevitable outcome of history, it still had its seeds (that is, causes). Unplanted seeds do not grow, but the seeds planted by Atsutane certainly grew and bore fruit. (Watanabe 1943)

Although Hirata was a very hard worker—and thereby also a very well-read person with a retentive memory—he had a contemptible personality and was called a "swindler" during his lifetime. It was truly a huge disaster for the Japanese people that Meiji leaders were influenced by the bogus teachings of this giant swindler. I believe that the root cause of the collapse of the Meiji government lies here. (Takikawa 1950)

Both examples above are discourses directly linking Hirata's nativism to the Meiji Restoration, but they also reveal the reversal in the evaluation of Hirata's legacy after the war. In the context of wartime mobilization, Hirata's focus on imperial rule was praised and an Atsutane boom occurred during the centennial of his death in 1943 (Tanaka 2009; Mitsumatsu 2016a). The former argument (by Watanabe) is a product of that time period, and the latter (by Takikawa) a reaction against it. At that time, talking about Hirata Atsutane also meant talking about the Meiji Restoration.

One hundred and fifty years after the Meiji Restoration, and more than seventy years since Japan's defeat in the Second World War, the war can now be regarded as almost a halfway point in Japanese history from the Meiji Restoration to the present. I want to reflect on whether one should emphasize the influence of Hirata's nativism in talking about the Meiji Restoration. I will first review the trends in postwar scholarship up to the present. On that basis, I will confirm

the influence of Hirata theology (*Hirata shingaku* 平田神学) on the Meiji administration for each of the groups in positions of power.

### 1. Postwar Research on Hirata's Nativism

### 1. THE TURN TOWARDS THE SPIRITUAL

Perhaps because the wartime Atsutane boom remained on people's minds as a loathsome memory, there was a considerable period of time after the war during which research on Atsutane was largely avoided. Even after the reexamination of Hirata's nativism began, there was a tendency not to recognize its significant influence on political movements at the end of the Edo period. Instead, much more attention was paid to Atsutane's theological thinking about Amaterasu governing the Visible World (kenkai 顕界) and Ōkuninushi governing the post-death, Invisible World (yūkai 幽界)—where people would go after dying, and receive judgment—depending on the result—to become a kami. And the perennial image of Atsutane as the "pioneer of Japanese folklore studies" or the "seeker of Japanese spirituality"—with Orikuchi Shinobu's arguments as the starting point of such a portrayal—could also be evaluated as a product of the efforts to discuss Atsutane while avoiding negative wartime memories (see Orikuchi 1976; Asukai 2002; Asoya 1989; Kamata 1987; 2002; Inoue 1977; KOYASU 2001; SAGARA 1972; NUMATA 1984; HOSHIYAMA 2001; MIYAGI 2004; YOSHIDA 2016; YOSHIDA 2009). Atsutane's Senkyō ibun 仙境異聞 ("Strange Tales of the Land of Immortals"), which gained widespread attention thanks to Orikuchi, is a record of interviews with the boy Torakichi, who claimed to have a connection to the Invisible World. But this work by Atsutane was originally not even published as a hanpon 版本 (books printed from wooden blocks), and simply existed in handwritten form. Despite this fact, Senkyō ibun garnered much attention from those interested in the occult boom<sup>2</sup> and yōkai 妖怪,<sup>3</sup> and it was taken up by Iwanami Bunko at the end of the twentieth century and republished again in 2018. The cover reads, "The testimony of a child who was kidnapped by

- 1. Matsumoto (1972) positions *bakumatsu* Kokugaku as an ideology that denies political practice and ensures the obedience of the governed, and Tahara (1963) also sees the construction of theory for the stability of the lifestyle of the governed as an issue of Hirata's nativism. Both regard Hirata's nativism as something that stabilizes immediate order, and does not recognize it as an opportunity for reform. There may have been more nuance to Haga Noboru's arguments, but due to stylistic problems, it should be regarded as having had no significant impact.
- 2. In publications by Hachiman Shoten, besides  $Senky\bar{o}$  ibun, there are many by those from the Hirata school and Restoration Shintoists.
- 3. From around the end of the twentieth century, Atsutane and Torakichi were re-presented to the reading public by Mizuki Shigeru and Aramata Hiroshi. See Aramata and Maita (2000), Mizuki (2005), Aramata (2007).

a tengu!" The tendency to isolate the political movements of the bakumatsu era from Hirata's nativism leads to the dissemination of the image of Atsutane in this type of nonpolitical context.<sup>4</sup> Some even went as far as to claim that Hirata's thought and the influence his nativism had on the Meiji Restoration should be treated altogether separately.5

Also among historians of religion of the Meiji period—as more and more empirical research was produced—the tendency to caution against the overestimation of the influence of Hirata has spread. Until the 1970s, there was still a general consensus that Hirata Atsutane played an important role in leading the Meiji Restoration ideologically.<sup>6</sup> But gradually, more emphasis was placed on the unworldly qualities of Hirata theology (and its students) and the secular nature of Meiji state leaders. This led to the now common perception that views the Tsuwano school in leadership positions and the Hirata school on the margins of power (at least speaking exclusively about the first year of Meiji).<sup>7</sup> Yasumaru Yoshio once regarded Atsutane's doctrine as one that "is thought to have gained the status as the official ideology of the Meiji Restoration through the mediation of Ōkuni Takamasa and Hasegawa Akimichi," and as the "mortal enemy in front of us—the arrogant and insensitive connection between nation-

- 4. The fact that Torakichi's arguments could not have been unrelated to the bakumatsu sonnō movement has been made clear in MITSUMATSU (2009).
- 5. HOSHIYAMA Kyōko (2007, 38) thought that there should be "a strict distinction between the intrinsic understanding of thought and the social function that it came to fulfill as a result of that in later Japanese society."
  - 6. For example, according to Murakami Shigeyoshi,

Hirata Atsutane developed a new religious aspect of Kokugaku and created a systematic doctrine of Restoration Shinto. . . . Atsutane created his own Shinto funeral rituals and prayers, but Restoration Shinto essentially remained a doctrine of Shinto, and its substance as a religion was still immature, when it entered a period of intensifying political disputes during the *bakumatsu*-Restoration period. . . . In terms of the history of Shinto, where it had accomplished self-expansion through syncretization with developed foreign religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Onmyōdō, Restoration Shinto was an unusual school of Shinto. The absolutization and exclusive nature of the fanatic Restoration was clearly different from the Shinto tradition. The reason why this kind of Shinto hereticism could become a political leadership ideology in the process of the political disputes of the bakufu overthrow was because that religious reactionism and sonnō-ism had ideologically based political effectiveness on the political purpose of the restoration of the monarchy, the central reunification of Japan through the restoration of the emperor's ancient religious authority.

