ŌSHIO HEIHACHIRŌ AND HIS REVOLT OF 1837

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Abstract

Although there is an abundance of resource material concerning Ōshio Heihachirō in Japanese, there is very little in English. Thus, this thesis seeks to make available and analyse for English readers some of the rich offerings that exist in Japanese. It sets out to describe the life and times of Ōshio and to analyse the influences that moulded his thought and that ultimately motivated him to take action against the heartless hierarchy and greedy merchants who refused to show any compassion on the desperately poor during the disastrous days of the Tempō Famine (1830-1837).

The later life and death in an abortive uprising in 1837 of Ōshio Heihachirō were a clear commentary on his thought and teaching, namely, the necessity of the unity of knowledge and action. He was a living embodiment of the Wang Yang-ming dictum, "To know and not to act is the same as not knowing at all". His first-hand knowledge of the situation impelled him to action. Ōshio's morality and integrity were sincerely demonstrated in his final act of sacrificing his reputation, and even life itself, for his principles. He was a reformer, not a revolutionary as some historians call him. His motivation was moral, not political. His was the dilemma of being grateful for the favours and status that his family enjoyed through the Tokugawa Shogunate and of being grieved by the corruption and inefficiency exhibited by the Shogunate's representatives, of supporting the system in principle on the one hand and of being exasperated by the intransigence of the system's officials on the other.

With scant planning and preparation, he foolhardily attacked the heartless bureaucrats and wealthy merchants of Ōsaka. This was tantamount to a challenge against the most repressive powers of the autocratic authority of his day, the Shogunate itself. His revolt was fated to fail but it sent ripples in ever-widening circles throughout Japan in the final decades of the Tokugawa period.

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Contents

Introduction

Ōshio Heihachirō was an enigma. Even nearly 150 years after his death it is difficult to evaluate him. He was a noted Yōmei[1] scholar in a day when Shushigaku was the officially accepted teaching and the philosophical basis of the Tokugawa shogunate. He was a samurai and thus a member of the ruling class. Ōshio was an able police official who served faithfully and with integrity. Consequently, he was a tool in the government power structure. Yet he dared to lead a revolt which, though at the time was an ignominious failure, doubtless hastened the collapse of the Tokugawa *Bakufu* by emboldening others either to question the system or openly rebel against it.

During his life and immediately after his death, people looked on Ōshio with either censure or praise. Hence, it is not surprising that he is still regarded as anything from a villain to a popular hero and that he is interpreted as anything from a benefactor of the people to a political rebel or an incipient Marxist. Some see him as a social iconoclast (Najita, 1970:156), some like Okamoto Ryōichi see him as the product of his age which was an age of unrest and reform and so they believe that he could naturally be called "a son of reform". (1975:40) Still others, the *Bakufu* included, see him as a traitor. As a samurai and a member of the ruling establishment, he rose in protest and so, naturally, it was regarded as a political revolt by the authorities.

There has been an abundance of historical research in Japanese concerning Ōshio's revolt. In the pre-war years two classics were produced. Kōda Shigetomo's book, *Ōshio Heihachirō*, was written in 1909 in the process of his compiling *Ōsaka Shishi* and Ishizaki Tōkoku, a so-called disciple of Ōshio's Senshindō, wrote *Ōshio Heihachirōden* in 1920. Post-war research into social and political history has resulted in some scholarly works being published of which Abe Makoto's[2] *Nōgyō to Tetsugaku no Zenshin -- Ōshio Chūsai ni tsuite* in 1951 and Okamoto Ryōichi's *Ōshio Heihachirō* in 1956 are representative.

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[1]See the Glossary (Appendix I) for the meanings of Japanese words used throughout this thesis.
[2]Abe's work was first printed in *Kōbe Daigaku Bungakkai (Kenkyū)*, Sōkangō, 1951.

Kōda Shigetomo's scholarly pre-war book clearly and correctly pointed out that Ōshio mobilised peasants from the surrounding villages, not townspeople, to co-operate in his revolt. Though not wanting to minimise the value of Kōda's "excellent research", Okamoto (1975:2) is somewhat critical that he does not make clear why Heihachirō, a city police official in Ōsaka, did not rely on the townspeople but had such a deep relationship with the peasants. Narabayashi (1970:1) feels that, though numerous books have been written about Ōshio Heihachirō and his revolt, there is still need once more to re-investigate "the inner relationship between Ōshio's thought and the revolt which should have been the result of his thought." This is crucial to our study.

Ōshio was a very able government officer who sincerely wanted to repay the obligation which his family had received generations ago with whatever sacrifice he paid. He was not negative regarding the Shogunate per se, in fact, he was very supportive of it as a system. So we need to ask why he threw his life away in resisting its representatives? Heihachirō was not a political rebel at heart. He was a faithful police officer who worked assiduously and with great integrity for the administration. He was proud of his samurai status and grateful to the Tokugawa family and so had no desire to overthrow the Establishment. Then, why did he raise his revolt?

In the course of this thesis we shall look at the motivation for Ōshio's 1837 rebellion. In the process we will need to discern the influences on his life which led to his implication in such a violent uprising. This will involve us, first, in looking at Ōshio's background to see any formative influences on his life from the point of view of both his heredity and his environment, his personality and his beliefs. What made him what he was? Particularly, it will be necessary for us to take a longer look at Confucianism than may otherwise have been the case, seeing Heihachirō's acceptance of the Yōmei emphasis on the unity of knowledge and action plays such an important role in moulding his thinking. We will need to see how Confucianist and Neo-Confucianist teaching developed, how it influenced the politics and life of the Japanese people, and, more specifically, how the philosophy of Wang Yang-ming came to influence Ōshio so radically.

In order to see the constituent parts of Heihachirō's support for his uprising, it will also be necessary to look at the network of contacts he

established both through his work as an Ōsaka police officer and as teacher of his private school, the Senshindō. Also pertinent to our study will be the philosophy he taught in his lectures and the views he espoused in his publications. We cannot divorce Ōshio the scholar, lecturer and writer from Heihachirō the raiser of the revolt. The ideas he embraced made him what he was. His beliefs made him behave in the manner he did. Nor is it sufficient to see his courageous sacrifice of himself as a form of persuasive reasoning and admonition of his superiors as some suggest.

I believe it is important to investigate the Yōmei teaching which Heihachirō followed in order to find the cause of his revolt, in other words, to see the connection between his thought and his actions. If we do not understand this, we cannot grasp the significance of his life and death. Then, because the combination of economic, social and political factors in his day were influential in bringing Ōshio to his decision to take matters into his own hands, we shall look in some detail at these. We shall particularly look at the Tempō Famine (1831-7) as well as at the peasant riots and urban smashings which increased dramatically because of the distressful conditions at that time. This will naturally lead us to the positive steps towards revolt which Ōshio felt convinced were inescapable. Being cognisant of the conditions, he felt he must act. His anger was aroused by the plight of the poor, hard-working peasants crushed by an unjust system of taxation and distressed by successive years of famine.

We will look at the steps which Ōshio took in raising his rebel army and at the reasons behind the publication of his famous Manifesto as well as commenting, at some length, on its contents seeing it is such a momentous document. Then we shall turn to the reasons for its limited distribution and focus attention on the actual revolt, its progress, participants and failure. Lastly, we will try to assess the historical influence of Ōshio Heihachirō, not only on the economy, society, and government of his own day but also on those events and people that followed, whether immediately or further removed in time.

Heihachirō was an intense person who did not do anything by halves. Whatever he tackled, he did wholeheartedly. In his application to the work of a police officer he cut a clean swath. In scholarship he studied

Wang Yang-ming philosophy so diligently that his friend, the famous poet Rai Sanyō, nicknamed him "Little Yang-ming". He excelled both in letters and in the martial arts, especially mastering the art of lancemanship. Ōshio refused to rest content with a successful official career and later with a "safe" life of scholarship and teaching. He must work out his principles in practice. The steadfast manner and zeal with which he actively acted upon his knowledge caused some to observe that he was even more consistent in his activism than the Master, Wang Yang-ming, himself.

Thus, it was not accidental that towards the end of the Edo period, as the inconsistencies inherent in the *Bakufu* organisation were revealed, the faithful Shogunate official and noted Yōmei scholar took up arms against the Ōsaka authorities in order to "save the people". Based on my belief that Ōshio Heihachirō was a moral reformer rather than a political revolutionary, I will discuss the motivation behind his uprising. There are many theories concerning his motives for revolt.

First, for many years, and certainly in the pre-war period, the popular view of Ōshio's revolt seemed to be that it was prompted by a temporary hot-blooded reaction to the frustrations he faced in trying to galvanise the bureaucrats and wealthy merchants into action in relief of the famine victims. In other words, it was opportunistic, the result of his righteous indignation.

Secondly, the general post-war feeling is that it was a far more studied revolt. Narabayashi (1970:4) believes that "reading between the lines" of *Senshindō Sakki* one should have expected a revolt for he "smells suspicious of revolt" in Ōshio's writings, and his "anti-shogunate consciousness is symbolised in the revolt". He believes that it was "continuously boiling up" in his publications. We certainly should not minimise the weight of Heihachirō's own words.

Thirdly, the plethora of post-war Marxist historians would certainly like Ōshio to fit neatly into their theories of "class struggle" and "the reorganisation of society" and it must be a source of considerable frustration to them that he defies such analysis.

There is no doubting that Ōshio was hot-headed and that, at times, he exhibited a sudden rush of blood, but his convictions did not eliminate

the possibility of revolt against ineffective government. He accepted the Confucianist teaching, not mentioned by Tokugawa Confucianists, that it was the right of the people to rebel against unjust rulers.

Thus, although there are elements of both the first and second present, I firmly believe that Ōshio's revolt was the inevitable result of his Yōmei belief in the necessary unity of knowledge and action. He knew and so, therefore, he had to act. What he was and what he did were the fruit of what he believed.

Ivan Morris (1975:180) writes that during one of his last conversations with Mishima Yukio, the famous Japanese novelist, the latter spoke of Ōshio Heihachirō as "the fierce type of hero that Westerners would do well to study if they wished to understand the essence of the Japanese spirit, which, as he gently pointed out, was not exclusively represented by the diaries of Heian Court ladies, elegant poetry exchanges, or ritual tea ceremony." This thesis is one Westerner's attempt to take Mishima's advice seriously.

I. *Ōshio's Background*

In this section I want to look at Ōshio's personal and family history, his official position and work as a government police official, the progress of his thought, his teaching through his private academy, his publications, and the conditions of his times, all of which influenced Ōshio the man and his actions.

1. *His Personal History*

i) *His Family and Upbringing*

Little is known of Ōshio's childhood except that he was born on the 22nd January, 1793, and that he said that his parents died when he was seven. His father's name was Ōshio Heihachirō Yoshitaka and his mother was of the Ōnishi clan. There is considerable difference of opinion concerning the age at which he was bereft of his father and mother; whether he was seven when both died, as he said, or six when his father died in 1799 and seven when his mother died in 1800 as given by Mori Ōgai (1940:70) and also in Miyagi's genealogy (1984:510). This latter is confirmed by his father's grave in Jōshōji temple which gives "his death as Kansei 11 (1799), the end of the year of the snake", and by the death register of Renkōji temple which gives "the year of his mother's death as Kansei 12 (1800), the year of the monkey" as recorded by Kōda who claims, "Even if the miswriting of numerals is common, there ought not to be any mistake with the sexagenary cycle". (1972:83)

Subsequently he was cared for briefly and given moral education by his grandfather, Masanojō Narimasu, and then, it seems, by a foster father, Asai Chūrin, a minor bureaucrat in Owari. There are various opinions as to whether he had one or two foster families, for the Shioda family is also sometimes mentioned. Maybe Mishima Yukio is right in asserting that his unsettled childhood accounts for his fierce, tense, hot-tempered nature.[1] Due to uncertainties regarding his upbringing, some believed he had been adopted into the Ōshio family. "But concerning this theory Heihachirō's disciple, Tayuinoshō Senri, strongly denied this saying, 'Mr. Ōshio was born in Ōsaka's Tenma Shikenyashiki. He did not come as a

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[1]As quoted in Morris, 1975:188.

foster child from elsewhere.'"[2] Ōshio himself also strenuously denied the story of his adoption and traced his ancestors to a vassal house of the Daimyō Imagawa clan Namiemon of Tōtōmi in Suruga (the present Shizuoka). "After the fall of the Imagawa family, Namiemon served Tokugawa Ieyasu. Following Ieyasu in the attack on the Odawara of Toyotomi Hideyoshi he killed an enemy general before Ieyasu's horse, and was given one of Ieyasu's bows by Ieyasu in person as a reward, and further was given the fief of Tsukamoto village in Itō." (Okamoto, 1975:45) Later he was appointed as a *hatamoto* (vassal) directly under Ieyasu's ninth son, Yoshinao, and, after following him to Owari, changed his family name to Ōshio.

The oldest legitimate child inherited the household and the youngest child departed for Ōsaka where he became a police officer in the city shogunal administrative office. Heihachirō was proud to be the descendant of Namiemon and this pride greatly affected his sense of destiny. According to Ōshio, his ancestors were assigned a post in Ōsaka as servitors of the Tokugawa house, a post which he claimed as his rightful inheritance. There he served with the position of horseguard. "The Ōshio household heads were hereditary constables in Ōsaka and Ōshio Heihachirō served in this bureaucratic position within the shogunate system of governance." (Najita, 1983:126) "Ōshio's father held a hereditary post as police inspector in the Magistrate's office in Ōsaka, and according to the contemporary system of appointments this was the office that would in due course accrue to his eldest son." (Morris, 1975:188)

"Ōshio's respected name was Kōso, his nickname was Shiki, and he was popularly called Heihachirō, but he assumed the name of Renzai and then later, Chūken, which was changed again to Chūsai. His father was Heihachirō Yoshitaka and he was born into a police official's residence in Tenma in what was commonly called Shikenyashiki on January 22, 1793 (Kansei 5)." (Okamoto, 1980:605) *Ōsaka no Chōmei*[3] (1977:451) adds, "On the East side of Kawazaki Tōshōgū were the houses of the city shogunate administration police officials. Among them was the residence of Ōshio Heihachirō who was a police official of the Eastern commissioner." His infant name was Bunnosuke but, when he grew up, he took his father's name, Heihachirō.

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[2]Ishizaki Tōkoku, *Ōshio Heihachirōden* as quoted in Okamoto, 1975:45.
[3]Edited by Ōsaka Chōmei Kenkyūkai.

Japan, at that time, was a closed and seemingly stable, peaceful nation. But the Kansei period (1789-1801) had followed the Tenmei period (1781-9) which had been characterised by severe famines which led to fierce, unprecedented country-wide peasant riots (*ikki*) and urban rice riots (*uchikowashi*). (Lamont, 1983:381) Okamoto claims that "Heihachirō could be said to be, by nature, the son of reform." (1975:40)

ii) *His Youth*

From a young age he was intelligent, astute and carefree. He also had the trait of being extremely hot-tempered. In his youth Ōshio evinced a special fascination with philosophical studies. As a member of the samurai class he also devoted himself to the military arts, excelling particularly in lancemanship, but he had little interest in firearms, perhaps because of their foreign origin.

iii) *His relations*

According to a written judgment of the *Bakufu* court, Heihachirō only had one nephew, Ōnishi Yogorō, an Eastern group police officer.[4] At the time of Ōshio's revolt Yogorō was given a special mission by Atobe, the city commissioner, but he was later punished with exile because of cowardly conduct. Then there was an uncle, Miyawaki Shima, commonly known as Gonkurō, who was the younger brother of Ōshio's real father. He joined Ōshio's revolt and, on its failure, committed suicide.

Combining the Ōshio family tombstones in Jōshōji temple and Renkōji temple in Tenma with the statements by Heihachirō's wife, Yū, and by Miyawaki's wife, Rika, it is possible to construct an Ōshio clan genealogy as in Kōda. (1972:143) Several editions of *Ōshio Kenkyū*[5] contain some interesting details concerning Ōshio's genealogy, family history, his own personal history, the course of the society honouring Ōshio as well as the connection between the Ōshio family and the Jōshōji temple.

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[4]According to *Saikyojō* as quoted in Kōda, 1972:144.

[5]Arimitsu Yūitsu, 1. "Ōshioke to Jōshōji", *Ōshio Kenkyū*, No.1, March, 1976, Ōsaka: Ōshio Jiken Kenkyūkai, 1976:2-4.
2. "Ōshio Chūsai no Kakei Ryakuzu to Bohi no Shozai", *Ōshio Kenkyū*, No.16, November, 1983, Ōsaka: Ōshio Jiken Kenkyūkai, 1983:6-18.

iv) *His Marriage*

Heihachirō's wife,[6] Yū, was the daughter of Daikokuya Waichi, an entertainment establishment in Ōsaka's Sonezaki Shinchi 1 Chōme, her real name being Hiro. Ōshio fell in love with her at first sight and, in 1818, she was received into his residence under the name of the adopted younger sister of Hashimoto Chūbei of Senjakuji village, Higashinari county in Settsu domain. (Sakai, 1975:6-7) Chūbei's adopting her was a tactical ploy as her station was far inferior to that of Heihachirō in Tokugawa society. Even as adopted into a farmer's family, she was still below his samurai status. Such "downward" marriages were generally discouraged in samurai circles and the young man's decision is often cited as an example of his headstrong, iconoclastic nature. It certainly defied the social conventions of the day and it adds to the enigma which was Ōshio Heihachirō for he was inordinately proud of his samurai heritage and status.

v) *His Adopted Son*

Heihachirō "was not blessed with the treasure of children" (Okamoto, 1975:46) and so he had already adopted a child from his head family in Nagoya with the hope of maintaining his boasted lineage but, regrettably, that was not successful. Hence, with dim marriage prospects, in 1829, he adopted as his heir, Kakunosuke, the younger son from the Nishida family who were also related through his mother's side. Kakunosuke was then 16, and Heihachirō was thus able to avoid the grievous prospect of the extinction of his family. Later he arranged a marriage between his only son Kakunosuke and his father-in-law's natural daughter.

2. *The Government Official*

"The Tokugawa political structure was composed of a central directing force, the *Bakufu* or Shogunate, at the apex of the hierarchical pyramid, and a number of local authorities who shared with it the actual government of the land and the people." (Tsukihara, 1966:13) The *Bakufu* claimed the legal authority over the whole country under the fiction that

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[6]Yū was probably Heihachirō's common-law wife; historians speak of her variously as his "wife" or "concubine".

the emperor had delegated his power to rule to the Shōgun who was the supreme commander of the entire military class.

i) *Ōsaka*

As birthplace to Heihachirō, Ōsaka at that time was the prosperous centre of a large population of about 400,000. It contained the large central rice market as well as the gold and silver mints to which gold and silver were bought from the provinces under a government monopoly. Seventy percent of the nation's wealth was concentrated in the city. Merchants prospered and had gradually gained control over the feudal lords and the warrior class through money-lending and other commercial deals. Ōsaka was the "merchants' capital" and "the nation's kitchen". (Okamoto, 1975:4,5) It was a place of wealthy retainers and favoured clans. As the greatest commercial city in Japan, it was second only to Edo in importance, and was an area under the direct control of the Shōgun. "Ōsaka is the nation's kitchen...one small matter about the kitchen is that it is the worry of the whole house and the disaster that was born in Ōsaka sent waves through the whole country." (Kōda, 1972:79)

ii) *Police Official*

At the age of 13-14 years (1806) Ōshio was summoned to official duties in Ōsaka and at first he served as an apprentice in the city's East Shogunal administration office. "In his fourteenth year, Heihachirō was placed under the care of Hayashi, the head of the official school in the *Seidō*, and after a distinguished course of five years there, he received an appointment as instructor in that institution." (Murdoch, 1964(ii):453) In 1812, at the age of nineteen, through pulmonary tuberculosis, he had to withdraw temporarily from his particular duties as a police official in order to recuperate. It was on this account that "maliciously he was nick-named 'green gourd' in reference to his pallid complexion, a result of weak lungs. He frequently suffered from haemorrhages, but managed to surmount his physical handicap by unremitting will-power". (Morris, 1975:188-9)

When he was 23, Heihachirō automatically succeeded to his father's and grandfather's office and emoluments as police-official under the jurisdiction of the municipal commissioner for East Ōsaka. The civil

administration of Ōsaka was divided into East and West groups, each under a commissioner. The two groups were responsible for the city administration in alternate months. This system of discharging one's official duties by shifts, besides having the purpose of stopping the possible occurrences of corruption and dishonest practices of each group, also stimulated a spirit of mutual competition between the two groups. It was born from the plan to increase the effectiveness of their duty. Actually, there was not only competition between East and West, there was also deep-seated antagonism and jealousy between them. By turns they took responsibility for the whole of Ōsaka's three districts, North, South, and Tenma. Each of the two city commissioners was chosen from among *hatamoto* (vassals directly under the Shōgun) and had thirty police officials on horses and fifty subordinate policemen assigned to them. Formally, these were personal appointments limited to one generation, but actually, they were hereditary offices and so they became Shogunal officials resident in Ōsaka. In the Tenma area *yoriki* had a 500 *tsubo* residential lot given them with a stipend of 200 *koku* while *dōshin* had a 200 *tsubo* residential lot and a stipend of 10 *koku* divided among three of them. Compared with the low-ranking samurai of that time, a *yoriki* was a remarkably high-salaried person, particularly when consideration is given to their "side" income. Okamoto (1975:44) gives an illustration of how high an allowance of 200 *koku* was "when you remember that the allowance of Watanabe Kazan who put forth such strenuous efforts in reforming the *han* government as an important vassal of the 1200 *koku* Mikawa Tabara clan of that time was 100 *koku*". Thus, from the salary point of view, a police official seemed to be a rather upper-ranked samurai.