(Murakami 1970, 66–67)

7. See, for example, INOUE and SAKAMOTO (1987); SAITO (2006); SAKAMOTO (1993; 1994); SHIMAZONO (2001); TAKEDA (1996); NITTA (1997); YASUMARU (2007a); YAMAGUCHI (1999). Regarding this period, HAGA (1994), and TAKAGI (1984) are also important, but they have been criticized for the context of the Hirata school vs. Tsuwano school.

alism and cultural assimilation—a fraudulent system of Japanese 'modernization' theory—that had cursed the Japanese people" (YASUMARU 2007b, 32, 47). But later Yasumaru changed the focus of his analysis of Atsutane, commenting that, "beginning in 1871 (Meiji 4), Hirata scholars and Shintoists were excluded from positions of responsibility in religious policy; some of them became the chief priests of large shrines and, as Shintoists, demonstrated a strong tendency to go along with the Meiji government's policies. Caught in the tide of bunmei kaika 文明開化 ('civilization and enlightenment'), Hirata's religious philosophy—based on the belief in a spiritual reality—has largely retreated, and many Shintoists also adapted themselves to such circumstances. If anything, they mostly swam with the tide" (YASUMARU 2007c, 302). The above example shows how the image of Hirata's nativism had changed from the public ideology of the Meiji Restoration—which had pioneered modernization theory—to a spiritualistic thought that became outdated and relegated to the background.

One of the arguments that emphasized the point that Hirata theology which took seriously the existence of the Invisible World and theories about judgment after death—was ultimately not acceptable for the imperial state can be found in HARA (2001). Hara's work first shows that Izumo/Ōkuninushi which are contrasted with Ise/Amaterasu—hold great significance for Hirata theology as the main kami of the Invisible World. In the fourth year of Meiji, according to Hara, the Hirata group—who emphasized Izumo—was defeated by the Tsuwano group—who emphasized Ise. The movement to enshrine Ōkuninushi at the Shinto secretariat temple, led by Senge Takatomi, who succeeded Hirata theology—was also defeated before the Ise group. Hara argues that belief in the Invisible World and the religiosity of Shinto itself was denied by the government. Hara recognizes in Hirata theology—which emphasized the importance of Ōkuninushi—a potential that is distinct from the Amaterasu/emperor-centric state that actually came to be, and observes that Hirata's legacy would eventually influence individuals like Deguchi Onisaburō and Orikuchi Shinobu.

Thus, in recent years, the widely circulated view is that Hirata's nativism which privileged spiritual matters—was not able to play an active role in the development of the Meiji nation, and that the discourse praising the Hirata group's contribution to the nativist movement during the Meiji period was merely a product of subsequent generations.8

8. Katsurajima Nobuhiro (2008, 127) states that the modern image of Kokugaku in academia seems to suggest a succession of Motoori-Hirata nativism, but that actually, this image was only created after the fall of nativism and its cosmology, and so the failed Hirata faction alone cannot accurately represent all of Kokugaku back then. See also Fujita (2007).

## 2. Rediscovery of Ibukinova Materials

Recent research and organization of the historical materials related to the Hirata school (Ibukinoya 気吹舎)—led by Yoshida Asako and Miyachi Masato greatly changed the standard for research on Atsutane. They directed our attention to a number of important topics, including the impact of the Russian crisis in the early nineteenth century on the development of Atsutane's thought, his interactions with other scholars of the same time period, the circumstances surrounding their publishing activities and discipleships, and the elucidation of Atsutane's thought based on the comparative analysis of manuscripts (YOSHIDA 2016; MIYACHI 2015; YOSHIDA 2012; NAKAGAWA 2012; KOBAYASHI 2017). The standard for political history, social history, and bibliographic analysis has been raised dramatically, and it is now difficult to advance serious research through discussions that rely solely on the Hirata Atsutane *zenshū*.

Concerning the relationship between Hirata's nativism and politics, the best argument is provided by Miyachi Masato—who had, from early on, been focused on the Hirata group at the end of the Edo period as a political information network (MIYACHI 1999; 2015). According to Miyachi, Atsutane's thought—developed during the early nineteenth century as Russia approached Japan—was primarily concerned with the formation of national subjects that could confront the external crisis. This was a groundbreaking argument in that it once again foregrounded the image of Atsutane as a nationalist, and not necessarily in a negative way.

As for the bakumatsu-Restoration period, Miyachi examines how individuals in the commoner class became political actors towards the end of the Edo period, focusing on the South Shinano/East Mino regions—featured in Before the Dawn (Yoakemae 夜明け前), a well-known historical novel by Shimazaki Tōson—as the main stage. In other words, Hirata's nativism expanded as a result of the imperial-shogunal division over trade treaties and the collapse of samurai authority; the regional middle class became politically active in this context, and the idea of a nation that directly connected the emperor and the people was conceived. While this generally led towards a centralized government based on hanbatsu 藩閥 (han favoritism), it also provided the impetus towards the Movement for Civic Rights and Freedom in the 1880s. This is the gist of Miyachi's argument. It is a huge debate exploring the formation of a nation-state from the bottom up, using Hirata's nativism as a starting point.