As a police official, Ōshio was responsible for day-to-day judicial and administrative functions in the city and so had great authority in the administration of justice and the conduct of government. It was said that the actual authority in civil administration was in the post of police official. He was for a time a patrol police officer in Jōmachi where he arrested thieves and the disorderly. Although Ōshio's position as a *yoriki* was a fairly lowly one it was important in the actual administration of Ōsaka and it could have been extremely lucrative since traditional perquisites included "gratitude money" (a euphemism for bribes) from the merchants and others who sought their favour. The main responsibilities of the police officials were the three roles of rural regional service, river service, and temple and shrine service in the

various towns in Ōsaka's three districts. In these positions they could expect "gifts" from the guilds and also, at the beginning of the year and on the 1st August on the lunar calendar, from the various towns or blocks in Ōsaka.

As a patrol officer in Yodomachi, whenever Ōshio went on official trips of inspection around the three districts, without fail, in every town he found townsmen sending money and a number of valuables to the police officials. Merchants "tipped" them in order to have charges against them withdrawn, while the government officials also used their authority to scare the people and even publicly demanded that palanquins, lunch, and other things, be provided for them. To his disgust, Heihachirō found bribery and corruption to be accepted facts of life, but these practices grieved Ōshio who could not be bought. From the outset he distinguished himself by his rigid adherence to the rules and refused to be bribed. His honesty and uprightness in the discharge of his duties won him the regard of the people as well as of Takai, the East city commissioner, who was impressed by his zealous, young subordinate. As a result he gave Ōshio full support in his campaign to fight corruption and impose the law. Because of the great authority the police officers wielded and because of their propensity for giving threats and receiving bribes, they were known for their arrogant manner and harsh treatment, and thus were hated by the people. This corrupt behaviour and affluent lifestyle of the Tenma police caused Heihachirō such grief that he wrote, "Learning is achieved in the midst of poverty, but among Tenma's 60 police officers there is not one who understands learning." (Kōsai Hiki:203-4)

Heihachirō served under the East city commissioner for about 24-25 years and, from beginning to end, he devoted himself consistently to his work as a shogunal official. He was often called upon to dispose of difficult issues which he did with utmost despatch and integrity, and so he was extolled as an honest, able, and famous police officer. During that time he laboured industriously with the sword and the pen and especially excelled as a lanceman. From the outset ōshio made it abundantly clear that he would have nothing to do with the traditional custom of accepting bribes. Such rectitude might have seriously hampered his career except for what Miyagi calls "one chance in a thousand years", (1984:14) namely, the fact that Takai Yamashiro no Kami Sanenori who was appointed as East commissioner in 1820 was immediately impressed by Heihachirō's zeal and

gave him his full patronage and backing in his campaign against corruption. He discerned Ōshio's ability and appointed him to a responsible position. "He also often sought Ōshio's opinion on many things concerning Ōsaka affairs, both public and private." (Yazaki, 1968:263) Thanks to Takai's patronage, Ōshio was soon a scourge of dishonest officials and merchants and was able to climb through the grades. After only a few years he had become famous for his campaign against bribery.

Naturally, this type of reforming zeal did not endear Ōshio to his less principled associates and thus, before long, many of them resented his excessive honesty. But his intelligence, learning, and integrity in performing his duties won him the popular regard and respect of successive city commissioners. Often Ōshio's tactics were unconventional. In one instance he ordered the confiscation of a certain venal official's accumulated wealth and had it distributed among the poor of the city. Already their appalling plight had begun to incite his indignation. This act seems to foreshadow his final great indignation and action.

He studied the lancemanship of the Saburi school from Shibata Kanbei, a police official of Tamatsukuriguchi, and had a considerable reputation as a lanceman, holding the rank of master. It grieved him that neither the *yoriki* nor the *dōshin* under the two Ōsaka city commissioners' administration practised either letters or martial arts. Heihachirō was an accomplished master in both. "As a constable in Ōsaka, Ōshio gained a reputation for his relentless campaign against corruption and crime." (Najita, 1983:126)

iii) *Three Great Achievements*

Ōshio "had a high reputation for three meritorious accomplishments; arresting Christians, impeaching corrupt officials, and exiling Buddhist priests who broke the (Buddhist) commandments." (Yasuda, 1966:283) Between 1820 and 1830, "Ōshio gained wide fame (along with his great skill in lancemanship) for being the most effective police censor (*gimmi yoriki*) in Ōsaka, cleaning out corruption in Buddhist churches, secret religious groups (presumably Christian), and a number of prostitution rings". (Najita, 1970:156)

Ōshio's first great achievement came in April 1827, at the age of 34, when, after painstaking investigation, he uncovered a number of hidden

Catholic believers between Ōsaka and Kyōto and ordered their mass arrest. Papinot (1910:495) notes that "he was remarkable for his skill in discouraging evil doers". He then turned his energies to the most challenging problem of corruption in the municipal administration and in the judicial courts. In 1829 he impeached a number of corrupt officials. One such typical incident occurred when Takai instructed him to settle a certain law-suit which had dragged on for years. On hearing that Ōshio was now in charge of the case, the plaintiff, under cover of darkness, brought him a box of sweets as a gift. In the court hearing the following day, after weighing the evidence, Ōshio decided the case against the plaintiff. At a subsequent meeting with his fellow officials, Ōshio produced the box of sweets and said, "It is because you have such sweet teeth that lawsuits take so long to settle." So saying, he raised the lid and revealed a glittering heap of gold coins. His fellows blushed, but remained silent. Ōshio's ire was also aroused by corruption in the Buddhist establishment. In 1830 he prosecuted quite a large number of delinquent Buddhist priests who had been breaking their vows and, as a result, many of them were defrocked and banished from Ōsaka.

All of these three great feats of Heihachirō were difficult matters in which he devoted all his strength, and as a consequence, he attracted the attention of society. He was proud of these three achievements and often boasted openly of his ability. In fact, in September 1830, on the day of his retirement from public office, he wrote a poem which he later included in a letter to his intimate acquaintance, agricultural scientist Ōkura Nagatsune: "As you know I have no connections with merchants or wealthy people. Among the *yoriki* some, unlike me, have intimate relations with wealthy merchants".[7] Concerning this poem, Miyagi writes, "Ōshio cites these three incidents in the preface of the work *Shōin Shi* (Poems on Shōin) which he wrote on the day of his resignation and in which he praises himself for his meritorious achievement, but we have no other materials at all except this." (1984:14)

Certainly none among Heihachirō's colleagues could compare with him in uprightness and zeal. Amidst the many temptations in his official duties, unlike his associates, he did not attempt to mix with the affluent townspeople. Even in an age when nobody worried about receiving

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[7]Okamoto, 1975:47, as quoted from Hayakawa Kōtarō's *Ōkura Nagatsune*.

bribes, he was very honest and strict, not even accepting small gifts. Many eulogised his uprightness, honesty and integrity. In all his official duties there were no crooked or unfair dealings, no graft or irregularities. His name truly became a "watchword for integrity". (Okamoto, 1975:48) But, as we shall see later, his reputation was acclaimed in Ōsaka not just for his being an able and honest official, but also it was still more greatly esteemed on account of his being the most excellent Yōmei scholar of that period.

Kōda (1972:88-91) mentions many interesting items of anecdotal traditions that have been handed down concerning Ōshio and, though not all can be verified, there are those whose factual accuracy has been established. They all speak of Heihachirō's honesty, sternness, and diligence in his official duties. He was scrupulously honest and rebuked his fellow officials, as well as the city merchants and village headmen, for any suspected dishonesty. When he was on regular patrol duty in Jōmachi there were frequent robberies in the city. He thought that they were possibly the acts of pirates and so he first arrested the boss and, from his mouth, learned the names of dozens of his subordinates who sailed on trading vessels and anchored in the neighbouring waters. He arrested them all.

It is not clear under what circumstance it happened but, while he was out, Harimaya Rihachi of Oikedōri 4 Chōme took him some food. Ōshio returned this to the elder of the town saying that he would not take any action on this occasion but warned that, hereafter, they had better not do such a thing. There had also been a boundary dispute between the Kishiwada and Kishū domains for some years, but, because the Kishū clan was one of the three branches of the Tokugawa family, the previous official in charge had hesitated in making a judgment against them. When the matter was referred to Ōshio, following simple reason, he quickly passed judgment, declaring that Kishū's demands were unreasonable. Heihachirō acted typically, without fear or favour.

It also came to Ōshio's notice that a certain person, under the cover of being an umbrella maker in Tenma, loaned money at high interest rates. Actually he was a very lowly ranked person who did some minor service for *yoriki* and *dōshin* and who consequently used his government connections to scare people into borrowing money at high interest. Ōshio intentionally

borrowed 100 *ryō* and left it sealed as it was. At the expiry of the dead-line, as quick as a flash, the merchant urgently demanded his money. Ōshio threw down the sealed money with the interest and, as the merchant stooped to pick it up, he brandished his sword and said, "Now I will exchange this money for your neck! Coveting high interest and using the authority of government is a breach of etiquette!" It is said that that person kowtowed a hundred times and apologised profusely for his sin.

3. *His Life's Three Turning Points*

Ōshio accepted the Yōmei concept that the ideal transcended all social and political distinctions. As a result, Najita says, "from this premise he discarded all distinctions based on names as artificial means designed to satisfy selfish emotions and to support oppressive governments". (1971(i):28) He also rejected distinctions between private and public, internal and external, etcetera, as conceptually divisive and argued that inevitably all actions were public in character. Najita further believes that, "because of this radical denial of the introspective and ascetic principle implicit in Ōyōmei idealism and other intuitive schemes of thought such as Zen, Ōshio's ideas took on political meaning". (ibid:27)

Both Okamoto (1975:48-50) and Miyagi (1984:7-12) trace the development of Ōshio's thought through three crises or turning points as enumerated in 1833 in his "Letter sent to Satō Issai",[8] a friend, who was at that time head of the *Rinke* private academy. Miyagi suggests that this letter could be called "The ideological autobiography of Ōshio as a Yōmei scholar" (ibid,7) for it explains his reasons for embracing Yōmei learning.

The first turning point in Ōshio's life came at the age of 14-15 when he perused his family genealogy and learned of the meritorious exploit of his ancestor before Ieyasu. He realised that early he would have to carry on his grandfather's office, but he "deeply regretted being engaged as a minor official and was ashamed at being ranked with prison guards and city officials" (ibid., 8) when one of his ancestors had been engaged in distinguished military service for the first Shōgun. His daily contact with criminals and petty officials was galling. All his fellow

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[8]This letter and the reply from Satō Issai are translated in Appendix III.

officers thought and spoke about was advancement, tax, and complaints. Days spent in memorising rules and regulations seemed so futile. None of his colleagues shared his passion for learning. "He indignantly determined with great achievement, courage, and integrity to succeed in the intention of his ancestors." (Okamoto, 1975:48) Thus we can imagine why he applied himself with such fierce, youthful enthusiasm to letters and the martial arts, the sword and the pen. Ōshio was filled with melancholy as he compared his present humble position and its petty duties with the dazzling form of his notable ancestor defending his lord. But what chaffed Ōshio most were the hereditary barriers of the social system so that whatever noble achievements were accomplished, it was nigh on impossible to break through the barrier and his one ardent ambition in life was to succeed. Heihachirō accepted the teaching of Confucianism because he believed that only by following the teaching of Confucius could the ills of society be cured.

The second turning point in his thought was his aspiration to be a virtuous person. While fulfilling his duties as a police officer, judging and governing people, he studied and pondered the tenets of Confucianism as a means of calming his troubled mind. *The Great Learning*, the model for Confucianist politics, has the quotation: "What Great Learning teaches, is -- to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence." (Legge, 1960:356) A virtuous person is a person who teaches true statesmanship through the achievement of inner morality. In illustrating "illustrious virtue" one ought to carry out politics that "renew the people". Through contact with such Confucianist political ideology, Ōshio's ambition completely changed and he lost any desire to work his way up. He thus extricated himself from the duties of a police official.

As he had patrolled the towns in his official duties he saw bribery and corruption, merchants bribing police officials to have charges against them withdrawn and government officials using their authority to threaten and demand services of the people. After he passed the age of 20, as the result of being more deeply involved in the realities of the actual world, "he reflected that his intentions of great achievement, courage, and integrity were nothing more than youthful ardour and arrogance". (Okamoto, 1975:49) He had largely forsaken reason and become arrogant, but now he intended, through the study of Confucianism, to quieten his heart's inner sickness.

Thus, aiming at being a virtuous person filling the position of the ruling class, being the scholar that he was, Ōshio earnestly gave himself to study. He became dissatisfied with the scholarly emphasis on the mere interpretation of words and on rules and poems. So he separated from the lecture-hall of city Confucianists and avoided Confucianist companions who indulged in exegesis and poetry, and engrossed himself in private study of the hardships and privations of life which could not be exhausted by pen or tongue. However, Heihachirō also found this way of study to be a thorny way. "The trend in learning at that time was limited to exegesis, poems, and essays, and not only did this not cure his inner sickness, on the contrary, it only had a still more harmful influence on him." (ibid.)

The third turning point was his coming in contact with Yōmei learning. While engaged in such personal study as mentioned above, fortuitously, a book called *Shingingo* by Ro Shin-go, a Confucianist of Ming China, had recently been impoorted from China and fell into his hands. Ōshio sought the origin of Ro Shin-go's learning, and he realised that it corresponded to Yōmei learning, a form of extreme introspective or "intuitive" Confucianism which was based on the universal moral sense which is called *ryōchi* (intuition). Hence, leaving the deception of material things and separating from empty interpretations, poetry, and the practice of the five Confucianist relationships, through *Shingingo*, Ōshio, in his mid-twenties, is thought to have looked within himself. He clearly obeyed the laws of nature which are the substance of the heart, and learned self-control. His goal now was to work practically and to act with intuition.

When he was 27 years old (in 1819), his name Kōso appears for the first time. The change of name from Seikō to Kōso which had its origin in *The Analects* of Confucius is thought to have indicated this last turning point. After Nakae Tōju, Kumazawa Banzan, and Miwa Shissai there was no scholar left in Kansai to lecture on Yōmeigaku. Thus Ōshio was forced to study privately with *Kohon Daigaku* and *Denshuroku*, the only Yōmei works that Miwa had reprinted, as his companions. At that time, Yōmeigaku had been proscribed as heretical by the Kansei edict of 1790, and so Heihachirō had no teacher to inquire of concerning Yōmei learning.

We can see in Heihachirō's poem to Rai Sanyō:

> "The dawn of Spring, the sham Confucianists of Ōsaka doze off to sleep/ The song of the small people who try to fly over the edge of the eaves is in vain/ Even if you sounded the fire alarm while climbing the tall cherry/ At evening also they would not waken",

that his Yōmei convictions had deepened and his attention had been attracted by the moral corruption of his colleagues, the Ōsaka city police officials. Bribery and corruption were rife, "gifts" from citizens being a natural part of the police official's job. Flattery and servility towards superior authority was also common in order to curry favour and gain promotion to influential positions which had many extra emoluments of office. Ōshio frankly condemned such practices of the city police officers. Miyagi quotes a letter addressed to Ogino Shirōsuke in 1832: "Even though they serve their rulers, many think first of their own profit, and if by chance someone did work and care for their ruler, generally, they had self-interest at heart, wondering what kind of reward, what kind of government service, what kind of stipend they would receive. Actually they are not concerned about either their ruler or their country". (1984:12) Miyagi regards such a denunciation by Ōshio as indicating the degeneration of the warrior society under the growth of the commercial economy during the Bunka-Bunsei periods (1804-30).[9] Ōshio was indignant at the moral ruin of the warrior society and it is possible to think of his "intuitional learning" as arising from this resentment.

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[9]The Bunka (1804-18) and Bunsei (1818-1830) periods together are commonly called the Kasei era.

II. *The Influence of Confucianism on Ōshio*

Under this heading I want to look first at the teachings of Confucius, then at the Chinese Confucianists, Chu Hsi and Wang Yang-ming, and to see how Shushigaku and Yōmeigaku entered Japan and influenced Japanese thinking. Finally, we shall observe how Yōmeigaku affected Ōshio's thought and actions.

1. *Confucius and His Teaching*

Confucius is the Latinised form of K'ung Fu-tsu, the honorific name of K'ung Ch'iu who lived about 551-479 B.C. He was steeped in the cultural heritage of China's past, especially in the essence of the ancient art of living. He sincerely sought to think through the basic problems of the many changes confronting his age. Confucius was conservative and regarded himself as "a transmitter of old customs, rather than an originator" (A.VII.1;[1]Lau, 1979:86), and a teacher rather than a sage. (A.VII.33; Legge, 1893:206)

He deplored the political confusion of his age, believing that it was possible to restore order and good government through "the rectification of names" (cheng ming) and by men in all stations living in conformity with the ideas applicable to those stations. Confucius favoured refinement and education, holding to the perfectability of man through tireless endeavours to raise himself above biological impulse and barbarity. He believed that education would ultimately erase both existing class barriers and the differences between barbarians and the refined.

Pre-eminently, Confucius was an educator. He was the first man in China to make teaching his profession, and thus popularise culture and education. Although formal education was an inherent part of high social station in Chinese feudal society, Confucius seems to have been the first one to disregard any social qualifications among his pupils and to accept commoners just as readily as young aristocrats, even though they could offer only a few pieces of dried meat by way of tuition. (Ch'en, 1961:43)

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[1]A. in these references refers to the *Analects*. To avoid repetition, the dates of Lau and Legge's translations of the *Analects* will henceforth be omitted.

c.f. A.VII.7; Lau:86 This constituted a great step towards emancipation. "It was he who inaugurated, or at least developed, that class of gentleman in ancient China who was neither farmer, artisan, merchant, nor actual official, but was professional teacher and potential official." (Fung,1952:48) Confucius trained scholars capable of engaging in two kinds of activity, holding government office and teaching. The *Analects*[2] says: "The occupant of office, when his duties are finished, should betake himself to study; the student, when his studies are finished, should betake himself to office." (A.XIX.13; Legge, 1893:344) Ōshio would wholeheartedly concur with this.

To Confucius, "the ultimate aim of education was to obtain a post in government...it is no use being able to recite 300 'songs' unless this fits one for the task of administration and diplomacy." (Dawson, 1981:22) Thus Murdoch (1964(i):102) asserts that Confucius's teaching was "in no sense either a religion or a system of philosophy; the sage abstained from all devotional ecstacies and all metaphysical flights. He confined himself to practical details of morals and government, insisting especially upon the virtue that lay in the due observance of the duties of the five social relations."

Mou (1981:28-29) suggests that the basic ideas of Confucius can be summed up as: "Jen (humanity, benevolence, goodness), Hsing (human nature) and T'ien tao (the way of Heaven or nature)." The Confucian scholars of the Sung (960-1278) and Ming (1368-1644) dynasties made these concepts into the centre of their thinking and expounded their meaning. Especially pertinent to our topic is the concept of "jen" for, irrespective of the school, "jen" is the basic idea in Confucian philosophy.

The exact meaning of "jen" is difficult to grasp. It is approximately equivalent to "humanity" but Mencius equates it with "jen-ai" (benevolence or love, the love for man). Although these are adequate explanations, they do not exhaust the basic significance of the term as Confucius understood it. All his various ways of expressing "jen" in the *Analects* were directed towards "creativity itself". Whereas Christians see God as

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[2]For details on the formation of the text of the *Analects*, at what time and by whom they were compiled, as well as its plan and authority, see Legge, 1893:12-18.

representing creativity, Confucius saw "jen" as the final essence of the Universe and of all things. In the beginning, "jen" was not thought of as matter, but as spirit. It also contained the moral significance of feelings of sympathy. The word "embraces all those moral qualities which should govern one man in his relations with another", and so may be "best translated into English as 'human-heartedness', although it is often also equivalent to 'morality' or 'virtue'. It is the manifestation of the genuine nature, acting in accordance with propriety and based upon sympathy for others". (Fung, 1952:69) Thus the Master said, "Artful speech and ingratiating demeanour rarely accompany benevolence (jen)". (A.I.3; Lau:59) It also includes the virtue of filial piety. Basically, "jen" is love for one's fellow-men and has sympathy as its basis.

Confucius indicated the way of restoration to " creativity itself" by insisting that people become "jen" by walking the way of "jen". Mencius did the same by trying to get people to fulfil their nature for that is to fulfil "jen". By fulfilling one's nature, and, therefore "jen", one can know Heaven. This represents the heart of the teachings of both Confucius and Mencius. By bringing out the meaning of one's subjective nature, Confucius taught, we find ourselves in sympathy with everything around us. Confucianism sees human existence as a process of moral perfection, its final goal being sagehood and the attainment of goodness. Therefore, its teachings are not developed with deity as their central theme but rather on the basis of *how* man is to embody and manifest the Way of Heaven in order to perfect his virtue. Whatever the particular emphasis of the scholars from Confucius on down to pre-modern times, all of the great Confucian thinkers were concerned with this theme. This is accomplished through man's aroused consciousness. When his consciousness is aroused and he embodies and manifests the Way of Heaven, he fulfils his nature and is thus able to know Heaven. But the path along which one fulfils his nature and comes to know Heaven is endless; it is a process for the perfection of virtue in which all values are brought to perfection and the world of human values is totally affirmed.

Sinaiko picks out two facets of Confucius's thought that he regards as worthy of the student's interest: his humanism and his approach to political theory and reform. (1959:148-9) The overwhelming evidence in the *Analects* points to his chief concern as being the life of man in this world and not of the spirit life or the future life. In this he has much

in common with the philosophic character of the modern world. Confucius recognised the great importance of man's social context and he strongly emphasised the ethical and political obligations that life in society involved. To him, the good man not only exemplifies moral principles in his conduct but he is also personally responsible for their maintenance and growth in society. Hence, the *Analects* has many references to the necessity for the continual cultivation of one's character. Let us identify the above two facets under headings of personal character and government seeing these were the cornerstones of Ōshio's philosophy.

i) *Good Character*. Confucius argued that good government depended on the moral and intellectual qualities of the men who actually exercise political authority. "He was fully conscious of the corrupting influences of power and the inability of most men to resist them. Thus he educated his disciples in order to produce men capable of wielding political power with justice and intelligence for the benefit of society as a whole. Only when such men were in positions of authority could government function as it should." (Sinaiko, 1959:151) Confucius sought to inculcate the highest ideals of dedicated public service in his disciples and to prepare them for office in a society where treason and cruelty, bribery and corruption were the common practice. He believed that the truly good man would accept personal hardships and privations and, if necessary, even lay down his life for his principles. We will see these characteristics exemplified in Ōshio.

Both Sung and Ming Confucians investigated "natural endowments" and found that men are not equal. They found that all men are equal in worth, but there are inequalities and essential differences due to talent. So, although every man could become a sage for all men are equal, in practice all do not become sages.

The central concern of Confucius was the moral guidance of mankind, and the chief virtue for him was humaneness. "However deplorable the political situation in the state of Lu and however dark the prospect of improvement, Confucius was training his disciples to hold office. Several of them did achieve positions in government." (Dawson, 1981:76) Confucius felt one should be involved in the political world, and one should indeed even be prepared to die for the good Way (A.VIII.13; Lau:94), just as one should be prepared to die for humaneness or

benevolence. (A.XV.9; Lau:133) "The Master said, 'He has not lived in vain who dies the day he is told about the Way.'" (A.IV.8; Lau:73) In other words, once a person has realised the Way, he can die without regret. Ōshio would agree with all this.

A good Confucian must always take office to help realise the Way but, by staying in office, he must not compromise his commitment to the Way. The duty of resignation is equally compelling if the Way does not prevail. "The term 'great minister' refers to those who serve their lord according to the Way and who, when this is no longer possible, relinquish office." (A.XI.24; Lau:109) But since participation in government was the goal of all educated men, renunciation of office and of political ambition was not an easy step to take. If divorced from political life, a man could still pursue his commitment to the Way by practising self-cultivation and finding scope for the exercise of his virtues within the family and community. At the same time he could reflect that even the Master himself endured the frustration of not being employed in affairs of State.

Speaking of the man of moral character, the Master said: "The man of moral character makes demands on himself, the petty man makes demands on others." (A.XV.21; Lau:135) "The man of moral character brings out the good in others, and not their bad side. The man of petty character does the opposite." (A.XII.16; Legge:258) Moral men will also give their lives for moral principles. "The Master said, 'The gentleman (superior man) understands what is moral (right). The inferior man understands what is profitable'." (A.IV.16; Lau:74) This stress on righteousness for the sake of righteousness is common to both Confucius and Mencius. "The Master seldom spoke of what was profitable." (A.IX.1; Legge:216) For Confucius, a world without order (tao) was the result of the breakdown of the social institution of his times. His constant hope was to remedy this condition through good order and noble ministers. (A.XVI.2.; Legge:310) "It was Confucius's belief that the degeneration of political and social states originates from the top." (Fung, 1952:59)

In the *Great Learning* Confucius tells us that "from the sovereign down to the mass of the people all must consider the cultivation of the person to be the root of everything." (Legge, 1893:359) The great object of the book is stated in its opening paragraph: "What the *Great Learning* teaches, is...to illustrate illustrious virtues, to love the people, and

to rest in the highest excellence." (ibid.,356) Seven steps are laid down for the attainment of this object: "the investigation of things, the completion of knowledge, the sincerity of thoughts, the rectifying of the heart, the cultivation of the person, the regulation of the family, and the government of the State." (ibid.,29) These are the steps to a tranquil kingdom. Two pertinent quotations illustrate the point: "In order rightly to govern the State, it is necessary first to regulate the family, that is, it is not possible for one to teach others, while he cannot teach his own family." (A.IX.1) The virtues taught in the family have their correspondencies in the wider sphere. Filial piety will appear as loyalty. Fraternal submission will be seen in respect and obedience to elders and superiors. Kindness is capable of universal application. "From the loving example of one family, a whole State becomes loving, and from its courtesies the whole State becomes courteous." (A.IX.3; Legge:370)

The State being governed, the whole empire will become peaceful and happy. Confucius taught that when the ruler is respectful to the aged, the people become filial, when he treats the young and the helpless with compassion, the people do likewise. Governing in such a way, he will make a wise selection of ministers and thus he will secure the affections of his subjects and his throne will be established, for "by gaining the people, the Kingdom is gained, and, by losing the people, the Kingdom is lost." (G.L.X.5;[3] Legge:375)

Four principles can be educed from the *Great Learning*:

a) The object of government is to make its subjects happy and good. Rulers are to love the people and not rule for their own gratification but for the good of those over whom they are exalted by Heaven. Rulers have no divine right except that which springs from the discharge of their duty. "Goodness obtains the decree, and the want of goodness loses it." (G.L.X.11; Legge:376)
b) The insistence on personal excellence in all who have authority in the family, State, and kingdom, is a great moral and social principle.
c) Such excellence must be rooted in the state of the heart and be the natural outgrowth of internal sincerity. A man is as he thinks.

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[3]G.L. indicates references in the *Great Learning*.

d) The negative form of the Christian golden rule, "What a man dislikes in his superiors, let him not display in the treatment of his inferiors; what he dislikes in inferiors, let him not display in his service of his superiors." (G.L.X.2; Legge:373)

To Confucius, the sincere or perfect man is the one who satisfies all the requirements of duty in the various relations of society as well as in the exercise of government. Even though he enumerated many maxims concerning character and morals in general, he was never satisfied with merely improving the individual. His grand object was always "the Kingdom, the world, brought to a state of happy tranquility. (G.L.4-5; Legge:357-9) Confucius held that there was in man a willingness to be governed which only needed to be taken advantage of in a proper way. There must be the right administrators, but given these, "the growth of government would be rapid, just as vegetation is rapid on the earth". (D.M.XX.3;[4] Legge:405) According to Confucius this readiness to be governed arose from the five duties of universal application. If only the sanctity of these relations are maintained, and the duties belonging to them are faithfully discharged, then happy tranquility will prevail all under heaven for "with the right men, government would flourish and without them it would decay and cease." (D.M.XX.2; Legge:405)

With respect to the social relationships, Confucius emphasised the necessity of personal correctness of character on the part of those in authority in order to secure the right fulfilment of their implied duties. Confucius maintained that, unless a person had a sincere and genuine nature, any ceremonial and etiquette he observed would merely be a false and empty form. "The Master said, 'What can a man do with the rites who is not benevolent? What can a man do with music who is not benevolent?' "(A.III.3; Lau:67) He laid emphasis on the importance of possessing the quality of sincerity and he hated all emptiness, falseness, and deceit. To be upright of character one must not deceive himself or others. Uprightness comes from within, it is the direct expression of one's heart. Later, Mencius also said, "No benevolent man ever abandons his parents, and no dutiful man ever puts his prince last." (M.I.A.1; Lau:49)[5]

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[4]D.M. indicates references in the *Doctrine of the Mean*, Lau, D.C.(Transl.), 1970.
[5]M.indicates references to the *Mencius*, Lau, D.C.(Transl.)

ii) *Good Government.* Confucius was a severe critic of repressive government. Passing through the foothills of T'ai Mountain he saw a woman weeping bitterly beside a grave and, on enquiring the cause of her sorrow, she answered: "Father-in-law was killed by a tiger some time ago, and then I lost my husband the same way, and now my son also is killed." When the Master asked why she did not leave the area she replied: "There is no repressive government here." The Master said to Tzu Lu, "Note this, young man, repressive government is worse than tigers." (Ch'en, 1961:77)

Confucius believed that the only way to restore order would be to arrange the affairs so that the Emperor would continue to be Emperor, the nobles to be nobles, the ministers to be ministers, and the common people to be common people. In other words, the actual must in each case be made to correspond to the name. This was the theory which Confucius called the "Rectification of Names", a doctrine which he recognised as being of the utmost importance. (XIII.3; Lau:118) He believed that once the meanings of names were fixed, they would serve as standards for conduct.

When asked of the principles of government, Confucius answered, "Let the ruler be a ruler, the subject a subject, the father a father, the son a son." (XII.11; Lau:114) The name is that thing's essence or concept. For instance, what is pointed out by the definition of the name "ruler" is that essence which makes a ruler a ruler. Similarly with the other terms. If everyone acts in real life in accordance with the definitions or concepts of these words so that all fully carry out their allotted duties, there would be no disorder in the world. But Confucius believed that, because these people were not fulfilling their responsibilities in his day, the world was in disorder. Thus, their names had to be rectified. And this rectification had to start from the top for it was there that the discrepancy between actualities and names originated. He firmly believed that the personal conduct of a virtuous ruler would inevitably influence greatly the uneducated mass of the people. Quoting from the *Book of History*, Confucius said: "Filial piety and friendliness towards one's brethren can be displayed in the exercise of public service." (Fung, 1952:64) This is the seed of the concept that harmony within the family is the root of good government in the State, an idea which is developed later in the *Great Learning*. In reply to an

official's question about government, Confucius replied: "To govern is to correct. If you set an example by being correct, who would dare to remain incorrect?" (A.XII.17; Lau:115)

Confucius taught government which was a modified despotism. He permitted no divine right independent of personal virtue and a benevolent rule; the moment a ruler ceases to be a minister of Heaven for good and does not administer for the benefit of the people, he forfeits the title by which he holds the throne. Continuance in oppression must surely lead to a ruler's overthrow. (G.L.X.16; Legge:378) Speaking of the qualifications of an officer who will always act right in accepting and declining office, Confucius says:

> "Such an one will not enter a tottering State, nor dwell in a disorganised one. When right principles of government prevail in the Kingdom, he will show himself; when they are prostrated, he will keep concealed. When a country is well-governed, poverty and a mean condition are things to be ashamed of. When a country is ill-governed, riches and honour are things to be ashamed of." (A.VIII.13.2-3; Legge:212)

To Confucius, the three requisites of government were "that there be sufficiency of good, sufficiency of military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler." (A.XII.7.1; Legge:254) When asked by Tsze-Kung if two of these had to be foregone which one could not be dispensed with, Confucius answered that faith in the ruler was indispensible. "From of old," he said, "death has been the lot of all men; but if the people have no faith in their rulers, there is no standing for the State." (A.XII.7.3; Legge:254) In such a case it is better for them to die rather than live without faith in their ruler.

When asked about government by various people, Confucius sundrily replied: "There is government when the prince is prince, the minister is minister, the father is father, and the son is son." (A.XII.11; Legge:256) That is to say, good government only obtains when all the relative duties are maintained. "Set an example for your officials to follow; show leniency towards minor offenders; and promote men of talent." (A.XIII.2; Lau:118) "Good government obtains when those who are near are made happy and those who are far off are attracted." (A.XIII.16; Legge:269) Confucius believed it to be shameful in an official to be caring only about his emolument. (A.XIV.1; Lau:124) He

explained the "four bad things" in a person in authority as "cruelty, oppression, injury, and acting the part of a mere official."[6]

In the *Doctrine of the Mean*, Confucius expounds his views on government in describing that of Kings Wan and Wu.[7] The Master sets forth in detail the nine standard rules for the administration of government as:

> "the cultivation of their own characters, the honouring of men of virtue and talents, affection towards their relatives, respect towards the great mninisters, kind and considerate treatment of the whole body of officers, dealing with the mass of the people as children, encouraging all classes of artisans, indulgent treatment of men from a distance, and the kindly cherishing of the princes of the States." (D.M.XX.12; Legge:408-9)

Confucian political theory always discussed government primarily from the people's point of view. Mencius exalted the government of the ideal king and deprecated that of the feudal ruler. He believed that the regulations promulgated by the ideal king are all on behalf of the people with the result that the people delight in and obey him, whereas the feudal leader only gains the allegiance of the people through military force. (M.II.A.3; Lau:80) The reason why the ideal king acts on behalf of his people is that he has a heart which can sympathise with their suffering and so he develops a government which cannot endure the possibility of any hardship. On the other hand, the feudal leader, though he may on occasions promulgate measures which appear to be for the people's benefit, he does so merely to obtain a good reputation, profit or honour. "Mencius said, 'Yao and Shun had it (benevolence) as their nature. T'ang and King Wu embodied it. The Five Leaders of the feudal lords borrowed it.'" (M.VII.A.30; Lau:188)

2. *The Teaching of Chu Hsi*

Chu Hsi (1130-1200), an ardent Confucianist, in 1180 "was appointed governor of Kiangsi where he vigorously translated his ethical theories into governmental practice". (Ch'en, 1961:366) He tirelessly wrote commentaries on the Chinese classics and, his erudition being quite encyclopaedic, he would probably qualify as the most learned man of his

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[6]Further details are given in the *Great Learning*, Book XX, Chapter II.1-3; Legge:352-4.
[7]In Chapter XX.

age. Chu Hsi was a famous statesman and historian and was a leading figure in the important philosophical renaissance which took place in China under the Sung dynasty; in fact, he was regarded as the greatest of all the Neo-Confucian philosophers. The canon of this school was Chu Hsi's commentary on the works of the Chinese sages, entitled "*A New Commentary on the Four Classics*".[8] He was the greatest commentator on the Classics and was China's leading philosopher after the Classical age. "He put his stamp so heavily on Neo-Confucian thought that in East Asia it has often been known as Chu Hsi-ism." (Reischauer and Fairbank, 1958:239)

Lidin (1970:8,n28), the translator of Ogyū Sorai's *Distinguishing the Way* says, "His interpretation of Chinese thought in Later Sung remained orthodox for the next 700 years of Chinese history. His impact on Far Eastern thought can be regarded as immeasurable." This revived form of Neo-Confucianism shifted much of the emphasis from the forms of conduct, the institutions, and formal education to the spiritual and ethical concerns of the individual. It was distinguished by a systematised method of self-cultivation and by elaborate and precise metaphysical and cosmological ideas. Chu Hsi transformed Confucianism and reinvigorated it as an intellectual discipline. He rejected the exegetical practices of his predecessors in the T'ang dynasty (618-907) and stressed the importance of studying the Way of the Sages as expressed in the Four Books: the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Great Learning*, and the *Mean*. He was a realist, believing that things exist in their own right, apart from the mind. He held that external things partake of the principles of the mind and that, for this reason, knowledge may be perfected by investigating the principles of all things with which we come into contact.

Chu Hsi laid great stress on the value of quiescence. Maruyama (1974:30) notes that, "This emphasis on quiescence over movement and meditation over action derives, in the final analysis, from the continuative mode of thought; it is one more manifestation of the optimism of the Chu Hsi system". Naturally, this does not mean that *Shushigaku* disregarded practical ethics for that would be impossible for any school of Confucian philosophy. But, as opposed to the Wang Yang-ming school's theory of the unity of knowledge and action, Maruyama (ibid.,n18) points out that the Chu Hsi school is identified with the slogan, "First knowledge, then

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[8] *Shishō Shinchū* in Japanese

action", because he taught "Knowledge and action always require each other. Without legs the eyes cannot move forward. Without eyes the legs cannot see. With respect to the order of things, knowledge comes first, and with respect to relative importance, action comes first."

Chan (1960:569) gives us another pertinent quotation from Chu Hsi, "In my teaching it is not true that I have put somewhat more emphasis on following the path of study and inquiry", that is, than Lu Hsiang-Shan and his disciples who were mostly concerned with putting their beliefs into practice. "As a consequence," Chu Hsi admitted, "My pupils often do not approach his in putting beliefs into practice". The Confucian text most discussed by Chu Hsi was *The Great Learning* which linked learning to political action as seen in Confucius's classical statement:

> "Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things.
> Things being investigated, knowledge became complete.
> Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere.
> Their thoughts being sincere, their hearts were then rectified.
> Their hearts being rectified, their persons were cultivated.
> Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated.
> Their families being regulated, their States were rightly governed.
> Their States being rightly governed, the whole Kingdom was made tranquil and happy." (G.L.5-6; Legge:358-9)

In general, during the Sung period, the policies of the government were in the hands of Confucians whose doctrines were not seriously questioned. With the patronage that Sung emperors gave to Confucianism, interest revived. A steady line of Sung philosophical Confucian thinkers culminated in Chu Hsi and their interpretation of the Classics has dominated Chinese thought, with few exceptions, until the early twentieth century. Fung Yu-lan (1953:xxiii) states that Chu Hsi was "the great synthesiser in the history of Confucian thought whose particular brand of Neo-Confucianism, known as Rationalism, remained *the* major orthodoxy from his death until recent decades." He synthesised the ideas of all his predecessors into one all-embracing system. Through his prolific writings and his commentaries on the Classics he brought the Rationalistic school to full maturity, and in the process created a version of Confucianism that was to remain orthodox until the twentieth century."