Following Miyachi's work, research was advanced on Ibukinoya—which operated as the center of a political information network—and its activities during the end of the Edo period. The fact that Hirata Nobutane (the third head of the Hirata school) was active as a member of the sonnō jōi 尊王攘夷 group of Akita domain was revealed in detail by Amano Masashi 天野真志. Furthermore, my own research describes how the Hirata family—which had originally affirmed the emperor's delegation of the administration of the country to the shogunate—came to disseminate sonnō jōi commentary after the conclusion of the trade treaty and ultimately argued in favor of ōsei fukko 王政復古 ("restoration of imperial rule"); see MIYACHI (2004; 2015); AMANO (2009; 2012; 2015; 2016), MITSUMATSU (2010; 2012a).

There was also some progress in research on the activities of the Hirata school in the new government. Concrete aspects of the conflict over the official teachings within educational facilities established in affiliation with a government agency or in connection with the Jingikan 神祇官 (Council of Divinities, 1868–1871)—among the Tsuwano school and surrounding nativist scholars were examined in detail. Among other observations, it was revealed that Hirata Nobutane was somewhat embroiled in a conflict between Hirata's direct disciples—such as Yano Harumichi and Maruyama Sakura who emphasized adherence to Atsutane's theology (by opening, for instance, an inquisition over the location of the World of Darkness [yomi 黄泉])—and others like Fukuba Yoshishizu (Tsuwano school)—who was close to the Chōshū faction and sought to create his own concepts about ritual. It has also been shown how Hirata's direct disciples—unable to promote their opinions about the closure of Kyoto Daigakkō 京都大学校 (the University at Kyoto) and Nobutane's dismissal from the senkyōshi 宣教使 (the Office of Indoctrination) role—all lost their positions in a national criminal case in which they sought advice from a spirit medium called Maebashi Shinnyo 前橋神女 (1858-?) (ENDŌ 2012; KUMAZAWA 2007; MITSUMATSU 2013; 2016b).

In summary, it was confirmed by detailed examination that, in the process leading to the Meiji Restoration, Hirata's nativism stimulated the formation of political subjects and that the Hirata group's activities inside and outside the new government were frustrated by beliefs about spiritual matters and sonnō jōi. When we think about the significance of the Meiji Restoration broadly, the impact of Hirata's nativism cannot be ignored. But, on the other hand, when we interpret the significance of the Meiji Restoration more narrowly in terms of the political and administrative history before and after the establishment of the new government, it is difficult to negate the existing analyses that de-emphasize Hirata's influence.

What needs to be noted, however, is the range of the Hirata school under consideration. The groupings of the so-called direct disciples of Hirata and the Tsuwano school are undoubtedly effective categories for distinguishing nativist scholars in terms of their thought and affiliation during this time period. But the reason why the old debates managed not to compartmentalize these groups was because they both appeared to be Hirata Atsutane's ideological successors. While it is true that Hirata's students began a theological debate against other groups in order to be faithful to Atsutane's theory—regarding questions such as the location of the World of Darkness, the main kami of the Invisible World, and the possibility of interacting with the Invisible World—the groups they were arguing against were not necessarily uninfluenced by Atsutane's theology. Given Hirata's contribution in terms of assembling a grand (albeit rough) cosmology that presented views about the world after death and the significance of the emperor that differed from Confucian and Buddhist understandings by freely expanding upon and making use of materials such as the deities that appear in the Kojiki 古事記 and Nihon Shoki 日本書紀 after the three kami of creation (zōka sanjin 造化三神) or ame 天 (heaven), tsuchi 地 (earth), yomi 泉 (spring)—it is hard to deny that for the subsequent Restoration (fukko 復古) Shintoists, Hirata Atsutane was an important predecessor to learn about or learn from, and for research-minded Shintoists who idealized Motoori Norinaga-style philology, Hirata was their starting point of inquiry.9 Doesn't the fact that people like Suzuki Shigetane and Ōkuni Takamasa who were criticized by the Hirata school indicate how they were regarded as splinter groups that advocated heretical views? (MATSUURA 2001; MITSUMATSU 2010; YOSHIDA 2012). In considering the relationship between Hirata's nativism and the Meiji Restoration, we need to be more sensitive to the fact that the lower-class groups and Hirata's direct disciples—who happened to be excluded from leadership positions—were not the only successors of Hirata theology.

However, there is a strong tendency in Miyachi Masato's argument—similar to that of Hara Takeshi—to emphasize the gap between the Hirata school and those close to the center of power in government—perhaps in an effort to derive from Hirata's disciples a different possibility than the Meiji state that actually formed. Arguments by Sakamoto Koremaru and others that differentiated Hirata's disciples into groups like the Tsuwano and Satsuma groups, while improving the empirical validity of the discussion, may have also resulted in promoting the above image.

So in the following, I will not limit the influence of Hirata theology on the Meiji Restoration exclusively to the students of Ibukinoya or to a particular subset of pro-sonnō jōi nativists. I will instead reaffirm the influence of Hirata's nativism and the activities of the Restoration Shintoists for each major group inside the new government, which is often regarded as among the leading players of the Meiji Restoration.

<sup>9.</sup> The case regarding Iida Toshihira, who was responsible for the development of the ritual system at the Office of Ceremonies (Shikiburyō 式部寮), was introduced in MITSUMATSU (2012b).

### 2. The Ishin Government and Restoration Shinto

### 1. THE FOOTHOLD/BASE OF THE SONNO IOI GROUPS

Sawa Nobuyoshi, who was responsible for the requisition of Nagasaki by the new government, was a pro-sonnō jōi court noble that returned to the political stage after the Shichi kyō ochi 七卿落ち ("the exile of seven nobles") and the Ikuno no hen 生野の変 Incidents. Making use of his experience in Nagasaki, Sawa served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs from the summer of Meiji 2. Sawa assigned Maruyama Sakura, another sonnō jōi activist he encountered in Nagasaki, to the position of the Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (gaimu taijō 外務大丞) and moved him up north to manage the situation in Sakhalin.

Sakura was a loyalist from the Shimabara domain, who studied nativism at the Hirata school and served in the Council of Divinities (Jingikan 神祇官), the University (Daigakkō 大学校), and the House of Peers (Kōgisho 公議所; Shūgiin 集議院). Rumored to take up the post of Councilor (sangi 参議),10 Sakura could be regarded as the most powerful student of Hirata. Among the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—serving under Nobuyoshi and Sakura—were the disciples of Sakura and Yano Harumichi, as well as many others who were not under the influence of Satsuma and Chōshū. Besides the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Council of Divinities, the House of Peers, the university, and the Board of Censors (Danjōdai 弹正台) also exhibited strong sonnō jōi tendencies, and were comprised of many individuals who were not under the control of the Meiji bureaucracy, including the commoner class. But these departments, which represented the main foothold for the sonnō jōi factions, were ultimately rendered dysfunctional after conflicts with the mainstream government. Even within the senkyōshi system, established as an anti-Christianity organization, the result of forcefully championing Hirata theology (although this succeeded to a certain degree) and denouncing alternative views was the defeat of Nobutane and other affiliates. In the end, Sakura's hard-line anti-Russia measures were not accepted, and as a result of trying to make a breakthrough in the situation through an invasion plan of the Korean Peninsula, around the third month of Meiji 4, the conservative court nobles, as well as the sonnō jōi groups from places like Kurume and Akita—together with powerful men of the Hirata school—were arrested, and the tide of history moved towards haihan chiken 廃藩置県 (the abolition of feudal domains and the establishment of

<sup>10.</sup> Nobutane's letter addressed to Kanetane dated the 23rd day of the 5th month, Meiji 3, states, "Maruyama was offered the position of Councilor in confidence, but he rejected it because he thought it would only hinder his activities. Now he is very busy organizing meetings with comrades and doing other things" (Kokuritsu rekishi minzoku hakubutsukan kenkyū hōkoku, vol. 128).

prefectures) (see Tanaka 1983–1993; MIYACHI 1999; ENDŌ 2012; MITSUMATSU 2016b; Ковачаѕні 2017).

### 2. TSUWANO, CHŌSHŪ

During the first year of Meiji, the Tsuwano school—which had linked to the Chōshū group led by Kido and others—was the rival for Hirata's disciples (INOUE and SAKAMOTO 1987; SAKAMOTO 1993 and 2005; TAKEDA 1996; MITSU-MATSU 2013). Restoration Shintoists who were influenced by Hirata Atsutane but advocated their own versions of nativist theory—such as Oka Kumaomi and Ōkuni Takamasa—came from the Tsuwano domain. Fukuba Yoshishizu, who is thought to have led the religious policies of the first year of the Meiji administration, also learned from Takamasa,11 representing another Tsuwanotype nativist scholar influenced by the Hirata school. Towards the end of the Edo period, Yoshishizu entered into Kyoto politics—under the direction of his feudal lord Kamei Koremi—and created a connection with the Chōshū domain, eventually serving in the Council of Divinities in the first year of Meiji. Today he is also known as the person who designed the ritual for the Charter Oath (Gokajō no goseimon 五箇条の御誓文), the enthronement ceremony for the Meiji emperor, and the Daijōsai 大嘗祭 that was held in Tokyo. He could be regarded as a nativist scholar who created Shinto rituals that differed from the precedents valued by the court nobles (for example, by including the participation of various samurai officials in such rituals), and who not only attempted to restore old customs but also promoted measures that were suitable for the reform posture of the new government (denying, for instance, the importance of holding the Daijosai in Kyoto, as advocated by Hirata's disciples).

Regarding the shrines, while Hirata's disciples—on the premise of the coexistence of the Council of Divinities alongside the Council of State (Jingikan dajōkan ni kansei 神祇官太政官二官制)—called for policies such as the direct control of the national shrines by the Council of Divinities and the expansion of the shrines' land ownership, Tsuwano-school individuals such as Fukuba Yoshishizu, Kadowaki Shigeaya, and Kabe Izuo—who actually controlled the Council of Divinities and the Jingishō 神祇省 (Ministry of Divinities)—in cooperation with nativist scholars from the Tottori group, denied giving more control to an independent Council of Divinities, and they helped bring about policies such as the confiscation of land owned by Shinto shrines (the first month of Meiji 4) and the abolition of the hereditary status for Shinto priesthood. Implementations towards saisei icchi (祭政一致; unity of ritual and political rule) were

<sup>11.</sup> However, there were non-negligible differences between Takamasa and his disciples, such as whether he was a proponent of the bakufu government (see MATSUURA 2001).

advanced—through the annexation of the Council of Divinities by the Council of State (Dajōkan) (Jingikan no Dajōkan naibu kikanka 神祇官の太政官内部機 関化) and the absorption of Shinto roles into those of public servants (Zokuri no yakushoku ken'nin 俗吏の役職兼任)—and the establishment of a shrine system centered on the rituals for Amaterasu and the imperial ancestors by the emperor was envisioned.

Regarding the policies for Shinto proselytization of the masses, after Hirata's disciples were ousted in Meiji 4, a series of discussions were developed in line with the theories of Ōkuni Takamasa, which took on an Amaterasu-centric monotheistic character and abandoned the interest in interacting with the Invisible World as originally emphasized by the Hirata school. Under the Shinto policies advanced by Yoshishizu and others, Amaterasu not only represented the imperial deity and the ruler of Takamagahara but also absorbed the role of the three kami of creation (zōka sanjin 造化三神)—as depicted in Hirata theology—as well as the role of Ōkuninushi as the ruler of the Invisible World. Fukuba and others, in collaboration with Kido Takayoshi, who was close to Nishi Honganji 西本願寺, envisioned the creation of a national edification (kokumin kyōka 国民教化) program—involving both Shinto and Buddhism—as an anti-Christianity measure, proceeding to establish the Ministry of Doctrine (Kyōbushō 教部省) (third month of Meiji 5) and to introduce the kyōdōshoku sei 教導職制 (the system of national instructors). But with factors such as Kido's (and other's) trip to the West, Fukuba's influence on the national edification policy was lost within this year, and the nativists from the Satsuma school entered into the Ministry of Doctrine.