Chu Hsi is said not to have shown any striking originality of mind, his greatness lying in his remarkable capacity to adopt and embrace in one system of thought the individual contributions of his predecessors. He had great powers of analysis and synthesis which enabled him to put ideas

together, but he also had the ability to articulate each idea with great clarity and coherence. He interpreted reality in terms of a single natural principle (li; *ri*) and, in guiding the individual, he counselled the methods of the investigation of things (ko wu, *kakubutsu*) by which he meant the contemplation of one's physical environment with the aim of understanding the role of principle in it. Man is fundamentally good. His mind is, in essence, one with the mind of the universe, capable of entering into all things and understanding their principles. Chu Hsi believed in the perfectability of man, in his ability to overcome those limitations or weaknesses which arise from an imbalance in his physical endowments. His method of the "investigation of things" was taught in the *Great Learning*. He advocated the study of these principles and also self-cultivation to bring one's conduct into conformity with the principles which should govern it. Eventually, Chu asserted, persistent effort in this direction would result in everything becoming clear and the full enlightenment of the sage being attained. In this type of self-cultivation, broad learning went with moral discipline. In Chu Hsi there was a kind of optimistic positivism which affirms the reality of things and the validity of objective study.

His cosmology is based upon a dualism between the concepts of "li" (principle) and "ch'i" (ether or matter). This explains why he believes that man possesses two kinds of nature: the "nature of Heaven and Earth" which retains its transcendant purity, and the "physical nature" which has been corrupted by its contact with the ether or matter. Thus he says, "Those who speak about the nature of Heaven and Earth, do so with exclusive reference to Principle (li); those who speak about the physical nature, do so with reference to Principle as it is found mixed with the Ether (ch'i)." (Chu Hsi, 1922:83)

According to Chu Hsi, the origin and cause of all things is the "Supreme Ultimate" or "Great Absolute" (t'ai-chi, *taikyoku*). This is the principle of "li" (*ri*) which existed constantly before and after heaven and earth came into being. "Before there was Heaven and Earth, there was 'li'. Heaven and Earth exist because of 'li'. Without 'li' neither Heaven nor Earth can exist." (Maruyama, 1974:22) "Li" is the Supreme Ultimate, the ultimate source, transcending everything in heaven and earth. When the Supreme Ultimate, or Principle, was in motion, it created the "yang" (*yō*), and when it was quiescent, it created the "yin"

(*in*). The "yin-yang" (*yō-in*) theory conceives of the "yang" and "yin" as two opposite, mutually compensatory forces. "The 'yang' is the active, positive, productive, male principle of nature, while the 'yin' is regarded as passive or receptive, negative and female." (Aston, 1899:226-7) All natural phenomena result from the interplay of these two forces. By the mutual actions of these two principles, the cosmos was formed out of chaos, the "yin" manifesting itself in the impure sediment as earth, while the lighter and purer "yang" ascended and formed heaven.

Since for every individual thing there must be a principle, inevitably the organisation of the State and society also must have its own Principle. When the ruler follows this Principle, good government and order result and when he fails to do so it leads to bad government and disorder. Any man who achieves anything in government or society does so only because his conduct conforms to "tao" (way, moral order). Those who accord with the one principle for government attain success, whereas those who flout it court disaster. By contrast, what Wang later meant by wholly conforming to Principle is obeying the natural promptings of one's intuitive knowledge. (Fung, 1953:618) By "the investigation of things", Wang "meant the extension of the intuitive knowledge of our own mind to each and every affair and thing, so that these affairs and things would all conform to their proper Principle". (ibid., 628) By this "extending of intuitive knowledge" he meant "practising", and thus he corrects the error of merely pursuing hollow investigation of empty principles.

Reischauer and Fairbank (1958:240) summarise the central core of Confucianism which reached its full maturity in the Sung period as:

a) The particularistic, family-centred Confucian ethic which stresses the five human relationships first spelled out by Mencius. Except for the relations between friend and friend, they were all relationships of authority and obedience.
b) The Confucian political ideal of benevolent paternalism. The state was regarded as a large family. The authority of the ruler, like that of the father, was regarded as essentially ethical. Good government depended upon the moral character and sincerity of the ruler. According to Mencius this was best achieved by the influence of the ruler's good example.
c) There was the bureaucratic ideal, the realisation that even the ethically perfect ruler needed the aid of a large body of morally excell-

ent officials through whom he could exercise his benevolent paternalism. This ideal was institutionalised in the civil service and the examination system through which bureaucrats were most properly chosen in China.

Neo-Confucianism was divided into two major schools: the Ch'eng-Chu school which was named after its forerunner, Ch'eng Yi (1033-1107) and its major exponent, Chu Hsi (1130-1200) and the Lu-Wang school of which the elder Ch'eng, Ch'eng Hao (1032-1085), was the forerunner. Its name was derived from Chu's major philosophical rival, Lu Chiu-yuan, commonly called Lu Hsiang-shan (1139-1193), its real founder, and from Wang Shou-jen (1472-1529) its chief exponent. The Ch'eng-Chu school was commonly known as the "School of the Study of Principle" after the most characteristic feature of its teaching and is often referred to as the Rationalistic school, based on the fact that "li" (Principle) is also sometimes translated by Western scholars as "Reason". The Lu-Wang school is commonly known as the "School of the Study of the Mind" and is often referred to as the Idealistic school. We shall now consider this latter school.

3. *Wang Yang-ming and His Emphasis*

A century and a half after Chu Hsi's death, his commentaries on the Classics had been accepted by the Chinese state as the orthodox interpretation of the Confucian tradition. But even such recognition and the support of the highly effective civil service examination system could not insure its continued intellectual vitality. By the end of the fifteenth century, the School of the Mind eclipsed the School of Reason in vigour due to its formidable new protagonist, Wang Shou-jen (1472-1529) who "was better known under the name given to him by his students, that of the Master of Yang-ming." (Fung, 1953:596) For details of Wang Yang-ming's biography see *The Philosophy of Wang Yang-ming*.[9] His ideas provided the stimulus for the most active schools of thought in the Later Ming Period. Wang Yang-ming was the first to dispute the supremacy of Chu Hsi's philosophy and he was the outstanding spokesman of the School of the Mind. He completely freed himself from the trammels of tradition and maintained that all reading could be dispensed with. He believed that objective scientific investigation was of little value because the

[9]Henke F.G.(Transl.), New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1964:3-44.

source of all man's knowledge was in his own mind. He had absolute trust in intuition and so his school was sometimes called the "School of Intuition".

In his earlier scholarly career, Wang had dedicated himself to literary studies in which he excelled, but he found no lasting satisfaction in them. He read all of the writings of Chu Hsi that were accessible to him and devoted himself to a detailed study and observation of the myriad objects in the physical world. However, he could not identify "the way of things" with the reason in his heart. His search into Buddhism and Taoism still did not furnish him with an ultimate answer but, while living in exile in the isolated, wild and sparcely populated province of Kueichow, he came to enlightenment one night at the age of 36. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, the meaning of the extension of knowledge through the investigation of things "dawned upon him." (Fung, 1953:597) For the first time he found that the truth concerning the Way of the sages was all within his own heart and that it was wrong to seek for Principle outside of one's own nature in affairs and things. On re-reading Chu Hsi's writings, he discovered that his new findings were all opposed to Chu's philosophy. After the end of his exile, while steadily rising in his civil service career, "he shared his philosophic theories with many scholars who flocked to him as pupils, and, as the leader of a new idealistic movement within Neo-Confucianism, his influence was exerted for many future generations in China and, eventually, in Japan." (Ch'en, 1961:512)

Wang Yang-ming, a soldier-statesman, was the most gifted scholar of the Ming dynasty. Despite his lack of worldly success, Wang Yang-ming's school became the centre of reformist activism and his ideas provided the spark for later generations both in China and elsewhere in the East. He set an example by shaking himself free from intellect and taking the leap from knowledge into action. Wang deplored what he considered the unpractical and academic emphasis of the Chu Hsi system. He rejected the objective study of Principle and substituted subjective intuition as the standard of moral action. Because of its activism, subjectivity, and concern with internal motivation rather than adherence to external norms, Wang's system held a potential appeal for those dissatisfied with the status quo. Whereas Chu Hsi and the Sung philosophers had stimulated original thinking, freedom in speculation reached its zenith in the

sixteenth century when, under the influence of Wang, scholars even went so far as to discredit book learning altogether and to insist upon the basic importance of introspection. "For Wang, mind covered the entire gamut of existence; he thought that nothing existed independent of and apart from mind. His point of view was consequently at variance with Chu's." (Henke, 1964:xiii)

Chinese philosophy has always stressed what man is, namely his moral qualities, rather than what he has, that is, his intellectual capacities. If a man is a sage, he remains a sage even though he may be lacking intellectual knowledge, and if he is an evil man, he will remain evil even though he may have limitless knowledge. Wang Yang-ming compared the sage to pure gold, believing that a man only needed to have a pure quality to be a sage regardless of the extent of his knowledge or other abilities. These may differ among different persons just as eight pounds of gold differ from nine pounds in weight, but the quality of the gold is the same in both cases. (Fung, 1952:2-3) According to Fung Yu-lan, "Much of the conflict between the two opposing schools of the Sung and Ming dynasties...has centred over the interpretation of the two phrases 'extension of knowledge' and 'investigation of things'." (1952:363) Wang derived his thought from Chu Hsi's opponent, Lu Hsiang-shan, a contemporary of Chu Hsi with whom he also held friendly debates. Each derived his thought from the Ch'eng brothers, but they emphasised different aspects, Chu teaching a more objective investigation of the universe, while Lu held that all things are subjective, existing only in the mind and that, therefore, education should consist largely in reflection. Chu and Wang illustrate the large latitude existing within "orthodox" Confucian thought in China. Chu Hsi insisted on an objective examination of the universe while Wang Yang-ming interpreted "the investigation of things" as meaning introspection. The Rationalist school's formula was "the nature is Principle", whereas that of the Idealistic school was "the mind is Principle", a fundamental difference. These formulae "spring from a basic metaphysical difference: the Rationalistic school postulates two realms of being, whereas the Idealistic school postulates only one." (Fung, 1953:623) Wang said, "The investigation of things is what is meant by resting in the highest excellence. He who has knowledge of the highest excellence also understands the investigation of things." (Henke, 1964:56) He held that the distinction between the external and internal, the objective and the

subjective, is the same as between movement and quietness, and to investigate things is to investigate oneself. Chan (1960:570) points out four concepts that are characteristic of Wang's philosophy:

a) His concept of humanity (jen) which unites in one body the true sage with the entire universe. "The universe is the macrocosm and each human mind is a microcosm. This naturally leads to the conceptions, equality of opportunity and liberty, and as such serves well as the fundamental principle of social activity and reform." (Henke, 1964:xiv) Wang believed that the great man is an all-pervading unity with Heaven, Earth and all things and that those who emphasise the distinction of bodily shapes, and thus make a separation between self and others, are small men. This "Idealist school" of Wang denied the dualism of Chu Hsi's system, the sharp distinction between Heaven and man, and therefore between Heavenly Principle and human desire. Instead, it viewed them both as part of a single realm, which brought it closer to Buddhism. "Wang Yang-ming's teaching represented a sort of Zen revolt within Confucianism in that it put much greater stress on meditation and intuitive knowledge than had Chu Hsi." (Reischauer and Fairbank, 1958:309) It found strong backing in Mencius's statement, "All things are complete within me" which confirmed his insistence on the goodness of human nature.

b) His equation of Principle with the mind, in which all things are contained, and thus, the individual mind is one with the mind of the universe. Every individual may understand the fundamental principles of life and of things, including moral laws, by learning to understand his own mind, and by developing his own nature. Each has the solution of the problems of the universe within himself. This accords with the modern belief that man is the measure of all things. We will look at the next two concepts in more detail as they are basic to Ōshio's philosophy of life and action.

c) His belief that this original mind manifests itself through every man's innate knowledge ("good knowledge") and intuition which is the activity of the mind in its natural purity and perfection. This "good knowledge" represents the universal moral law immanent in man. It is most evident in the individual's innate sense of right and wrong. The fulfilment of one's nature consists simply in remaining true to this innate sense in whatever one does. He attracted many followers by proclaiming his doctrine of "good knowledge". (Tsunoda, 1958:361)

The idealist philosophers, such as Lu and Wang, maintained that all men originally possess an "intuitive knowledge", so that everyone potentially is a sage. They therefore believed that men need only follow this "intuitive knowledge" in their conduct in order never to fall into error under any circumstance. Confucius himself did not hold with such a doctrine. For him, the true manifestation of man's nature was not necessarily to be followed under all circumstances. For example, he stated emphatically, "To return to the observance of rites (propriety) through overcoming the self constitutes benevolence." (A.XII.1; Lau:112)

Wang was an idealist whose teaching was directly opposed to that of Chu Hsi on the doctrine of "the extension of intuitive knowledge" and in believing self-knowledge to be the highest kind of learning, and therefore, self-culture to be man's highest duty. The Chu Hsi school insisted on the necessity of knowledge as a preparation for right conduct. The Wang school, while not opposed to learning per se, believed in the rule of conscience and attached the greatest importance to introspection. "Wang Yang-ming emphasised the 'good knowing' (*ryōchi*) innate in all men and argued that awakening to this good knowing was a process by which 'li', the ultimate universal principle, was 'realised'." (Yamashita, 1983:335). Harootunian (1970:139) suggests that "Wang Yang-ming's intuitionism discredited the more orthodox emphasis upon a natural order and the need for constant investigation of social reality to determine the proper mode of conduct. It held that men always know how to act correctly, without recourse to investigation, and that learning can only confirm this self-knowledge."

Wang stated, "People fail to realise that the highest good is in their mind, and seek it outside in individual things." (Chan, 1960:574) But when the mind is in peaceful repose, whenever a thought arises, the mind with its innate knowledge will thoroughly sift whether or not that thought is in accordance with the highest good. Mencius's statement, "The sense of right and wrong is common to all men" means the innate knowledge of the good. This does not require long deliberation or learning. It is innate knowledge or intuition. That is why Wang revised "the extension of knowledge through the investigation of things" and advocated instead that "the extension of intuitive knowledge" could be achieved through the investigation of one's inner mind for, in this way,

what is incorrect is rectified. The process for doing this, as in Zen Buddhism, was essentially meditation leading to a sort of enlightenment. Thus Confucius said, "When things are investigated, true knowledge is extended; when knowledge is extended, the will becomes sincere; when the will is sincere, the mind is rectified, and when the mind is rectified, the personal life is cultivated." (G.L.5; Legge, 1893:358-9)

"Good Knowledge" was a term derived from Mencius, "The knowledge possessed without the exercise of thought is 'good knowledge'", (VII, A.15), or, as translated by Lau, "What a man is able to do without having to learn it is what he can truly do; what he knows without having to reflect on it is what he truly knows." (1970:184) Wang Yang-ming called this "intuitive knowledge". Developing and bringing this intuitive knowledge into actual operation, Wang called "extending the intuitive knowledge". The nature of all men is good and they originally possessed a state of equilibrium and harmony. But the mind of the average man has been beclouded by things as Wang said, "...nature is in its original condition devoid of all evil and, for this reason, is called the highest good. To rest in the highest good implies returning to one's natural condition." (Henke, 1964:106) Consequently, intuitive knowledge of good is the characteristic of all men. He wrote:

> "The mind of man constitutes Heaven in all its profundity, within which there is nothing not included. Originally there was nothing but this single Heaven, but because of the barriers caused by selfish desire, we have lost this original state of Heaven. If now we concentrate our thoughts upon extending the intuitive knowledge so as to sweep away all the barriers and obstructions, the original state will then again be restored, and we will again become part of the profundity of Heaven."[10]

Wang believed that the illustrious virtue, in its original state, is what is known as intuitive knowledge. Hence to manifest this illustrious virtue and love people are both ways of extending the "intuitive knowledge". This process was understood as being equivalent to the "extension of knowledge" in the *Great Learning*. When the highest excellence manifests itself, right is right and wrong is wrong. Wang comments that the word "ko" in "ko wu" means "cheng" (rectifying). It means to rectify what is unrectified in order to restore it to a state of

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[10] *Ch'uan-hsi Lu* (*Record of Instructions*), P.154 as quoted in Fung, 1953:601-2.

rectitude and get rid of evil. To restore it to rectitude means to practise goodness.[11] The leading concepts of Wang's philosophy are contained in his treatise *Ta Hsueh Wen* which was completed just a year before his death and so it represents his final views. Wang believed that the extension of knowledge to the utmost was progressive; the longer you apply yourself, the more you will realise that the application makes progress. He defines "intuitive knowledge" as " the nature which Heaven has conferred on us, the original state of our mind which is spontaneously intelligent and keenly conscious." (Fung,1953:603) Any ideas which arise are automatically understood by this "intuitive knowledge" of our mind. Wang said:

> "Knowledge is native to the mind; the mind is naturally able to know. When it perceives the parents it naturally knows what filial piety is; when it perceives the elder brother it naturally knows what respectfulness is; when it sees a child fall into a well it naturally knows what commiseration is. This is intuitive knowledge of good, and is not attained through external investigation." (Henke, 1964:60)

d) The doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action was Wang's most characteristic tenet. He taught that "...every one is under obligation to keep knowledge and action, theory and practice, together. There can be no real knowledge without action. The individual has the spring of knowledge within himself and should constantly put into practice what his intuitive knowledge of good gives him opportunity to do." (Henke, 1964: xiii) Concerning this unity of knowledge and conduct, Wang believed that only through the act of extending or translating intuitive knowledge which is mental into some field of concrete conduct can that knowledge be made complete. To Wang, there was no such thing as knowledge which could not be carried into practice.

Wang Yang-ming's most famous dictum was "To know and not to act is the same as not knowing at all". True knowledge must have some practical consequence. He urged that through a process of disciplined self-cultivation one might achieve the "unity of knowledge and conduct". As he put it, "Knowledge is the beginning of conduct; conduct is the completion of knowledge." This is still an ideal among Chinese and Japanese in modern times. Wang cited the example of filial piety. A person who truly

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[11] *Questions on the Great Learning*, P.213-4, as quoted in Fung, 1953:602.

understands filial piety will put it into practice. Only the actual fulfilment of the obligations of filial piety will ensure that a person knows the meaning of filial piety. Wang's own career gave evidence that his primary concern was for self-understanding as the key to effective moral action. Someone said to Wang that, because all men know that filial piety is due to parents and that the elder brother should be treated with respect by the younger brother and yet they are still unable to practise it, it implies that knowledge and practice are really two separate things. Wang replied, "This separation is due to selfishness and does not represent the original character of knowledge and practice. No one who really has knowledge fails to practise it. Knowledge without practice should be interpreted as lack of knowledge." (Henke, 1964:53)

Wang believed that it was futile to profess understanding of filial piety and brotherly respectfulness unless they are actually practised just as a person must have experienced things like pain, cold, and hunger before he can know what they are. Knowledge and practice were originally one before selfish aims separated them. Thus, one must practise before he may be said to have understanding. Failing practice, he does not understand; knowledge and action cannot be divorced. "When knowledge is genuine and sincere, practice is included; when practice is clear and minutely adjusted, knowledge is present. The two cannot be separated; where practice is absent there is no real knowledge." (Henke, 1964:297) Learning and practice always go together. If a person is learning filial piety, he will certainly toil and care for his parents and display filial piety. Then, for the first time, he may speak of learning filial piety. Thus practice is surely the beginning of learning.