In this way, regarding the ideological policies during the inception of the Meiji nation, we could say that the generally accepted understanding in recent years is to emphasize the role played by the Tsuwano school, namely Fukuba and his allies—in collaboration with Kido—over the role played by Hirata's disciples. One could also observe the tendency among the members of the Tottori group—which collaborated with the Tsuwano school—to highly respect Norinaga more than Atsutane.12

However, as mentioned above, Fukuba was also originally a student of the Hirata school and worked in cooperation with Nobutane. It also cannot be denied that Ōkuni Takamasa was another individual who succeeded Atsutane in his academic style of preaching about the superiority of the imperial country over all countries, creating a grand (albeit rough) myth/history through repeated references to Chinese and Western studies.

Furthermore, the influence of Hirata's nativism on the thought formation of the Chōshū loyalists cannot be ignored. First, it has already been pointed out

<sup>12.</sup> MITSUMATSU (2012b); TAKEDA (2017). In addition, for Chōshū Kokugaku scholars, Kondō Yoshiki also derives from the study of Motoori.

that Yoshida Shōin, in his later years, was inspired to study nativism while in prison (KIRIHARA 2009). And Shiraishi Shōichirō, who was positioned at the nodal point of various activists, was a student of Suzuki Shigetane, who entered Ibukinoya after the death of Atsutane but was reprimanded by Kanetane, and developed a confrontational relationship with Hirata's disciples and was eventually purged as an "evil monster" (vōmi 妖魅). Takasugi Shinsaku was also a devoutly religious figure, and is presumed to have been influenced by Atsutane. Scenes of Takasugi praying and absorbed in the reading of Atsutane's *Tama no* mihashira 霊能真柱 (The True Pillar of Spirit) are recorded in his diary (setsugyo nisshi 暬御日誌). Recent studies have focused on the influence of Hirata's nativism on the thought formation of the pro-sonnō jōi faction of the Chōshū domain, which gave birth to the shōkon jō 招魂場 (sites of memorial for the dead who fell fighting for their country) (Tsuda 2009a; 2009b; 2011; 2013; NAKA-HARA 2014; AOTA 2015). The fact that Hirata's disciples were in conflict with the Restoration Shintoists, who allied with the Chōshū faction during the first year of Meiji, does not mean that Hirata theology did not leave any influence on the loyalists of the Chōshū domain.

### 3. SATSUMA

Next we will consider Satsuma. 13 Satsuma was originally a place where nativism thrived. Shimazu Shigehide, who was well known for his love of learning, also interacted with Hirata Atsutane, and he appointed the nativist scholar Shirao Kunihashira to the compilation of the encyclopedic books Seikeizusetsu 成形 図説. Shirao left many topographic descriptions inflected with a sense of Japan as shinkoku 神国 ("divine land"), and many of his other works also connect the myths—developed by Satsuma-domain nativist scholars embracing the notion of tenson kōrin 天孫降臨 ("descent of the grandson of the sun goddess")—to the local land. The poets of the Keien school who worked at the Kyoto hantei 藩邸 (official residence) such as Yamada Kiyoyasu and Hatta Tomonori were also such nativist scholars. But these individuals were punished by their feudal lord Shimazu Narioki due to the Kaei hōtō jiken 嘉永朋党事件 (a family feud over Shimazu Narioki's heir in the Kaei 嘉永 era [1848–1855]), and Yamada committed seppuku. Okobira Takamune—who was named alongside Shirao Kunihashira—died during his punishment, and Katsuragi Hikoichi—who became a student of the Hirata school after being impressed by Tama no mihashira—also went into a life of exile. When Shimazu Nariakira regained power, however,

<sup>13.</sup> On Satsuma Kokugaku or the abolition of Buddhism in Satsuma, see KUBOTA (1941); WATANABE (1986); MATSUMOTO (2005); MIYAMOTO (2010); NAGOSHI (2011); MIYACHI (2012); MITSUMATSU (2016c); KOZURU (2017).

nativist education became promoted at the domain school Zōshikan 造士舘 with Godaiin Mihashira—son of Okobira—and Hatta at the center.14

Hatta later worked at the Kyoto Daigakkō and the Imperial Poetry Bureau. Research has recently been advanced on the fact that poets connected to the Satsuma network—such as Takasaki Masakaze (who lost his father in the Kaei hōtō incident) and Saisho Atsuko, who were students of Hatta—had occupied the positions in the Imperial Poetry Bureau.<sup>15</sup> It appears that Hatta also shared Hirata theology's interest in the Invisible World, and Atsutane was very pleased to obtain Hatta's Kirishimayama yūkyō shingo 霧島山幽境神語 (Divine Tales of Mystic Realms in Mt. Kirishima), and considered adding it to the appendix of his Senkyō ibun. Not only was Hatta's work accepted by the Hirata family, but the influence of Hirata Nobutane's Gyojūron 馭戎論 (On Taming Barbarians) can also be detected in Hatta's works—such as in his Dairiron ryaku 大理論略 (An Outline of the Great Law), which argued that the greatness of the imperial country ought to be publicized in negotiations with foreign countries, negating the need for Japan's isolationism/exclusionism. But according to this book and Tōkō kakun 桃岡家訓 (Tōkō Family Mottoes), Hatta did not share the characteristics of the Hirata school that valued Okuninushi as the ruler of the Invisible World, and identified the creator kami (which would later be designated as Amenominakanushi) as the entity that commands over the Invisible World = the world of the kami.

Godaiin Mihashira was a nativist scholar who entered Ibukinoya while Atsutane was alive. He conducted research on temples and shrines in anticipation of shinbutsu bunri 神仏分離 (the separation of Buddhism and Shinto), and—together with Mishima Michitsune—surveyed the imperial mausoleums. The Kokugaku Bureau (Kokugaku kyoku 国学局)—where his disciples gathered—played a major role in the post-Restoration policies of haibutsu kishaku 廃仏毀釈 ("abolish Buddhism and destroy Shākyamuni") and the establishment of Shinto as the state religion (although we also cannot ignore the significance of the general devaluation of Buddhism among

14. "Godaiin is a famous scholar of National Learning and was offered the position of Lecturer at Zōshikan, given the proposition to change school traditions. According to the order, Kojiki, Nihongi 日本紀, and Ryōnogige 令義解 and so on were to be lectured because there apparently were students without adequate knowledge of Kokugaku in the school. On a certain day in the third month, he was summoned before the lord and ordered to lecture on the Kojiki. After the lecture, as I heard, he talked about the national canon as well. In addition, Hatta Kizaemon was ordered to lecture on Man'yōshū, read Waka poems, and so on. Also, in an effort to further National Learning, Godaiin, Hatta, and others were asked about the ability of Suzuki Shigetane; it is said that a determination was made to hire [Shigetane] after this." Ansei 安政 5, Kagoshimaken shiryō Nariakirakō shiryō, vol. 3, 102.

15. See MIYAMOTO (2010), MATSUZAWA (2014), and studies by CHŌFUKU (2015).

feudal retainers). As Kubota Osamu points out, their publications—such as Keishin setsu ryaku 敬神説略 (A Summary of Faith) and Kannarai gusa 神習草 (A Kami-follower's Note)—were composed with direct references to Hirata theology. Even if their policies were not exactly carried out as intended—due to the abolition of the han system and the people involved leaving for the capital—the scars left by this measure were quite large.

The impact of Hirata's nativism on the sonnō jōi faction of the Satsuma domain is not limited to these nativist scholars in the narrow sense. During the Ansei 安政 period (1854-1860), Saigō Takamori frequently visited Ibukinoya himself and guided his companions to the school (MIYACHI 2012, vol. 1, 274-75). After Nariakira's death, Ōkubo Toshimichi, in approaching Shimazu Hisamitsu—who was to lead the administration of the domain as the father of the feudal lord—is said to have slipped a petition along with Atsutane's Koshiden 古史伝 (An Annotated Ancient History) (Hisamitsu was interested in Atsutane's Koshiden, which was obtained by Saisho Atsushi—Hirata's student and member of the Seichū gumi 精忠組 ["league of loyalty," a sonnō jōi group in Satsuma] and was being circulated among his friends) (SASAKI 2001).

These members of the Satsuma school entered the Ministry of Doctrine in cooperation with members of the Dajōkan sain 太政官左院 (the House of the Left). The national edification (kokumin kyōka) policy—led by the Ministry of Doctrine—which initially left room for collaboration with Buddhists, transformed into a program that foregrounded a type of theology from the Satsuma school that prioritized the kami over the Buddha and respected not only Amaterasu but also Amenominakanushi. In the fifth year of Meiji, Kuroda Kiyotsuna was appointed as the deputy minister (Kyōbu taifu 教部大輔) of the Ministry of Doctrine and Mishima Michitsune as the senior secretary (Kyōbu taijō 教部大丞). Even at the Daikyōin 大教院 (the Great Teaching Institute), established in June of Meiji 6 to serve as the base for the national edification program (involving both Shinto and Buddhism), Amaterasu and the zōka sanjin, including Amenominakanushi, were enshrined, and eleven precepts based on Restoration Shinto were added to the teachings (the rehabilitation of Hirata's direct disciples, such as Yano Harumichi, can also be detected). Monks—who could not preach outside of the kyōdōshoku sei (the system of national instructors)—also got involved in this arrangement.

But opposition to such policies arose from Jodo Shinshū. After Meiji 7, Shimaji Mokurai—who had connections with those from the Chōshū faction, including Kido Takayoshi—criticized the policies of the Ministry of Doctrine that promoted "religious" Shinto. The Satsuma clique—which had traditionally suppressed Jodo Shinshū—sometimes differed in attitude with the Choshū clique, and after much confusion—following Kido and others' return to Japan, and Saigō Takamori and others leaving the government—the Daikyōin was dissolved in Meiji 8, Kuroda and Mishima were transferred, and the Ministry of Doctrine was also abolished in Meiji 10. The Ministry of Home Affairs' Bureau of Shrines and Temples (Naimushō shajikyoku 内務省社寺局) would later promote the separation of the government and "religion" (MIYACHI 1981; INOUE and Sakamoto 1987; Sakamoto 1994; Haga 1994; Nitta 1997; Ogawara 2004; Мічамото 2010).

The Office of Shinto Affairs (Shintō jimukyoku 神道事務局)—established after the dissolution of the Daikyōin as the hub for the Shinto kyōdōshoku system—became the root organization along with the Ise Shrines. From the beginning, Jingū kyōin 神宮教院 (Ise Jingū Teaching Institute) had tried to expand their affiliated religious associations (kōsha 講社) with a doctrine that prioritized the zōka sanjin and Amaterasu. In Urata Nagatami's Daidō hongi 大道本義 (The True Meaning of the Great Way)—in contrast with Hirata's theory—it was taught that Amaterasu was the ruler of Heaven and Earth as well as the governing entity over the Invisible World and the salvation of souls. In Meiji 7, Tanaka Yoritsune of the Satsuma school—who worked at the Kokugaku Department of Zōshikan, a school of the Satsuma domain, and also became a shrine magistrate—was appointed as the high priest of the Ise Shrines. While Sanjō engi 三条演義 (A Commentary on the Three Standards of Instruction), issued in his name, indicated the understanding that placed Amaterasu as the main kami of the universe, the emperor as the ruler of the Visible World, and Ōkuninushi as the ruler of the Invisible World, Tanaka's Shintokuron 神徳論 (Theory of Divine Virtues) emphasized the importance of the divine virtues of the *zōka sanjin*, including Amenominakanushi, who created heaven and earth, and the divine virtues of the "greatest, deeply revered" Amaterasu.