Maruyama (1974:32n) asserts that the Wang Yang-ming school "emphasised more strongly than the Chu Hsi School the moralistic element in the Principle. In consequence, it rejected any recourse to an intermediate object such as "Pursuit of the Principle" as a method of training and advocated the cultivation of the 'intuitive knowledge' of the subject." Thus Wang Yang-ming emphasised the unity of knowledge and action in contrast to Chu Hsi's theory of "first knowledge, then action". Wang Yang-ming "held that self-knowledge was the highest kind of learning and that a man could discover the principles of right behaviour by looking into his own nature without wasting time on speculation about the laws of the universe." (Sansom, 1950:218-9)

Naturally, Wang attacked the dualism of "knowledge and action" and urged that, through a process of disciplined self-cultivation, one might achieve the "unity of knowledge and conduct" so that knowledge was realised in action and action contributed to knowledge. Adherents of Wang Yang-ming favoured an individualistic approach to the human condition, believing that the truth was found by intuition rather than by cold reason. He taught that the way of sagehood was open to all, humble peasant as well as learned scholar because the achievement of self-perfection required neither an exhaustive investigation into the objective principle of things nor a prolonged study of the teachings of the sages in the Classics as Chu Hsi suggested. Rather, Wang conceived of it as a continuing process which required every man to seek actively its realisation.

To sum up the difference between the two groups of Neo-Confucianists, it could be said that Chu's school emphasised the "Learning of Principle" or "Rationalism" whereas that of Lu and Wang emphasised the "Learning of the Mind", or "Idealism". To Chu, the nature (hsing) is equivalent to principle, but the Lu-Wang school clearly stated that the mind (hsin), not nature, is what should be equated with principle and this is a fundamental distinction. The Rationalist school of Chu Hsi had reached its peak during the Sung and Yuan dynasties whereas the Idealist school which culminated in Wang flourished only during the Ming period. Wang found that, in actuality, some of Chu's sayings were impractical. He questioned whether anyone could carry out in practice such teaching as the "investigation of things". Both Wang and his friend Ch'ien exhausted themselves physically and mentally in attempting to investigate the principles of the bamboo and they mutually concluded, "We cannot be either sages or virtuous men for we lack the great strength required to carry on the investigation of things." (Henke, 1964:178)

Huang Kuan of the Imperial Supervisorate of Instruction (Henke, 1964:39) lauded Wang Yang-ming's learning as great in three respects: in his emphasis on the development of intuitive knowledge, his love for the people, and his insistence on the unity of learning and practice, and wonders how he could be charged with heterodoxy when he took the extension of knowledge through an investigation of things from Confucius and intuitive knowledge from Mencius. The idea of the unity of learning

and practice is found in the *Canon of Changes*, for example: "If one knows the best and highest essence, one should attain to it. When one knows the end, one should reach it." (ibid., 41) Wang urged that talk and practice agree. In this, he was in perfect harmony with, and supplemented the learning of, Confucius and Mencius.

4. *Shushigaku in Japan*

"Early Japanese chronicles state that Confucianism was introduced to Japan in A.D. 285 during the reign of Emperor Ōjin when Wani of Paekche brought copies from his native Korea of the *Analects* of Confucius (Lun-yu; *Rongo*)." (Nosco, 1984:5) The Confucianism which was enthusiastically accepted into Japan in the early days dealt largely with such concepts of propriety as were stipulated in great detail according to social rank in books like the *Books of Rites*. Over the years, Confucianism was eclipsed in both China and Japan by the doctrines of Buddhism. Nevertheless, it left its mark on Japanese society with its concern for hierarchical relationships and its emphasis on harmony in the family as the basis for harmony in the State. Against this, however,it could be argued that Confucianism merely reinforced and justified the social practices that already existed in Japan. "Prior to the Tokugawa, most Japanese were attracted more to the superstitious overlays of Confucian rites and practices than to the philosophical and ethical nucleus," (ibid.), that is, they were more interested in selecting auspicious directions for their buildings and auspicious dates for their travel and marriages than in how to regulate the State or the affairs of society. In the assimilation of Confucianism, it was filial piety which was most stressed, and that, in a way that would fit their institution of ancestor-worship. Thus, in the eighth century, Confucian students were made to study thoroughly the *Analects* and the *Treatise on Filial Piety*.

The Chu Hsi mode of thought was introduced to Japan in the early thirteenth century, perhaps as early as 1200, the year of Chu Hsi's death. It was through the Zen Buddhist community, rather than among the traditional Kyōto Court Confucian families, that it first took root for Zen monks saw in Neo-Confucianism a useful secular complement to their own religious teachings, particularly in their relations with political leaders. Eisai (1141-1215), a Tendai priest, returned to Japan in 1191 with a copy of one of Chu Hsi's works. (Kitagawa, 1966:125-6) Thus, he

and his disciples were instrumental in transplanting the Chu Hsi tradition of Neo-Confucianism to Japan and Zen temples soon functioned as schools for Neo-Confucianism during the Muromachi period. For the most part, the philosophy was centred for nearly 400 years in Zen monasteries where it was regarded as a stimulating mental exercise. But, during the Edo period, Chu Hsi's teaching became rooted in the social fabric of Japan and became the official teaching of the Shogunate. (Miyake, 1983:190) Little attention seems to have been paid the Neo-Confucianism of Chu Hsi until a revival of interest came about soon after Ieyasu's establishment of the Tokugawa *Bakufu*. However, since then the intellectual history of the Tokugawa period was intimately identified with the orthodox Neo-Confucian mode of thought of Chu Hsi.

The Tokugawa period was the golden age of Confucianism in Japan. One reason for its most rapid development at this stage was that "the social and political structures of Tokugawa feudal society were comparable with those on which Confucianism was based in the Chinese empire. This made it easy to apply Confucian ideas in Tokugawa Japan." (Maruyama, 1974:7) "In a society where every person knew their place, it is not surprising that the ruling philosophy was a kind calculated to keep them in it. The Confucian ideas of the Sung philosopher Chu Hsi were admirably suited to their purpose." (Beasley, 1963:11) The Tokugawa Shogunate was more concerned with the maintenance of a stable and harmonious society than stimulating minds and so "the seventeenth century Tokugawa discourse drew fruitfully from the assumptions and vocabulary of Neo-Confucianism for its descriptions of man and his society." (Nosco, 1984:8) Due to the official recognition that Neo-Confucianism received during that century, its thought rapidly gained broader acceptance in Japanese society, both politically and intellectually. This was hardly surprising seeing that Confucianism had traditionally been directed towards the various issues which were of urgent concern in Tokugawa society:

i) *The Legitimation of the Shogunate*

Shushigaku seems to have been promoted by Tokugawa Ieyasu to buttress and legitimise his regime. "Following the tradition of General Ōda Nobunaga, he accepted Confucianism as the philosophical ground and the official political philosophy of the Tokugawa Shogunate. It was equipped to meet the Shogunate's concerns at many levels. "Its ideal society was in many

respects congruent with the feudal order of Tokugawa Japan. It offered a potential legitimation to the Shogunate and the daimyō for their political hegemony, and its belief in a permanent natural and social order was attractive to those who wished to preserve the status quo." (McMullen, 1983:355) It was natural that Confucianism with its stress on social order based on rank should have been widely accepted by the rulers, and it was also natural that other Chinese ideas that tended to be either individualistic or democratic should have been rejected by them. "Chu Hsi's ethical system seemed particularly suited to the needs of the rulers of Japan. Its central point was loyalty...Its very definition of evil is 'disarrangement' and 'confusion', which can conveniently be taken to mean disturbance of ancient order." (Sansom, 1931:507)

Buddhism had obviously fallen into decline, having been unable to withstand the military pressures of the nation's unifiers in the late sixteenth century. Now it was proving an intellectually ineffective bulwark against Christianity and was even being disdained by the warrior-scholars and sophisticated townsmen alike. Thus, the Tokugawa rulers turned to Confucian rationalism for a philosophical foundation for their system of a secular social order. This was because Confucianism's chief focus was on the very problem that concerned the founders of the Tokugawa Shogunate most, namely, the creation and maintenance of an ethically-based, stable political and social order. The Confucian emphases on loyalty, the ethical basis of government, and intellectual orthodoxy, as well as the Chinese ideal of bureaucratic civil rule were all extremely useful to the Tokugawa rulers. Such ideals gave their system a firm philosophical base. Alhough the authorities still gave Buddhism a certain patronage, it cannot be regarded as the state religion of Tokugawa Japan. The guiding principles of the Tokugawa administration were clearly laid down in a system of social ethics derived from Chu Hsi's teaching.

Principles of government as well as law and order were needed to steer Tokugawa Japan from a purely feudal society to a large, unified nation with well-defined social classes, and from a military to a civil administration. "Reason dictated that the system over which Ieyasu presided must be supported and that its permanence must be ensured by some kind of moral sanction." (Sansom, 1964:76) Seeing neither Buddhism nor Shintoism possessed the necessary authority for such purposes, some other system of thought had to be adopted to justify the absolute

government of the country by a supreme overlord as well as a social structure in which the elite, privileged, warrior class could enjoy rights denied the rest of the people. Sansom asks where could such a school of philosophy be found to support so manifestly unjust a division? He asserts that, "It was there to hand in the Confucian system in general, and in the Chu Hsi system in particular. It was a question of emphasis on selected principles". (ibid.)

The duties of loyalty and service were expounded in the official schools maintained by the Shogunate government under the principalship of Hayashi Razan (1583-1657) and his descendants, and also by the feudal lords in their domains. As early as 1608 Ieyasu had appointed Razan, the expert in Confucian ethics and the chief exponent of the Chu Hsi philosophy, as an advisor both on education and foreign affairs. Razan was also the attendant scholar at Ieyasu's court and was responsible for drafting many of Ieyasu's laws and injunctions. He developed some of the Tokugawa political and ethical system. In 1630 he established a private school in Ueno, Edo, but it was afterwards taken under government protection and grew into an important institution under the name of the "Shōheikō". Sansom (1963:73) says that he was "a man of demonic energy, a voracious reader, an indefatigable writer, firmly committed to Chu Hsi's Neo-Confucianism, and violently opposed to Buddhism", even though he was the son of a Buddhist priest. From this small beginning grew a strong Chu Hsi school of Confucianism at Edo. Razan vigorously promoted the orthodox interpretations as they had been formulated in twelfth century China by a group of philosophers who, according to Reischauer (1964:86-7), "had added to the ethical doctrines of the early Confucianists a ponderous superstructure of metaphysical speculation". Such is beyond the scope of this thesis, except in as far as it impinges upon Ōshio's thinking.

Razan had been the principal disciple of a Buddhist monk called (Fujiwara) Seika (1561-1619) who forsook Buddhist orders to become Japan's first lay philosopher and was the one who brought Neo-Confucianism to Ieyasu's attention. Ieyasu valued Seika and Razan as those whose knowledge was useful, both in giving his political system a philosophical foundation and a position of legitimacy as well as in setting up his administration and conducting foreign relations with other East Asian courts. Maruyama asserts that Seika and Razan were "the men who liberated Chu Hsi philosophy from its total subjection to Buddhism

and laid the foundation for the development of Tokugawa Confucianism". (1974:13) Obviously, Ieyasu's interest in Confucianism and especially in Chu Hsi philosophy was because of its fundamental moral principles and its concepts of political legitimacy, not because of its literary and exegetic values or its speculative aspects. The presidency of the Shōheikō remained the preserve of the Hayashi family and Shushigaku remained the orthodox teaching throughout the Tokugawa period.

ii) *Assigned Roles in Society*

Confucius believed that men ought to play their proper assigned roles in a fixed society of authority. This idea is succinctly expressed in his famous statement: "Let the ruler be a ruler and the subject a subject, let the father be a father and the son a son." For long the elite of Japan had justified their status on the grounds of pedigree and precedent rather than on the basis of merit or humanity. Its notion of the ways of the ruler, the minister, the peasant, the child, and so on, divided the social system into constituent functions which affirmed the stability and continuity of the status quo. Hence, it was eminently suitable to, and highly successful in, Tokugawa Japan to legitimise its hierarchy. Hayashi Razan writes, "Heaven is above and earth is below. This is the order of heaven and earth".[12] From this, Razan reasoned that there were rulers above and subjects below and that the separation into the four classes, like the five human relationships, was part of the principles of heaven and was the Way taught by the sage (Confucius). Just as there was a differentiation between the above and the below, so among the people, rulers were to be respected and subjects were to submit humbly. The more the rulers are respected and the more the subjects submit humbly, and the more this differentiation is made clear-cut, the easier it is to govern a country. In its practical application, the Confucian theory of the Five Human Relationships can be seen as being responsible for the social hierarchy. It also provided the ethical basis for the gradation of classes from the ruler to the samurai, the farmer, the artisan, and the merchant with their various responsibilities.

Shushigaku "compared the relation between sovereign and vassal, father and son, to the relation between heaven and earth, high and low, holding that the relation was permanent and unchangeable, and...it was suitable

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[12]Hayashi Razan in Lu, 1974:236.

for consolidating the social order and social ranks of *shi*, *nō*, *kō*, and *shō* (warrior, farmer, artisan, and merchant)." (Inoue, 1962:103) But the strict ethical code of *Bushidō* that was a combination of Neo-Confucian philosophy and the ideals and social system of feudal Japan still remained quite distinct from the ethical code of China for loyalty to one's lord in Japan always superseded loyalty to one's family, or even to one's country. Jansen (1965:30) pertinently points out that "Tokugawa Confucianism, whatever its school, was not nearly as 'Chinese' as it tried to be. As many writers point out, in a setting in which political, and not family, loyalties were paramount, its thrust was quite different". They all emphasised political service rather than ethical reflection.

The five human relationships and their attendant obligations were primary to Confucianism; the subordination of subject to ruler, wife to husband, son to father, younger brother to older brother, and the relationship of friends. Lu says, "In judging the worth of a person, one needs only to use these five relationships as the criteria." (1974(i):236) They were the moral ligaments holding society together. With its emphasis on proper relationships between the ruler and the ruled, Confucianism seemed admirably suited to be a state philosophy as it fostered a deep sense of loyalty to the regime. Ieyasu and his successors found Shushigaku's ideal of orderly submission to authority well suited to the *Bakufu*'s desire to maintain a stable political and social order.

Razan stands out as the most representative of the many Chu Hsi scholars of the early Tokugawa period, both in the breadth of his scholarship and in his social influence. Maruyama (1974:195) considers that "The thought of this scholar who served three Shōguns...can be seen as a microcosm of the intellectual trends of the period." He emphasised that the five Confucian relationships encompass all social ties and that they are eternal and immutable. Hayashi (and others) found in Chu Hsi's thought a strategy for overcoming the problem of the largely illiterate samurai who were poorly equipped to play a "*kuge*-like" role as cultured rulers in the early seventeenth century. (Totman, 1981:152) The Tokugawa administration consequently gave all possible encouragement to the followers of Chu Hsi and supported teachers like Razan who most vehemently denounced all other creeds, not only Buddhism and Christianity, but also any variation from the rigidly orthodox Confucianism of its official interpreters. Though other philosophical systems were studied in Japan, Shushigaku had

the monopoly of official patronage. There were even times when other philosophies were proscribed as heterodox or heresy. For instance, under the 1790 Kansei prohibition of heterodox teaching in official schools, any who advocated Yōmei teaching "shone in the *Bakufu* eyes as a dangerous element". (Narabayashi, 1970:2)

Shushigaku's chief tenets were concerned with loyalty. The vassal owes loyalty to his lord, the samurai to his master, and these obligations transcended all others, even the bonds of duty and affection between parents and children, husband and wife, teacher and pupil. "Stress was laid on the study of Confucian thinking and Chinese literature which taught that the rulers should exercise authority with benevolence and the governed should accept it meekly...perhaps this bred the passive acceptance of the established order which was to be a later characteristic of the Japanese." (Nish, 1968:70) This emphasis suited the purposes of the Tokugawa rulers who, naturally, did not stress the obverse Confucian belief, namely, the popular right of revolution against an unjust ruler.

Another element in Chu Hsi's teaching was filial piety which was also related to the inculcation of habits of obedience. It received special emphasis during this period of Neo-Confucianist ascendancy. "Confucian morality, emphasising filial piety, respect for elders, male superiority with reference to women in general and wives in particular, was also appropriated as a means of entrenching further the traditional family system as the foundation of the social order." (Yazaki, 1968:28) While Buddhism had dominated the moral consciousness of the Japanese throughout the medieval period, it had been now replaced by Confucian precepts which were promoted by the ruling class in support of the new system of stratification. The relationship in the first four human relationships was rule and submission; the rule should be in righteousness and benevolence, the submission in righteousness and sincerity. In the ethics of feudal Japan, the greatest test of virtue and vice was the observance or the failure to observe these duties, especially on the part of the vassal to his master. In this single, all-important matter, Confucianism powerfully influenced the upper classes of Japan throughout the Tokugawa period.

Confucian thought could not only readily support the concept of hierarchy and social classes in society, but it could also provide a moral prescription for the conduct of both ruler and the ruled. Its ethical

code gave justification to the theory of the four classes and its intention was that the samurai-administrators of Japan be identified with the scholar-gentry class of China. The hoped-for result would be benevolent administration with a deep concern for the welfare of the people. But the difference between Chinese and Japanese administration was obvious, Chinese scholar-officials being selected on merit through a series of demanding examinations, whereas the Japanese warrior-officials received their posts through heredity. There was little, if any, scope for men of ability to break through the hereditary barrier. "One of the principles of Shushigaku was that a person's fate and fortune were determined by the social conditions of his birth. No one could, nor should he try to, alter his inherited station in life, a notion uniquely tailored for the stabilisation of authority in a feudal social order." (Yazaki, 1968:207) Ch'eng Yi stated that, "Destiny is what is endowed by Heaven and the nature is what things receive...As endowed by Heaven in all things it is called destiny. As received by creatures from Heaven, it is called their nature. The difference lies in the points of view."[13] The Chinese tradition held that good government "was largely a matter of correct moral dispositions on the part of the governors." (Dore, 1984:42)

But Confucianism did develop broad scholarly interests among the samurai and gradually turned the warrior-aristocrats into scholar-bureaucrats who operated the Tokugawa system. The Confucian economic theory also confirmed the feudal rulers in their emphasis on agriculture as the sole economic basis for government and encouraged them to disregard both foreign and domestic trade. In time, the *Bakufu* put increasing pressure on the peasants to produce in spite of climatical circumstances often mitigating against increased production. Officially the Shogunate encouraged learning which at the beginning consisted almost solely of Confucianism. The aim was "to give refinement to the machinery of government and to propagate the official philosophy." (Yanaga, 1949:38) From the beginning, the Shogunate took great pains to keep out ideas which were inimical and dangerous to the regime.

Learning was also encouraged by the authorities as a means of diverting the thinking of the warriors and of the other classes. Besides military

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[13]Quoted by Chan, W-t., "The Synthesis of Sung Neo-Confucianism in Chu Hsi", de Bary, W.T., et al.(Eds.), *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1960:544.

training, the Tokugawa put a deliberate emphasis on moral education. "It was difficult for a samurai to be an active man of arms, for there was no fighting, but it was possible for him to become a man of letters. Though stress was still placed on the '*bu*', the way of the warrior also recognised, indeed elevated, the importance of '*bun*'. The atmosphere, therefore, was conducive to learning." (Lehmann, 1982:130) The acceptance of Confucian teaching by the authorities also meant "that there developed among the ruling class, from the highest officers of the Shōgun down to the least samurai strict, if narrow, principles of conduct which were generally observed and were reflected in the standards followed by the rest of the people". (Sansom, 1950:196) As these were enforced by severe penalties, the whole nation was inculcated with habits of discipline and obedience which both eased the government's task and preserved a peaceful state for 200 years, except for an occasional social disturbance.