The Izumo Taisha 出雲大社 (Izumo Grand Shrine)—which was also trying to expand their management of religious associations—criticized the Ise Shrines and the Office of Shinto Affairs' maintenance of the edification program emphasizing Amaterasu and the Ise Shrines. Senge Takatomi sought to have Okuninushi enshrined by name at the altar of the Office of Shinto Affairs, where the zōka sanjin and Amaterasu were enshrined. This led to the Pantheon Dispute (saijin ronsō 祭神論争) that divided the Shinto world into Ise and Izumo factions. The Izumo group, which, like Hirata theology, privileged Ōkuninushi as the ruler of the Invisible World, criticized the expansion of Amaterasu's role in the Daidō hongi, especially the absorption of the role of the ruler of the Invisible World as having no basis in the classics. On the other hand, during April of Meiji 13 in the middle of the Pantheon Dispute, Tanaka Yoritsune—in opposition to Senge—maintained his position that the enshrinement of Ōkuninushi was unnecessary, not denying that Ōkuninushi was the ruler of the Invisible World but nevertheless emphasizing the divine virtues of the zōka sanjin and Amaterasu. After much debate, the conclusion made by the imperial decision of

Meiji 14 determined that one should worship from afar the kyūchū sanden 宮中 三殿 (Three Shrines in the Imperial Court) (kashikodokoro 賢所 = Amaterasu, the spirits of the past emperors, and the *kami* of heaven and earth). Far from the enshrinement of Ōkuninushi, the Office of Shinto Affairs having its own central altar itself was denied. In Meiji 15, Shinto priests and kyōdōshoku were separated and the Research Institute for the Japanese Classics (Kōten kōkyūsho 皇典講究所) was established. The separation of "non-religious" Shrine Shinto and sect Shinto was also advanced, and in Meiji 17, the Office of Shinto Affairs as well as the kyōdōshoku system were abolished. In this manner, Restoration Shinto—with its religious characteristics—was cut off from the government.<sup>16</sup>

#### 4. SAGA

Politicians who ran the new government were not necessarily limited to those from the Satsuma and Chōshū domains, who were the ringleaders of the coup for the restoration of imperial rule (ōsei fukko). The Hizen Saga domain—which contributed significantly to the victory of the Boshin War with its military power—along with its former leader Naomasa, quickly gained some influence by having the pro-sonnō jōi patriots they had retained enter the new government. Saga clansmen such as Ōkuma Shigenobu and Soejima Taneomi—who gained experience in international negotiations in Nagasaki—became prominent figures due to their abilities in a new government with little diplomatic experience (Shibahara 1965; Mori 2008; Nomura 2008; Sawai 2016a; 2016b; 2017; KIHARA 2009).

Edayoshi Shin'yō (see Ōzono 2014) was the mentor of these pro-sonnō jōi patriots from Saga. Like his father, Shin'yō served as a teacher at the domain school Kōdōkan 弘道館. He was known for advocating the Nihon ikkun 日本一君 ("only one lord in Japan") theory and starting the national literature study group at the Shōheikō 昌平黌 in Edo. He was also a close friend of Yano Harumichi. At Kōdōkan, Shin'yō not only taught the Chinese classics but also Japanese literature, formed a political association named Gisai dōmei 義祭同盟 ("league of honoring justice") that enshrined Kusunoki Masashige, criticized the shogunate

16. On the Pantheon Dispute, see NAKAJIMA (1972), FUJII (1977), INOUE (1991), and FUJITA (2007). Regarding Tanaka Yoritsune in particular, refer to TONAMI (2013) and TAKEDA (2018). Hara Takeshi sees the imperial decision on the Pantheon Dispute as the "official rejection of the claim of the Izumo faction," "Ise's Izumo-expunction," or the "official denial of ken'yūron 顕幽論 ('debates on the seen and the unseen')" (HARA 2001, 181). But the imperial decision itself did not touch on ken'yūron, and the Ise faction had also developed an original ken'yūron and spiritual theory for the purpose of committing to the kyōdōshoku system in opposition to Christianity (TAKEDA 2018). Not only Izumo's theory had been denied; Satsuma's theology of the three kami of creation also lost its privileged position at the time.

administration, and trained many pro-sonnō jōi patriots; he eventually died of cholera. His younger brother Soejima Taneomi, as well as Ōkuma Shigenobu, Etō Shinpei, Ōki Takatō, and many others received Shin'yō's instructions.

Shin'yō was also teaching at the Shingakuryō 神学寮 (Department of Theology) which was established in the seventh year of Kaei for the training of Shinto priests. Nishikawa Mikawa, caretaker of the Shingakuryō, wrote in his diary dated the eighth month of the second year of Ansei:

The second day [of the eighth month], I was present at an examination at Shingakuryō for all shrine priests in the domain. All officials including the magistrate attended. Over sixty priests received instructions, and over forty participated in the recitation of texts. Whoever remains should be examined on the twenty-seventh of the eighth month, so by then every single priest will have been examined. (*Ushizu* otomiyasha nikki)

It is well known that in the Saga domain, Kodokan—under the leadership of Nabeshima Naomasa, who was instructed by Koga Kokudō 古賀穀堂, a scholar of shushigaku 朱子学 (a form of neo-Confucianism, based on the teachings of Zhu Xi and his followers)—adopted the policy of educating all their clansmen and boasted the highest education standard in the country, introducing a system for medical licensing based on the education of Western medicine (Sagaken kyōikushi, vols. 1 and 4; MAEDA 2012; IKUMA 2011; 2015; AOKI 2015). But we should note that Shinto priests were also obligated to be trained in theology.

Another individual well-known for being a teacher at the Shingakuryō is Nanri Arichika, who-influenced by Hirata Atsutane-created a kind of Shinto theology that adapted ideas from the Chinese translations of Christian writings.<sup>17</sup> Others involved with the Shingakuryō included Shinto priests such as Mori Wakasa, Fujiwara Sadaaki, Nishikawa Sugao, Oka Yoshitane, and Itoyama Sadamoto. It is important to note that they all looked up to Mutobe Yoshika—renowned as the priest of the Mukō Shrine in Yamashiro Province and as a direct disciple of Atsutane—as their teacher. Individuals such as Sugao, Yoshitane, and Sadamoto came to be in charge of policies regarding Christianity during the senkyōshi period and the control of shrines during the Ministry of Doctrine period. Sugao is also known for being a lecturer during the early days of the Daikyōin, for his involvement in the Shintoization of Fujidō as well as the establishment of the sect Shinto group Jikkōkyō 実行教 with his teacher Shibata Hanamori, and the implementation of haibutsu kishaku in Dewa Sanzan. Yoshitane became the senior priest of the Ise Shrines, but after the establishment of Jingūkyō 神宫教, he left and became the superintendent priest of Kōsokyō 皇祖教. In addition to leaving behind theological writings about their own version of

<sup>17.</sup> For the history of research after MURAOKA (1940), see MITSUMATSU (2015).