Actually, the philosophers of Shushigaku differed most violently among themselves, and even used the most intemperate language about each other, yet, on the whole, they were unanimous in approving existing social institutions. They disagreed on points of political theory but, apart from some extreme followers of the Wang Yang-ming school, none seemed to be against the existing class divisions and prevailing concepts of social duty. I concur with Sansom (1931:513) that "here they might have found a worthy outlet for their reforming zeal". The morality of those times was strictly a class morality, even a group morality. The authorities discouraged individual responsibility and dealt with the people by groups. The result was that, while promoting mutual responsibility within the group, it tended to encourage neglect of duty, and even hostility to individuals and society at large, that is, to anyone outside their immediate group. Thus discipline was promoted at the expense of public morality and integrity. But this high standard of corporate morality, and the unconcern for the rights of persons outside the group which it engendered, often led to extreme antisocial behaviour. Although Japanese Confucianists of the Chu Hsi and Wang Yang-ming schools had many and considerable differences and some interesting controversies between them, "they held in common the notion of a process of moral self-cultivation with the religious aim of some sort of identification with the universe." (Bellah, 1957:76)

Neo-Confucianism was reinterpreted and transformed so as to fit into the social structure and political institutions of Japan, rather than the

other way round. Thus Hayashi Razan interpreted the "li" (reason or principle) of Chu Hsi and equated it with Shinto, saying, "The way of the gods is nothing but Reason. Nothing exists outside of Reason." (Kitagawa, 1966:156)

iii) *Its Appeal to the Japanese*

State sanction alone cannot explain Neo-Confucianism's acceptance in Japan. That came, in part, because its rationalism, humanism and pragmatism appealed to the Japanese nature as did the challenge of studying Chinese texts. "The investigation of things" taught the Japanese to look into the laws of human society and to take an interest in natural phenomena and Chu Hsi's emphasis on the basic human relationships gave the foundation for formulating a secular society.

Basically, Shushigaku taught the importance of self-culture, believing that man was innately disposed to right conduct, but that it was necessary for him to study the laws of the universe in order to understand virtue. Thus from those laws, by deduction, man will discover that the relationships of natural phenomena have their counterpart in the relationships between humans. Among these, relationships between sovereign and subject, parent and child, husband and wife, are supreme. Actually, these were the virtues that had long been honoured by Japanese and so Chu Hsi's teaching found ready appeal. Also "the Confucian concept of a human order established in harmony with immutable natural principles seemed to justify the rigid social cleavages and political absolutism of the Tokugawa system." (Reischauer and Fairbank, 1958:616) No wonder Shushigaku spread so rapidly and extensively throughout Japanese politics and thought at this time. Its characteristics were "humanism, rationalism, historical-mindedness and ethno-centrism" and "each of these in varying degrees and contexts is conspicuous in the Tokugawa discourse."[14]

The Chu Hsi school of Neo-Confucianism has been the most widely studied in Japan from the twelfth to the nineteenth century. It remained the most influential philosophy throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century in Japan. Sometimes it is called the "Tei-shu" system

[14]de Bary in Nosco, 1984:23.

of philosophy after the Japanese names of the Chinese masters, "Tei" standing for Ch'eng and "Shu" for Chu. Probably no single body of doctrine has had such a powerful effect upon the thought and behaviour of the educated class in Japan's whole history. Doubtless, it gained this hold on the minds of the people because Japanese have always been more interested in practical ethics than abstract speculation.

But although for many centuries the Japanese had adopted a good deal of Chinese thought and culture, they had always been careful not to alter the distinctive nature of the Japanese state. Not all Chinese ideas were readily acceptable to the Japanese. "The introduction of Chinese Confucianism into Japan caused almost no friction or disharmony; only the doctrine of abdication and rebellion presented difficult problems." (Nakamura, 1964:471) Confucianists believed that the ruler should lose his position if he lost Heaven's mandate, but the Japanese rejected this traditional Chinese idea of revolution. So even Confucianism was not accepted uncritically. Tōko Fujita (1806-55), a Confucianist of the Mito school, also argued that these above two doctrines were "definitely not applicable" to Japan. (ibid) In Chinese history, both Shin and Yu had gained the throne by abdication while T'ang of Yin and Wu of Chou had attained the throne through rebellion. The idea of a change of dynasty was a basic element in Chinese Confucianism. However, this was unacceptable in Japan due to the hierarchical structure of society in which the virtue of loyalty to the Emperor occupied the highest place among all virtues.

The most striking quality of Chu Hsi's teaching was its rationalism. It dealt with ascertained facts and observable phenomena and, maybe, these features made it attractive to Japan's thinkers. In fact, the reason for its acceptance was that an important feature of Chu Hsi's philosophy was his humanism manifested in his concern for human values and goals. The moral doctrines of Shushigaku focus upon man and his closest human relationships, not upon any supernatural order or divine law. Such an emphasis upon human loyalties was obviously congenial to Japan's feudal society of this time. Shushigaku provided a uniform, secular code by which the Shogunate could maintain social order in all their domains. The Japanese accepted the whole metaphysics of Neo-Confucianism including its belief that the fundamental goodness of man's nature grows out of the basic order of the universe. However, Japanese thinkers were

particularly concerned with the practical ethics of Confucianism such as its emphasis on the moral basis of political legitimacy, loyalty, a hierarchical family and social order, and the conservative virtues. The authorities, on their part, needed these ideas to keep dissatisfied daimyō and unruly samurai in line and to prevent unsettling social changes. Consequently, the official teachers had the task of developing an interpretation which upheld the social order. "Certainly the 'dangerous' features of Confucianism, such as the doctrines of abdication and of righteous rebellion, were abhorred by the regime." (Kitagawa, 1966:249)

While, on the one hand, the *Bakufu* showed a commendable desire to promote learning, on the other hand, it was careful to suppress the spirit of free enquiry. At first they succeeded and Shushigaku was supreme in Japan during most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, producing a number of learned moralists such as Arai Hakuseki (1656-1726) who was one of the most remarkable followers of the Chu Hsi philosophy. However, his principles of government on purely civil lines aroused a militaristic reaction from Yoshimune, the eighth Shōgun, on his accession in 1716. Paradoxically, while seeking to lead a "Back to Ieyasu" movement to revive the feudal regimentation of society and encouraging military exercises, Yoshimune relaxed the restriction upon Western learning. Though he respected orthodox Confucianism, he also wanted to obtain wisdom from other sources. His encouragement of all types of scholarship had far-reaching consequences which he could not have foreseen. He bestowed his patronage impartially upon various schools of Confucianists and, thus, set up philosophical currents which ultimately engulfed the Shogunate. His attitude towards Western learning also revived an interest in studies which had lapsed under the exclusion policy and, in time, these studies became some of the chief instruments in the reversal of that policy.

"The channels of Tokugawa thought were not wholly limited to the narrow Confucian orthodoxy and *Bushidō* of the founders of the system because the Shōgun's encouragement of learning and Confucian philosophy helped transform a significant proportion of the samurai from stolid warriors into inquiring intellectuals and so made possible a rich proliferation of ideas." (Reischauer and Fairbank, 1958:656) Under the patronage of the Shogunate and some of the daimyō, Confucian studies had prospered in Tokugawa Japan. Three main traditions had developed; from the rise of the Chu Hsi school via the Wang Yang-ming school to the school of Ancient

Learning (*Kogaku* or *Fukkōgaku*). This latter rejected both Sung and Ming philosophies in favour of a direct return to the fundamental Confucianism of Confucius and Mencius.

In studying Tokugawa Confucianism, it is important to realise that each domain could have its own educational system because, even though the *Bakufu* used orthodox Neo-Confucianism as its official teaching, it did not compel each domain to do the same. Because of this tolerant attitude, each domain promoted its own education independently. For the most part, the respective schools who professed either Chu Hsi or Wang Yang-ming studies did not engage in polemics, but there developed a diversity of thought during this period as an increasing number of heterodox philosophies spread. Because of the multiplicity of autonomous, political units, unorthodox schools could always find some domain that would provide patronage. On the whole, more vitality was displayed by heterodox thought than by Neo-Confucian orthodoxy and many concepts were produced which ultimately proved subversive to the Tokugawa system. Becoming anxious over the growing laxity in official discipline and the decay of morality, the *Bakufu* through Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758-1829) "issued in 1790 the Prohibition of Heterodox Studies, assuming that this would revitalise Neo-Confucian studies and renovate educational affairs with quasi-scientific thought." (Okada 1984:217)

Under this ordinance, known as the Kansei Edict, "only orthodox Chu Hsi scholars should receive administrative and academic posts both at *Bakufu* and *han* levels and the dissemination of 'different doctrines' was forbidden. Nonetheless, heterodox thought continued to afflict the Tokugawa regime." (Lehmann, 1982:131) Although, at the insistence of the official teachers, the Shogunate forbad the exposition of doctrines other than those of Chu Hsi in any official college or school, the measure did not prevent Yōmei scholars from advocating their ideas in writing or from maintaining their private academies. But, as this strict line was also followed in most domains, it was difficult for unorthodox teachers to find employment. "The result of the edict was to stimulate critical studies in private academies or in the domains of feudal lords who could afford to disregard the wishes of the *Bakufu*." (Sansom, 1950:222) However, the situation could no longer be salvaged simply by promoting Shushigaku. The *Bakufu* appointed Hayashi Jussai to head the official college and, even though he and his colleague, Satō Issai, laboured to reinvigorate the official educational system and championed Shushigaku,

they refused to adopt an exclusive view. Issai, particularly, could not accept the notion of a single school and, after Jussai's death, he espoused the theory of the common origin of the teachings of the rivals Chu Hsi and Lu Hsiang-shan. As the result, some called Issai "Chu Hsi on the outside, Lu Hsiang-shan on the inside." (Okada, 1984:218)

5. *Yōmeigaku in Japan*

In the atmosphere of intellectual dissent which existed in Tokugawa times, one prominent heterodox school which is relevant to our theme is worth noting. That was Yōmeigaku, one of the earliest manifestations of the ideological dissidence and, probably, the most important rival to Shushigaku. The individualistic philosophy of Wang Yang-ming only began to make headway in Japan in the seventeenth century, more than a century after his death. Since then it has had an important, though not consistent, influence. Probably no copy of his works entered Japan until 1645. Antagonism to the Hayashi school had come from several quarters. It first arose in important fiefs where scholars in residence took issue with Edo Confucianists. Prominent among these dissenters was Nakae Tōju, the "Ōmi Sage" (1608-48).

> "At the beginning of the Tokugawa period, the intellectual world was uniform in tone, because of the Chu Hsi school, but soon signs of differentiation began to appear. Nakae Tōju advocated Wang Yang-ming philosophy later in life, and this school made more spectacular advances under the leadership of his disciples, Fuchi Kōzan (1617-85) and Kumazawa Banzan (1619-91)." (Maruyama, 1974:202)

During the early Tokugawa period, Wang's teaching was established as an independent school whose founder, Nakae Tōju, the famous philosopher and teacher, exemplified his filial piety by giving up an important official position to look after his aged mother in an isolated village near Lake Biwa. Tōju was introduced to Yōmeigaku after he had spent many years in studying Shushigaku. One feature of Wang's teaching that especially appealed to him was his stress upon man's intuition or moral sense, rather than upon the intellect as with Chu Hsi. Everyone does not need to be a scholar, but everyone ought to be virtuous (good). Shushigaku stressed morality and order and the usual Confucian virtues, while Yōmei-gaku advocated that intuitive morality should be translated into action.

The followers of the Yōmei school in Japan tended to be isolated from each other. Moreover, in formulating their system of thought, most of

them drew not only upon the teachings of the Wang Yang-ming school whose translations into Japanese were few, but also on those of other schools. Thus, Maruyama (1974:32n) notes that the Wang Yang-ming school "still depended largely upon the Chu Hsi school for its basic methods of thought." This was "particularly noticeable among the Japanese Wang Yang-ming scholars...they failed to develop an independent school of thought. As a result the Wang Yang-ming scholars' modes of thought were highly individualistic." He cites examples of this in comparing the thought of Nakae Tōju with that of his disciple, Kumazawa Banzan, and then that of Ōshio Heihachirō who came much later. The finding is that the quiescent, contemplative tendencies became steadily weaker.

Gradually, other schools had arisen which were critical, in varying degrees, of the official Shogunate doctrine that wise men should instruct the people how to behave and that good government depended upon the wisdom of the ruler and the obedience of the subject. This had provided a convenient support for Tokugawa autocracy. The rational empiricism of Yōmeigaku which believed that the principles of right behaviour could be found by looking into one's own nature, Sansom (1950:219) suggests "commended itself to the best sort of samurai because it relied upon intuition and self-control, precisely those qualities which were the essence of Zen Buddhism that had appealed to military men from the early feudal age." Particularly, scholars with an independent turn of mind favoured Yōmeigaku and those who openly expressed views in disagreement with the official teaching found themselves at odds with, and punished by, the *Bakufu*. However, the penalties for heterodoxy were not severely enforced if no subversive act was committed.

Najita (1971(ii):386) feels that the Ōyōmei tradition "never formed a 'school' like the Shushigaku (Metaphysical school) or the Kogaku (Ancient Studies school). We do not, therefore, find it engaged in active intellectual discourse with the Metaphysical school, as we most certainly do in the case of the Ancient Studies school." Nevertheless, it played an important part in modern Japan in countering the rationalist approach of Shushigaku and Najita (ibid., 387) adds that, "Despite the fact that Ōyōmei was not a school, it became a living tradition among the samurai, perhaps mostly among those samurai living in outlying areas such as Kyūshū."

Although frowned upon by the authorities, Yōmeigaku later gained many adherents, including some remarkable men of the period. The reason for this, Sansom (1931:511) believes is that, "like Zen in Japan, the Ōyōmei philosophy rejected the authority of written words, recommended a practical, subjective morality, and insisted upon the intuitive perception of truth to be reached by self-study and self-command." It was Wang Yang-ming's emphases on an intuitive moral sense, on personal discipline, and on action rather than words that appealed to many Japanese thinkers with a background in Zen which stressed similar aspects. Also their views were more suited to the warrior mentality than the intellectual rationalism and academic approach of Chu Hsi's philosophy. Yōmei learning played a considerable part later on in the reform movement amongst middle or lower-rank officials in Japan. Its approach had much in common with that of Zen Buddhism, which for many centuries had exercised a powerful influence on the emotions and aesthetic lives of the upper class. The understanding of self and the control of the mind were regarded as the most important forms of learning, and were more important than any type of formal reasoning. Proper behaviour in society came neither from adherence to traditions and precepts, nor from the fear of punishment, but from the individual's intuitive moral sense which prompted him to act in sincere and generous ways. Because they were free from tradition, such doctrines always appealed to the most vigorous and thoughtful type of the upper class in Japan. Naturally, the *Bakufu* opposed the Yōmei teaching because independence of mind was not a quality they wanted to encourage. Their blind conservatism, as well as the implications of Yōmei thought, led the Shogunate to resist the followers of Wang Yang-ming. His teachings put more stress than did orthodox Japanese Confucianism on the Chinese ideal of individual merit rather than hereditary privilege as the criterion of a man's worth and status. Though Yōmei philosophy was by no means opposed to the Tokugawa system, it did foster attitudes which could easily lead to subversive thought. The Tokugawa *Bakufu*, with its strictly conservative approach and devotion to rules and established authority, predictably frowned on such non-conformist, individualistic philosophy.

In time, the uniformity of feudal opinion was broken by heterodox schools which challenged the assumptions at the base of the feudal society and so began an intellectual ferment that was to bring it to ruin in the nineteenth century. Wang's idealistic teachings had an important role, particularly in Japan, as a stimulus to new ideas and as a training for

independent spirits. From the beginning there were philosophers who rebelled against Chu Hsi's brand of orthodoxy. In contrast to the theoretical Shushigaku, Yōmeigaku had the strong tendency of attaching importance to intuition or man's subjective judgment. Some looked to this Idealist school of Wang Yang-ming while others, under the name of the "Ancient Learning" (*Kogaku*) school, attempted to go back beyond the speculative Sung philosophers to earlier Confucianism. "The *Kogaku* school called for a return to the study of the original texts of Confucianism -- the *Analects* and the *Mencius*, and, beyond them, to the Five Classics (The *Book of History*, the *Book of Odes*, the *Book of Changes*, the *Rites*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*) and to the activist, moral philosophy contained therein." (Watt, 1984:198) They believed that only by a return to the founders and the fundamentals of Confucianism could the "distortions" in Confucian traditions be rectified.

From the end of the eighteenth century on, the popularity of Wang Yang-ming philosophy which emphasised individual conscience and action began to push the mild 'status quo' ideas of Chu Hsi into the background. With the increasing prevalence of men who fearlessly advocated direct action, the ideological foundations of the Shogunate began to shake. Thus the Confucian scholars, Shinto theorists, native classicists, political economists, and historians gradually stimulated the people into thinking, and that was dangerous to the feudal regime. Despite the adoption in the early seventeenth century of Neo-Confucianism as the official philosophy of the Tokugawa Shogunate, Japan produced a great variety of intellectual leaders in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Certainly, as the eighteenth century progressed, intellectual diversification intensified. "By the nineteenth century this body of thought had acquired a subversive quality. It challenged the basic tenets of the established order and suggested reasons and ways to reform or even transform it." (Totman, 1981:177)

Though Wang Yang-ming's basic tenets would not seem to be particularly subversive in modern days, in Tokugawa Japan his philosophy was regarded as inflammatory and heretical. The official Shushigaku School of Reason came close to being a state religion under Shogunate tutelage. It placed overwhelming stress on knowledge as a preparation for correct conduct. It also emphasised traditional loyalties to state and family, and supported the social and political status quo. In its essence Yōmeigaku

had a high degree of idealism and, in the opinion of Okamoto (1975:50), "for that reason it was the learning with the greatest integrity", being concerned with virtuous conduct and advocating an activism based on the unity of knowledge and action. He believed that, "in Heihachirō, this characteristic of Yōmeigaku can be seen still more completely". This emphasis on the unity of thought and action placed stress on practice rather than on theory or on a scholarly investigation of things in pursuit of an objective principle. Consequently, Yōmei scholars put more trust in their individual efforts towards the betterment of society.

Yōmeigaku "provided a foundation for sophisticated counter-ideologies that could legitimise strategies for change should an observer conclude that social conditions no longer were tolerable." (Totman, 1981:180) As scholars throughout Japan pursued research into their own history and literature, it became increasingly evident to them that the Shōguns had usurped Imperial power. Thus, it could reasonably be said, in attempting to base its rule upon Confucian ethics and encouraging scholarship, the *Bakufu* had indirectly contributed to its own demise. An interest in the political philosophy of the Yōmei school had led to enquiries into the principle of loyalty, which naturally raised questions as to the legitimacy of the Shōgun's position. The growing doubts of some Confucianists were also held by scholars who devoted themselves to Japanese classical studies. In their historical research they soon discovered the true sequence of events which had transferred power to feudal dictators. This sowed the seeds of a revivalist movement designed to restore the ancient religion of Japan and, therefore, a return to the supreme power of the Imperial house which traced its ancestry to the national gods. This, in effect, described the Shōgun as a usurper.

6. *Ōshio's Study of Yōmeigaku*

Ōshio studied neo-Confucianism under Hayashi Jussai and then concentrated on the ideas of Ōyōmei which inspired his moral commitment to act in the name of justice. It is not certain precisely when Ōshio developed an interest in Yōmei learning or where and under whom he studied. Some claim that he studied it in Edo but it is more likely to have been in Ōsaka. Sufficient to say that his knowledge of the Yōmei tradition was considerable and from the late 1820's, even while still serving as a bureaucrat, he began to give private lectures on the subject. Ōshio knew

that Shushigaku was revered as the aim of all scholars for it was so stated by the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate, Ieyasu, and reconfirmed by Matsudaira Sadanobu. Increasingly it occupied a firm, immovable position as the official teaching to which all scholars must strictly adhere. Thus, he acknowledged Shushigaku as the undoubted, official school, while personally holding to Yōmei learning, and having to live with the disadvantages of adhering to heterodox teaching.

Ishizaki[15] mentions the instance of Hayashi, the head of the official school in Edo, appealing for contributions in order to solve a family financial problem. When Ōshio heard of the Hayashi's declining fortunes and of the appeal to retrieve the situation, he sighed and said, "Ah, the Hayashi family control the whole government educational administration, and so even if he says his hunger pierces his emaciated bones, how can he, without shame, follow the example of the common people and do such a disgraceful thing?" Immediately Heihachirō raised the money from some of his wealthy supporters and handed it to a messenger to relieve the Hayashi family's economic distress. He explained the reason for his actions as follows: "I respect the Tokugawa government very much as a public institution. Thus, I am working for the Hayashi family; what I am doing is not for myself." To Ōshio, rescuing from disgrace the Hayashi family who represented Shushigaku was "fulfilling righteousness in society". He therefore protected the existing order from loss of authority and thus maintained the prestige of the *Bakufu* - not the act of a rebel!

Ōshio had been reared on the official Shushi doctrine of the establishment, "but he had little sympathy with the dry, narrow, conventional formalism which characterised that creed and its professors." (Murdoch, 1964, (ii):454) Because he strongly disliked the over-emphasis on external propriety, he threw the system overboard. Many promising young officials would have followed suit but few had the courage of their convictions. Most were unwilling to sacrifice all prospects of a career. What drew Ōshio to the proscribed Yōmei school was its emphasis on the promptings of a pure conscience. In it he found a source of inspiration and a spiritual refuge.

i) *His Beliefs*

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[15]In *Ōshio Heihachirōden* as cited by Okamoto, 1975:60.

During the 1830's, while the 1790 edict was still in force, Ōshio Heihachirō was the most eminent Yōmei philosopher. He had gradually abandoned Shushigaku in favour of the rival "heretical" school of Yōmeigaku as he had found this more compatible to his own independent, activist disposition. Thus, years before he even envisaged the least possibility of revolt, he had adopted an intellectual stance contrary to the Establishment. Ōshio believed that the essence of government was to exclude people who caused damage. In the beginning of *Senshindō Sakki*,[16] Ōshio enumerated the substance of his theory under five heads as follows:

a) Returning to the origin of the universe.
b) Acting intuitively.
c) Transforming temperament.
d) Unifying life and death.
e) Forsaking falsehood.

Okamoto comments that the fourth and fifth belong to the universal moral law and that the third is also conventional Shushi teaching. Thus, it was only the first and second, namely, "returning to the origin of the universe" (*ki taikyo*) and "acting intuitively" (*ryōchi o itasu*) that were specially characteristic of Heihachirō's fundamental belief.

a) *Returning to the Origin of the Universe*

Ōshio could not accept any form of dualism. He vehemently rejected the various categories of distinctions taught by Shushi scholars, believing that these fallacious distinctions that men had imposed upon the world were the cause of its woes. Because he denied the validity of all conceptual distinctions, Heihachirō could sweepingly reject much in society. In place of these various social, political, and economic distinctions between men, he accepted the criterion of the original goodness of men. He believed that the fundamental spirit of the ordinary man was no different from that of the sage and that of the wretched man was identical with that of the aristocrat. Just as ordinary men could transform themselves into sages, so aristocrats could sink to the level of ordinary men. Thus, "a prince who knows goodness but does not act

[16]As cited in Okamoto, 1975:50.

(against evil) becomes lowly. A lowly man who knows what is not proper, and refrains from acting, can become a prince." (Senshin:136) Although Heihachirō spoke of the potential of lowly men to become sages, he maintained a strong sense of elitism. Throughout his lectures he made it plain that few would actually attain to sagehood. Therefore the true sages, because so few, must act publicly to "save the people!"

Ōshio repeatedly insisted that distinctions obscure the original unity of all things which he imagined to be "only goodness", "pure as the spirit of a newborn child". (Koschmann, 1978:23) He felt that one could only re-identify with the universal ideal of absolute goodness through a process of "self-clarification" which purges all false distinctions from the mind. For Heihachirō, absolute goodness stood for the universal ideal to which all could "re-identify", that is, "returning to the absolute". He believed that humans are fundamentally one with heaven, their essences one with moral truth. Because he believed that the personal and social were identical, to Ōshio, "self-clarification" basically meant public action. One of his well-known dogmas was, "the way of the sage is always in the public realm alone". He therefore advocated the principle of selfless action in society.

He believed that goodness was permanent, innate in men and in things, and hence was not of man's creation; on the other hand, evil was impermanent, not essential to men and to things, and thus was of man's doing or lack of doing. Consequently, because evil was not inevitable and permanent, it could be "rectified" through action in society. He was convinced that people had the capacity to realise immortality in an active rectification of injustice. "For Ōshio", Najita suggests, "the sage was neither a scholar writing erudite commentaries nor a recluse reflecting on the tragic and ephemeral nature of things, but the iconoclastic rebel." (1970:155)

To Yōmei philosophers, the origin of the universe is the light of the universe which embraces and reveals the two worlds of mind and matter, and is the emptiness which came from the invisible, immaterial. Spiritual light or understanding is an absolute thing and Ōshio believed we are all potentially receptive of it. It is called *taikyo* (the origin of the universe). This enables us to distinguish between good and bad and, by a transformation of personality, we can return to the absolute.

In Ōshio's sense, this meant a return to *makoto* (sincerity) and goodness, and the imperative need to "rectify injustice" (fusei o tadasu). Since *taikyo* comprised absolute Truth, error and wickedness were impermanent and could be overcome, just like time and death can, by re-identifying with the absolute. This approach to the evils in society relates to the Confucian doctrine of man's original goodness as expressed in the famous dictum, "men by nature are fundamentally good; by nature they share this quality". This sageliness inherent in the heart of every person invalidates the rigid, formalised, class distinctions which were so important in the Tokugawa concept of society. All human beings, regardless of their sex and station in life, have the potential "to return to the absolute". That alone is an amazing concession for a Confucian-samurai scholar. In theory, the meanest peasant woman toiling in the ricefields could become a sage, but in actuality, few did. Enigma that he was, in spite of this insistence, by personality, Ōshio was a fierce elitist who was very conscious of his own samurai status.

Thus to rid our minds of the false, for example, conventional categories of distinctions, it is essential to re-identify ourselves with the Absolute Spirit. As a samurai-philosopher, Ōshio was much concerned with the theme of death and, in his lectures, he stressed that both time and death were negated by a return to the Absolute Spirit. He repeatedly stressed the meaninglessness of physical death. Mishima Yukio (1970:36) quoted Ōshio as saying, "What is this thing called death?...We cannot possibly begrudge the death of the body; but the death of the spirit...that indeed is to be dreaded."

"Ōshio's system of metaphysics which profoundly influenced his own career and that of many a heroic successor was based on Wang Yang-ming's concept of *taikyo* (Absolute Spirit or Principle)...the fundamental creative force and the source of all things in the universe." (Morris, 1975:195) In one of his lectures Ōshio used the metaphor of a jar to illustrate this. When the jar is broken, the empty space that formerly filled it immediately returns to the space outside. In such a way is the human body automatically merged with the Absolute Spirit. It is eternal and stable. Being universal and preceding all things, including reason, it cannot be grasped by mere scholarship; being absolute and including all things, it transcends form, time, history, and change. Heihachirō was increasingly exercised by the subject of social justice. He saw all injustices as

stemming from the Chu Hsi type of dualism by which one group of people was judged as being intrinsically different from another. It had stressed distinctions between reason and matter, knowledge and action, active and passive, positive and negative, male and female, superior and inferior, past and present, life and death, and so on. By contrast, in Ōshio's metaphysics, there was no opposition between things. He felt that we could only reach the truth by perceiving the unity of all these categories. For instance, regarding time, Heihachirō taught that the distinction between past and present, like evil, was imperfect, and therefore, could be "rectified" into timelessness. When a person rectifies evil and time, he becomes a sage, one with the Absolute in all things. He becomes indestructible, his spirit survives the seasons and he no longer fears death.

Ōshio's language was strongly reminiscent of Zen Buddhism. He continually admonished his students to be imperturbable in the face of death for one could realise immortality by totally sacrificing oneself in the conquest of evil and time. Being a samurai, it was not surprising that Ōshio should be attracted to this concept.

b) *Acting Intuitively*

Ōshio's thinking could be summed up in a nutshell as "acting according to intuition". In Yōmei philosophy, intuition (*ryōchi*) means the heart's essence. Miyagi (1984:16) summarises this: "The real substance of the heart is what, not just the sages, but also the ordinary people have in their minds as human beings." The basis of Ōshio's thought is *shin soku ri*, that is, "the heart is the same as reason". While crossing Lake Biwa in a storm, Heihachirō faced the imminent prospect of death and was resigned to it. He testifies that suddenly, from this theory of *shin soku ri*, he experienced enlightenment in much the same way as Wang Yang-ming instantaneously entered enlightenment at a place called Ryūjo.

The most influential Yōmei principle which Ōshio embraced was the unity of knowledge and action. Contrary to Shushigaku which taught that we must first acquire knowledge and then, as appropriate, act upon that knowledge, Ōshio insisted that "to know without acting means that we do not know" (*shitte okonawazaru wa imada kore shirazaru nari*). If we do not transform our moral truths into action, our actual understanding of

those truths is nullified. The attainment of intuitive knowledge impels the sage to carry out the dictates of his conscience directly in social and political action. Heihachirō believed that one could only really be a scholar if he unified knowledge and action. There was no other basis for scholarship. However, when he looked around him, he regretted that he could not see even one whom he regarded as a true scholar pursuing such learning. He declared, "There is no Confucianist anywhere." Some looked at his strict discipline towards learning and regarded him as a true Confucianist, but the literary world of that day reviled him and labelled his scholarship as "the egotistical Tenma-style learning". Even though he could not escape the charge of "amateur scholarship", Ōshio was noted for his exceptional bravery in transforming his "good knowing" into moral action. Yōmeigaku had reduced the significance of scholasticism and increased the value of moral intuition and action. With regards to the first, it placed greater emphasis on the heart, while the latter indicated that simple contemplation was not enough if the thought was not translated into the corresponding deed. Ōshio believed that our goal must be innate, intuitive knowledge and only by attaining such knowledge can we see clearly and act accordingly.

After Yang-ming's death there were various interpretations of the doctrine of the "extension of the innate knowledge of the good" but Okada (1984:218-9) identifies the three main schools of thought as:
1) The Existential Realisation school which emphasised the actuality and utility of innate knowledge. They sought a kind of enlightenment experience based in reality whereby "being" and "non-being" were equated; they explained the immediacy of the here-and-now and emphasised direct or sudden enlightenment. This offered an attractive Confucian alternative to the Zen emphasis on enlightenment through sitting in meditation. As this school conformed well to the mood of the times, it came to predominate.
2) The Quietist school took "innate knowledge" and divided it into the fundamentals of emptiness and quietism on the one hand, and the practical value of inspiration on the other. The theory of establishing fundamentals and promoting utility explained quietism as the essence of Wang's doctrine of the extension of the innate knowledge of good. They also emphasised Wang's concept of forming one body with all things.
3) The Cultivation school taught that "innate knowledge" could only be acquired by cultivating sincerity. It promoted the practice of caution, honesty, loyalty and faithfulness, as well as the following of goodness

and the correcting of faults. Generally, the school maintained Wang's main emphasis on the unity of theoretical fundamentals and practical effort.

Ōshio Heihachirō "followed Ch'ien Te-hung (1496-1574) of the Cultivation school by referring to the substance of innate knowledge as the great emptiness and by regarding selfishness in the context of emptiness as the original substance of the universe." (ibid., 222) No issue was of more personal interest to Neo-Confucians than that of the mind and human nature. For nineteenth century Japanese thinkers, questions on the mind and human nature were linked to the exercise of retrospection and, at this time, tended to include a rejection of intellectualism or "book learning". While most attention has been focussed on the exploits of such activist nineteenth century Neo-Confucians as Ōshio Heihachirō, Sakuma Shōzan and Yoshida Shōin, they were not typical and, in fact, were roundly criticised by other Neo-Confucianists. Generally, Neo-Confucians believed in suppressing disorder and renewing society through self-cultivation.

ii) *Ōshio's Personality*

By personality Ōshio was fiercely elitist. In spite of his insistence on the potential of lowly men becoming sages, the theme implicit throughout his lectures is that only a few would actually become sages. "Egalitarianism and elitism were utterly congruous in Ōshio's ethics of action" is the way Najita (1970:166) explains the enigma. For all his egalitarian professions, Ōshio was inordinately proud of his samurai lineage and made a point of tracing his ancestry back to a Tokugawa vassal house. He was always "very conscious of his own samurai status and he treated his followers with all the paternalistic authoritarianism of a feudal overlord...The sage-hero as conceived by Ōshio -- and certainly no false modesty inhibited him from attributing the role to himself -- was a passionate, single-minded man, who had achieved intuitive knowledge of himself and all things." (Morris, 1975:197) Because that which is personal and that which is social were identical to Ōshio, he maintained that "the way of the sage is (always) in the public realm alone". (Najita, 1970:163) He pictured the sage as a belligerent, iconoclastic rebel whose action in society was "like that of a madman".

Ōshio commanded an undoubted reputation, not only being famous as a police official but also as an exceptional Yōmei scholar. When he appeared in the suburbs of Ōsaka to give lectures, it is said that his dress was truly something to behold. "In learning, Ōshio studied Yōmeigaku to the extent that he was called 'Little Yang-ming' by an acquaintance, the famous poet, Rai Sanyō" (Okamoto, 1980:605) Ōshio put into effect Wang Yang-ming's most famous dictum "To know and not to act is the same as not knowing at all" by refusing to rest content with a successful official career, or later with the secure life of teaching and scholarship. One writer has observed that Heihachirō was even more consistent in his activism than the great master Wang Yang-ming himself.

"Despite Ōshio's reputation as a scholar and thinker, he was far more a teacher; but his samurai background made him rely heavily on passion and zeal rather than on analytical finesse and subtlety of insight." (Najita, 1970:159) His lectures were often laced with sarcasm and he regularly fulminated against corruption in the bureaucracy and the extravagance of the wealthy. He also frequently used the whip on his students for their laxity in the pursuit of sagely studies, for indulging in the vulgar pastime of reading novels, as well as for their excessive drinking and courting of wicked women. "His strong will and idealism were combined with a wild, hot-tempered nature that bordered on the frenetic. During one of his lectures he worked himself into such a state of fury concerning the iniquities of the government that he abruptly seized a gurnard...and gobbled up the entire fish from head to tail with a loud crunching of bones." (Morris, 1975:192)

Morris goes on to observe that, "Like so many famous men in history who have championed the downtrodden elements of society, he seems to have had little tolerance, humility, or gentleness in his actual dealings with individuals." (ibid., 193) His own family were at times the objects of his wrath. Knowing Ōshio's principles against accepting gifts, his wife concealed a decorative comb that someone gave her until she had an opportunity to return it. But, on discovering it, Ōshio was livid with rage and ordered her to shave her head in the style of a nun. There are many such episodes which give us a vivid image of Heihachirō's personality, showing how he hated dishonesty and lawlessness and speaking eloquently of his temperament which easily erupted into great fury at any kind of corruption.

Heihachirō was engaged in a lifelong battle against illness, having suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis, but his extraordinary mental strength compensated for his physical deficiencies. At times, it is said, he would go for more than ten days without sleeping either day or night yet his mind and spirit were as clear and strong as at the beginning. Usually Heihachirō did not drink *sake* but, when he did, it is said that he could drain half a *to* (about 2 gallons). He would eat about ten bowls of rice at one meal, and in travelling he would cover thirty *ri* (over 70 miles) in one day. Even allowing for some exaggeration, his unusually great mental energy can be plainly inferred.

Ōshio Heihachirō was a charismatic type of leader who attracted a following by embodying the morality of a particular ideological position. This ultimately brought him to lead his followers in rebellion against the ills of society. Ōshio possessed extraordinary mental powers but he was also extremely conceited about his own ability which once prompted his intimate friend Sanyō[17] to observe, "He over-emphasises his spirit and moves very sharply but, like any sharp thing, breaks easily which clearly exposes this weakness in his personality." Morris (1975:193) suggests that "The philosophy that came to dominate Ōshio's life and that finally drove this loyal samurai to rebel against the government he had served so faithfully was perfectly suited to his complex personality."

7. *Some Famous Yōmei Scholars*

This school in Japan was advocated by, and owes its fame to, such outstanding men as Nakae Tōju, (d.1648), Kumazawa Banzan (d.1691), Miwa Shissai (d.1744), Satō Issai (d.1850), and Ōshio Heihachirō (d.1837). As Tsunoda (1958:378) notes: "Even during the heyday of *Bakufu* power there were men of independent mind who offered alternatives to the established Neo-Confucian orthodoxy, even if they did not directly attack it". Naturally, the *Bakufu* did not appreciate this opposition philosophy and, from time to time, they suppressed this "dangerous" teaching, often with severe penalties. The administration feared any ideology tending towards social reform.

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[17]As quoted by Okamoto, 1975:75.

Although Nakae Tōju and subsequent followers of the Yōmei philosophy differed among themselves in many respects, they all agreed on the primacy of introspection, independence of mind, and a pure conscience. "Moral cultivation based on the Yōmei concept of the 'Prime Conscience' appealed to many Japanese to such an extent that Yōmei learning developed into a pseudo-religious system among warriors as well as among upper-class farmers and merchants." (Kitagawa, 1966:158) The philosophy of Wang Yang-ming had a strong anti-scholastic bent and thus certain outstanding adherents of his teaching, such as Kumazawa, were largely self-taught. They poured their energies into practical action rather than book-learning. Even the most scholarly representatives of this school tended to denigrate the authority of written words and supported a subjective morality which led to sincere action. The last important figure in Yōmeigaku was Ōshio Heihachirō who "regretted the discontinuation of studies on 'good knowing' after Shissai's death and preached, following Tōju and Banzan, that 'good knowing' in a person's heart was at one with the universal Great Emptiness." (Yamashita, 1983:335-6) We shall look briefly at the more famous Japanese Yōmei scholars in order to trace the route by which such a philosophy passed down to Ōshio.

i) *Nakae Tōju (1608-1648)*

Yōmeigaku was introduced into Japan by Nakae Tōju, the peasant "Sage of Ōmi" (*Ōmi Seijin*). Basically, Nakae's contention was that, whereas the Chu Hsi scholars preached the way, not sufficient emphasis was placed on the actual practising of the way. It was Wang's emphasis on deeds, rather than words, that attracted Nakae. "Tōju began his studies with the philosophy of Chu Hsi, but in his mid-thirties, turned his attention to the teachings of Wang Yang-ming", although he "continued to admire both philosophers." (Hane, 1983:312) After serving as a samurai in a small fief in Iyo, Shikoku, in 1634, at the age of 26, Nakae determined to sacrifice all prospects of future advancement in order to return to Ogawa to care for his frail, aging peasant mother. Thus, he demonstrated through action his belief in filial piety as the fundamental virtue. It was the practice of Confucian philosophers to single out some particular virtue from the Classics as the focal point of their teaching. For Nakae (1928:215-6), "the focal point was 'filial piety' which he regarded as the underlying moral power in the universe." His philosophy tended to foster an activist way of life and influenced many important thinkers and the political leaders of Tokugawa Japan. He firmly believed that right

should be done for its own sake, not because it was profitable with the hope of receiving either praise or reward. Contrary to Shushi principles and samurai conventions, to Nakae, the most important duty of all was not loyalty to one's lord, but piety towards one's parents. The result of his life and teaching was that soon this humble village schoolmaster was wielding a moral influence near and far. His fame as a teacher spread abroad and his precepts were taken to heart by country folk as well as by educated men, even attracting such able men as Kumazawa Banzan to his school and influencing such great scholars as Arai Hakuseki.