Restoration Shinto that revised Atsutane's theory, 18 they were also regular contributors to the publication Shinkyō sōgo 神教叢語 (Tales of Divinities), which was supported by Kubo Sueshige—Hirata Kanetane's son-in-law—during the time of the Office of Shinto Affairs (Kobayashi 2017). In the case of Saga, one of the results of the feudal lord's promotion of scholarship was the spread of Hirata theology.

Soejima Taneomi was also one of these Restoration Shintoists. He is known as a teacher at Kōdōkan or as a scholar of Chinese and Western learning who studied with Guido Verbeck in Nagasaki, but in fact he also studied kōgaku 皇学 in Kyoto (said to be the only retainer from his domain to do so) and interacted with figures such as Mutobe Yoshika, Yano Harumichi, and Tanimori Yoshiomi. In the first year of Meiji, with regard to the management of the Daigakkō, Hirata's disciples expected a lot from Taneomi—and also from the Satsuma faction during the era of the Ministry of Doctrine—but it is difficult to conclude that he performed up to their expectations. Ōkuma Shigenobu, who also received instructions from Shin'yō and studied eigaku 英学 together with Taneomi, gave up on Shinto early on, citing as his reasons the incompetence of nativist scholars and the imperfection of Shinto as a religion, and marking as a turning point Restoration Shinto's failure to evangelize Christians in Nagasaki (ENJŌJI 1895, 301-2). On the other hand, unlike Shigenobu, Taneomi—even after retreating from the frontline of politics—continued to be a staunch Hirata-school Shintoist. During the Seinan War (1878), Taneomi had gone to China, but there is a rumor that he did so in order to avoid a catastrophe as foretold by a revelation of the kami from Honda Chikaatsu, a Satsuma nativist who had developed a unique practice called the chinkon kishin method 鎮魂帰神法. Many things are not known about the theologies of Taneomi and Chikaatsu that emphasized spiritual possessions and divine revelations, but according to the remaining records, there is a considerable amount of similarities between their theologies that valued theories about *jindai moji* 神代文字 (ancient Japanese characters) and Amenominakanushi.<sup>19</sup> It appears that Taneomi's manner of spiritual possession was thought to be questionable even by Sano Tsunehiko, who founded the sect Shinto group Shinrikyō 神理教.20

<sup>18.</sup> For details, see MITSUMATSU (2017). On Sugao and his teacher, Shibata Hanamori, see MITSUMATSU ed. (2016). On Yoshitane, see NAKANISHI (1998) and OKA (2014). On Sadamoto, see Kondō (2013).

<sup>19.</sup> Soejima Taneomi zenshū and Honda Chikaatsu zenshū; see SUZUKI (2000); SATŌ (1978); Kusamori (2000–2003). Soejima and Honda also seemed to see Atsutane's theology as insufficient.

<sup>20.</sup> INOUE (1991) briefly touches on the encounter between the two, but I quote below the most extreme assessment from the diary of Tsunehiko:

Tsunehiko: "There is a rumor that you are a fox-taming mystic."

### Conclusion

There are many more examples I would like to introduce, but—based on the discussion so far—allow me to summarize my provisional views on the question at the beginning of the paper about the relationship between Hirata's nativism and the Meiji Restoration.

Since the conclusion of the trade treaties, the number of students of Hirata has increased dramatically. During the era of sonnō jōi, from commoners to the feudal lords, we find many cases of individuals accepting Hirata's nativism in the process of their formation as political subjects. The Hirata family became a node of a political information network, and in addition to disseminating ideas about the political situation of the time, they worked as members of the sonnō jōi faction in the Akita domain. We also cannot ignore the influence of Hirata's nativism on activists who were not his direct disciples. Although not every member of the Hirata school was active in political activities, it is difficult to separate the political movements of this time period from Hirata's nativism by simply referring to Hirata theology's emphasis on spiritual theories and the exploration of the Invisible World.

Within the new government, especially in the ritual and academic departments, it is true that Hirata's direct disciples, who were faithful to Hirata theology, lost their positions before exerting as much influence as might have been expected. However, the scope of the influence of Atsutane is not limited to his direct disciples. Many Restoration Shintoists—such as those in the Ōkuni Takamasa and Suzuki Shigetane schools, or the Satsuma school—were influenced by Hirata theology in constructing their arguments, and these effects cannot be neglected. The range of Hirata's influence also extends to sect Shinto and the subsequent new religions. Some discussions place Deguchi Onisaburō as the successor of Hirata theology, but should we not more carefully interpret the processes of succession, transformation, and diffusion of Hirata theology by setting a broader field of vision, and without abridging or oversimplifying this history?

Taneomi: "It's understandable. You also see me with a suspicious eye because of ignorance about kami's dwelling in our body. Knowing the truth, divine revelations come at any time. But even I can't get revelations when the mind is impure."

Tsunehiko: "I know the presence of kami in our body well. I am not one of those quackish shamans."

Taneomi: "Well, I will tell you. Pray to the deity on my head, 'bless me, tell me,' and then the deity will come and tell you omens."

Tsunehiko: "I thought that he was a neurotic, which women often become. I saw neurotics many times when I was a doctor. I saw many tombstones engraved 'A daughter of Soejima Taneomi' in Aoyama cemetery before. Heaven still had punished him."

<sup>(</sup>Shinrikyō Kyōso Gonisshi, vol. 1, 72).

The hope is to better understand the complex relationship between Hirata's nativism and the Meiji Ishin/Fukko from a variety of perspectives, by bringing together specific case studies in line with the available historical evidence.

(Translated by Miura Naohito)

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