Wang had explained the unity of knowledge and action by showing that, no matter how much a person read or talked about filial piety, he could not truly be said to have understood it until he put it into practice. One's understanding of virtue must be practised. Nakae gave an excellent example of this. His conscience told him that the well-being of his parents should be the first concern of every pious son, even though it meant virtual seclusion from the world to eke out an existence in a fairly remote region. Nakae also accepted the Yōmei teaching that correct knowledge and sound understanding were not derived from the study of approved texts but from intuitive insights, that is, from within one's conscience. Public behaviour followed private impulse. This kind of intuitionism held that men always know how to act correctly, without recourse to the "investigation of things". "Nakae Tōju's doctrine of innate or intuitive knowledge is directly derived from Wang Yang-ming, according to whom this sense constituted the goodness of human nature and rendered man one with Heaven." (Inoue, 1932:81) Tōju believed in the equality of men and women for since "good knowledge" is inherent in all, all have an equal chance of becoming virtuous and the fundamental truths of life were the same for all regardless of their station in life. Whereas other Confucianists usually addressed themselves to scholars and officials, Nakae offered guidance to the humblest of men and even to women whom Confucianists and Buddhist often neglected.

ii) *Kumazawa Banzan (1619-91)*

The most famous and influential of Nakae's disciples was Kumazawa Banzan, an energetic *rōnin* philosopher-official who was much concerned with the plight of hungry peasants. Under the benign protection of the great Daimyō Ikeda Mitsumasa of Bizen and the wise leadership of his chief

minister, the model samurai-administrator, Kumazawa Banzan, Okayama became the major centre of Yōmei learning and reform and thus attracted the opposition of the *Bakufu* administration. Banzan became a major and active reformer of the late Tokugawa period. Though his ideas on the whole were hardly revolutionary and, in fact, his advocacy of a return to a more complete rice economy was actually reactionary, he was eventually expelled from office for his wild unorthodoxy. In 1657 he retired from active service and concentrated on teaching. Unlike the protagonists of Shushigaku, he did not teach blind obedience but insisted that rulers be worthy of their name by practising benevolent rule towards the people. Kumazawa[18] claimed:

> The "Heaven-appointed duty of the subject is to help his lord exercise benevolent government (*jinsei*) by obeying the judgment and commands of his lord, or making up for his shortcomings...But if his lord should sin, let him shrink not from correcting the lord at any cost, for thus shall submission be saved from slavery. The Heavenly way stoops to serve, the earthly way obeys superiors."

Banzan's extensive writing on questions of economics and administration were rational and humanitarian and laid a foundation for much social and economic thought of the Meiji period. He stressed the practical character of Yōmei learning and taught that it was necessary to understand humanity and actual social conditions because extensive knowledge alone did not guarantee the successful conduct of state affairs.

Both Nakae and Kumazawa were regarded as cultural heroes in the Tokugawa period. They maintained both the profound respect of scholars who believed in the importance of scholarship and the reverence of the common people because of their humane concern for the poor and for their rejection of bureaucratic politics. They did not retreat into seclusion to write poetic laments, but involved themselves in practical agriculture and in teaching the people and, thus, were idealised as true heroes of the period. As samurai, trained to become bureaucrats, they were instructed in the Yōmei principle of action which taught that there were occasions in life when one had to commit oneself to a course of action, not because it was advantageous to oneself but because it was right. Both Nakae and Kumazawa did this, sacrificing their security by severing

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[18]Cited from Fisher, G. M. (transl.), "Daigaku Wakumon by Kumazawa Banzan", *T.A.S.J. 2nd Series*, XVI (1938), p. 271.

their ties with the establishment and denouncing the existing politics of the Shogunate. They redirected their energies to other fields; Nakae returning to the country to care for his decrepit mother and to help poor farmers, and Kumazawa directing his talents to improving agricultural techniques in order to rescue farmers from their parlous state. Influenced by the Yōmei spirit of individualism, both rejected position and power to commit their lives to their inner conscience or intuition in order to help the people, a logical step from their Yōmei conviction of the "unity of knowledge and action", which ultimately led them to defy political authority.

iii) *Miwa Shissai (1669-1744)*

A son of a Shinto priest, Miwa "is said to have revitalised Yōmeigaku after the deaths of Tōju and Banzan." (Yamashita, 1983:335) He converted to Yōmeigaku from Shushigaku and held that the *Four Books* and *Five Classics* were but an expression of innate "good knowing", and that the essence of these documents was thus found in our own hearts. His greatest contribution was the first annotation of *Instructions for Practical Living*, a collection of Wang Yang-ming's sayings and writings, which was largely responsible for the increased popularity of Yōmeigaku.

Miwa did not approve of the rank system existing in the feudal society of the period. On the contrary, he preached the complete equality of man, saying, "From the Emperor down to the petty warriors, *eta* (pariahs) and beggars, they are all men. From Sages down to men of mediocrity and outcastes, they are all men." (Nakamura, 1964:427-8) Yet, at the same time, it is apparent from his remark, "Even beggars who are not fit for the Way of Man must not be neglected" (Bamba:226-7), that he acknowledged the existing ranks. Miwa is considered to be the last great Yōmei teacher prior to Ōshio and Satō Issai.

iv) *Satō Issai (1772-1859)*

Issai was well-known as a profound Confucian scholar and head of the official Shogunate school, the Shōheikō, but Dower (1979:22) notes that "he was concerned with conscience and personal activism as well as social conservatism -- with the samurai spirit exemplified in the concept of *bu* as well as the scholarly tradition embraced under the rubric of *bun*." He

also engaged in correspondence with Fujita Tōko and Ōshio Heihachirō, emphasising to them the public importance of private action. Thus while Satō Issai, as head of the *Bakufu* college, trained bureaucrats in Neo-Confucian ideology through his public lectures on Shushi philosophy, he was also attracted to the more individualistic Yōmei teaching and gained nation-wide fame for his private lectures on Ōyōmei idealism which he admired. His position could be said to represent a synthesis between the two schools and his *Genshi Shiroku* is regarded as having exerted a considerable influence in the *Bakumatsu* period. Some of the great innovators of the *Bakumatsu* period, such as Sakuma Shōzan, Ōhashi Totsuan and Yokoi Shōnan were among his students.

When Satō Issai was given a copy of *Senshindō Sakki* by Heihachirō, he diplomatically replied: "Although I have read Yōmeigaku books from of old, it is only for one's own admonition; all lectures are given solely on Shushigaku. As our family is especially devoted to the Hayashi family it would be a hindrance if I taught Yōmeigaku. Because it raises doubts in people, I do not teach other doctrine than the Chu Hsi teaching."[19] In this way, Satō Issai tried to avoid the stigma of being labelled as a Yōmei scholar.

v) *Their Influence on Ōshio Heihachirō*

After Nakae, Kumazawa and Miwa, Yōmei scholars completely ceased for a long time in Kansai (West Japan) and so there was no one to lecture on it. Ōshio had to study on his own guided only by the two Yōmei books that Miwa had translated. The inspiration derived from Nakae and his disciples moved some of Japan's more remarkable characters. "The most celebrated Japanese followers of Ōyōmei were resolute men of a reforming spirit, and it is noteworthy that the list includes as well as great scholars, leaders of revolutionary movements like Ōshio..." (Sansom, 1931:511) Ōshio, though a *Bakufu* retainer, was shaped by Yōmei learning and was moved to action as a result of his knowledge of the situation. He was profoundly affected by the plight of the needy and by the ills of society. Heihachirō was concerned to serve the people even to the extent of sacrificing himself in the name of justice, being greatly frustrated and angered by the corruption and inflexibility of the *Bakufu* system.

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[19]Quoted in Okamoto, 1975:54.

In Najita's opinion, "Ōshio Heihachirō was a political sage (*seija*)...He was, however, a sage of a particular sort; in many ways he was a saint bent on attacking political and economic corruption -- indeed, conceptual corruptions of all sorts -- and offering a paradise of justice for the common folk." (1970:155) For Ōshio, the unity of knowledge and action meant that fearless action replace conventional loyalty as he rebelled against the regime to which both he and his ancestors had sworn fealty. To him the realisation of justice for the people was a moral imperative. Norman assesses the reason for Ōshio Heihachirō being so deeply influenced by the Ōyōmei philosophy as: "It was less authoritarian in its emphasis than the Chu Hsi school...more individualistic and democratic in outlook." (1940:33,n56)

Like Nakae and Kumazawa before him, Ōshio refused to be a tool of despotic government and, like them, he followed a course of action in harmony with the dictates of his conscience. But, unlike his predecessors, Ōshio was to transform his commitment to inner principle into rebellion on behalf of the common people. In him, quietism was transformed into active revolt on behalf of the down-trodden. Clearly it was Ōshio who gave the Yōmei tradition in Japan such a radical demonstration that actions be public rather than private. Thus it was Ōshio, as a Yōmei scholar, who was one of the principal figures in developing it to its fullest. "For Ōshio, loyalty to the lord, either in personalised or institutionalised form, was being superseded by loyalty to absolute moral truth, which dictated action in and for society. His iconoclasm stemmed from that commitment." (Najita, 1970:165) Doubtless, his vigour was conditioned by his samurai spirit, but the nature and direction of his actions were influenced by his Yōmei ideology.

As part of the Kansei Reform, the *Bakufu* put a prohibition on heresy. That meant that teachings other than those of the official school were banned. Under such a situation one had to have extremely strong convictions to declare that he was studying anything other than Shushigaku. Ōshio is often assessed in the same light as Satō who taught a comparable message. But, unlike Satō who taught the ideas of Ōyōmei behind the screen of lecturing for the *Bakufu* on orthodox Shushigaku, Ōshio made plain his allegiance to Yōmei thought despite his full knowledge of the *Bakufu*'s official opposition to such heterodox ideas.

Actually, Heihachirō denounced as hypocrisy the teaching of Yōmei thought under the guise of Shushigaku.

In order to protect his official position which was one of the most influential in the country, Satō kept insulated from the social milieu whereas Ōshio insisted on acting out his ideas. For this reason, Ōshio has been accepted and respected as the more typical of the Yōmei position. In fact, Miyake Setsurei[20] is quoted as saying that "Ōshio was more consistent in his activism than the great master Wang Yang-ming himself." Although Ōshio had boldly declared his belief in Yōmeigaku, he did not openly attack Shushigaku. However, the very fact that he dared to criticise the official teaching at all indicates his real attitude towards Shushigaku; he did not recognise it at all, but his opposition to it was dignified. To Heihachirō, names were of no consequence. His teaching was simply seeking virtue and thus had no name but, if pressed to give it a name, he would merely call it the teaching of Confucius and Mencius.

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[20]Quoted in Shimada Kenji, *Shushigaku to Yōmeigaku*, Tōkyō, 1967:129.

III. *Teacher and Friend of Peasants*

The question is often asked why Ōshio, an Ōsaka city police officer, did not rely on the townspeople for his revolt. Why, on the contrary, did he have such a deep relationship with the peasants? The answer is probably found as much in Ōshio's personality and character as in the nature of the revolt and the constitution of townspeople's administration.

Heihachirō was a "lover of peasants" as well as "a master and teacher of peasants". "When Heihachirō worked as an official, especially when he was under Takai Yamashiro no Kami during the Bunsei era, (1818-30) and worked very energetically as a police official, it was a time when peasants appealed on a large scale" (Okamoto, 1975:71) against their hardships and injustices. Although there is no conclusive evidence that he was the responsible police officer who was directly in charge, as Takai's trusted lieutenant and "think tank" he exerted considerable influence on the development of such matters. Heihachirō always had a deep concern and interest in the livelihood of farmers and he drew many illustrations and parables for the classroom from peasant life and their struggles against injustice in many forms. He was a friend and supporter of the peasants in their economic struggles and doubtless he used his kind offices to mediate for them. Many peasants became his disciples and later joined his rebellion because they admired Heihachirō's goodness and compassion towards the "small people".

Some would say, particularly post-war Marxists, that he used the peasants as the manpower in this uprising, buying their support, and that the "fan of farmers" had ulterior motives. Even if that can be proved to be the true interpretation of the motivation behind Heihachirō's almsgiving, it is certainly belied by what I believe was his initial and genuine concern for the poor and distressed. Okamoto (1975:73-4) points out that there were limitations to his love and concern for farmers and cites Ōshio's reaction to the Mino, Kai, and Banshū peasant riots as evidence of this. From time to time throughout the Tokugawa period, peasants in extremes of poverty and worn down by life's economic struggles had risen in revolt even to the extent of confronting the military power of the magistrates and the daimyō and completely rejecting the feudal order. Heihachirō, at this point, had withdrawn his support of them.

In August, 1835, peasants, resenting the injustice of the governors who took advantage of the flood damage to feather their own nests, raised a peasant revolt in Mino. They attacked the governor's camp, killed or wounded some officials, and continued their violent riots for several days. Even though the fault was clearly with the governors, Heihachirō composed a poem, "All of a sudden rioters came and committed violence. When they kill people, it is the same as killing a hemp plant; they take open action and become rebels". Obviously here, Ōshio regarded the farmers who resisted the evil, tyrannical governors as bandits. Then again, a year later, in August 1836, a great riot occurred in Kai when armed peasants moved against Kōfu castle. A fierce exchange ensued as a warrior band went out to suppress the attack. On this occasion Heihachirō said, "These days poor harvests continue, the price of rice is very high, and people are suffering. Already in Kai there has been a riot and so we are not sure when a riot will happen in Ōsaka. In such a case, theoretically it is the government who would suppress it, but I also will work for the government."

Yet Ōshio had reacted in an entirely different way to the Banshū (Harima) riot of September, 1833, where it was said that a total of 10,000 rioted. Though this was probably an exaggeration, when this large uprising broke out, the Ōsaka police officials and subordinate policemen who were Ōshio's former colleagues were immediately despatched to arrest the rioters. His intimate acquaintance, Saitō Setsudō, gave on-the-spot information and doubtless Ōshio was familiar with the actual state of affairs. His reaction was, "There has been a riot in Harima province. ...Although it has calmed down, it was an unpleasant affair. Injured people will increase. It is really a sad event for a benevolent person (Confucianist)." Thus the fierce indignation and uneasiness that he felt in the case of the peasant riots at Mino and Kai were not felt here at Banshū. In fact, he looks on as a calm bystander. Why was there this remarkable difference in Ōshio's reaction? Doubtless because the Banshū revolt was aimed solely at the wealthy merchants and wealthy farmers who enriched themselves by unjustly plundering the poor, hard-working peasants. An analysis of the 116 houses that suffered as the result of the attack can be broadly classified as those of 7 wealthy farmers (village headmen and elders), 51 wealthy merchants (high-interest moneylenders, wholesalers, pawnbrokers) and 58 commercial capitalists (wine manufacturers, dried sardine merchants, cotton merchants, oil

merchants, rice merchants, etcetera). These were the very people that Heihachirō detested and upon whom he himself would have happily pronounced heaven's judgment. It was not basically an attack on the feudal authority, and so he could easily turn a blind eye, and maybe, even secretly rejoice over the occurrence. Thus Okamoto concludes, "In Heihachirō there were these kinds of limitations, but within these bounds he was still "the fan of the farmers" and "the teacher and friend of peasants". (1975:75)

Okamoto's theory gives serious consideration to the suburban peasants as being the constituent power behind the urban *uchikowashi* (smashings) in Ōsaka and even in Ōshio's revolt. Others give prominence to the city poor, although Abe Makoto[1] asserts that "tenants in Ōsaka at that time were the migrants who came from poor farming families in the regions surrounding Ōsaka. These migrants reflected the class struggle of the farming villages and seemed to be the most fierce critics of the city administration". Inui Hiromi suggests, "In this opinion, Abe regards the poor farming family in the suburbs of the big cities as homogeneous with urban poor", (1975:16), a Marxist explanation, but there seems to be little homogeneity between the poor suburban peasants and the city poor.

In his analysis of the later Ōsaka smashings of 1866, Sakai Hajime[2] notes the same homogeneous phenomenon: "Farmers around the big cities and the poor people belonged to the early stage of the proletariat class and the fact that many people around Ōsaka were leaving agricultural production was the major reason for Ōshio's revolt being so influential. Those who joined the revolt were not the farmers, but the early stage of the proletariat." Sakai calls "semi-proletariat" those who sojourned in the cities. But I believe we confuse the issue if we attempt to apply Marxist concepts to the situation and try to squeeze the natural unrest of the people into a Marxist mould. Clearly there was no homogeneity between the migrants from the country and the poor townsmen in the cities in Ōshio's time.

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[1]Abe Makoto, "Nōgyō to Tetsugaku no Zenshin -- Ōshio Chūsai ni tsuite", *Kōbe Daigaku Kenkyū*, No. 1, in Inui, 1975:16.
[2]Sakai Hajime, "Keiō Ninen Ōsaka Shūhen Uchikowashi ni tsuite", *Nōmin Tōsō Shi*, Vol.2, Part 2, in Inui, 1975:16.

It seems better to see Ōshio's base more in the wealthy middle-class farmers than in the proletariat. Much research has been done on the subject of the "peasant base" of Ōshio's revolt and, collating the results of this research, we can easily see that the bulk of Heihachirō's support came from the farming districts contiguous to Ōsaka city. This is especially true of such villages as Senjakuji village, Higashinari county in Settsu domain which accounted for 113 of those punished for participation in Ōshio's revolt, Moriguchi town in Manda county, Kawachi domain, 191, and Sonenji village in Katano county, Kawachi domain, 111. Ōshio's good friend, the popular agriculturist, Ōkura Nagatsune, who wanted to make peasants rich, regarded the Higashinari and Manda areas as progressive, agricultural regions where the production of cash crops was advanced.

But Okamoto Ryōichi[3], in a former article, had referred to Ōshio as being of the feudalistic, reactionary element and not a progressive and he regarded the outskirts of Ōsaka as rather underdeveloped, but later in his book, he changes his mind and acknowledges Heihachirō's disciple-farmers as "the wealthy farmers of the advanced region where the production of commercial crops is most developed". (1975:117) These obviously made up the nucleus of Ōshio's support. They constituted the main strength of the revolt, and the core areas which raised the participants for the army were clearly Higashinari county in Settsu domain and Manda and Katano counties in Kawachi domain. Over 600 from these three counties were later punished for their participation. From these areas disciple-farmers such as Hashimoto Chūbei, Kashioka Genemon, and Kashioka Denshichi of Senjakuji village, Shirai Kōemon of Moriguchi town, Fukao Saijirō of Sonenji village and Ueda Kōtarō of Kasugae village were especially active in recruitment both for Senshindō and the rebel army.

Inui (1975:18) shows there was a close correlation between Heihachirō's disciples, his almsgivings, and the recruiting of participants in his rebel army, which is natural, and he is critical of Okamoto who considered that from the outset Ōshio was planning to use the peasants for his own purposes. Doubtless Heihachirō would have expected the sympathy and the voluntary support of the farmers because he had addressed his manifesto criticising the Shogunate administration to the "minor farmers

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[3]Quoted from Inui Hiromi, "Ōshio no Ran to Nōminteki Kiban", *Hisutoria No. 69*, 1975:16.

in the villages of Settsu, Kawachi and Izumi". Thus, it is important to see what reasons Ōshio had for his expectations of the farmers.

1. *The Loyal Samurai*

"Ōshio was a samurai who held the office of Inspector of Police in Ōsaka. He was a fine type, humane, and sympathetic and very well educated." (Sadler, 1946:235) Heihachirō was a very able government official who sincerely wanted to repay the obligation which he felt seeing that generations ago his family had received the favour of Ieyasu. He was willing to pay any sacrifice in time and effort as the result. Kōda eulogises his integrity thus: "Even though he saw profit, he did not consent to advance; even though he saw injury, he did not consent to withdraw; if he achieved meritorious deeds with another, then he attributed that service to the other person; if he committed a fault with another person, he took responsibility for it himself." (1972:151) He was a faithful and loyal Shogunate official who, to the utmost of his ability, fulfilled his responsibilities. Certainly his criticism of the administration did not arise from any anti-Shogunate, or even any anti-feudal ideology.

He was so deeply moved by the special favour he received from Takai, the city's East Commissioner, that he worked long and arduously in the administration of the city. Even after his retirement, when there was a rumour that he would be summoned to Edo for employment with the central government, he was extremely happy. He regarded it as a potential opportunity to honour the name and status which he had inherited from his ancestors. He was thus excited with the high expectation that he could actually be involved in Shogunate politics. He had a firm belief that he could be used to maintain, restore, and strengthen the feudal system which was on the verge of collapse. Here was an opportunity of applying his knowledge to action, the main element in his philosophy. This is not the attitude of a political rebel. Heihachirō's habit of criticising the government did not mean that he was anti-Shogunate or anti-feudal in intention. On the contrary, because he saw the many inconsistencies in the current system which was in a state of crisis, as a member of the ruling class, he felt obliged to expose them so that the situation could be remedied. With his strong convictions he could not connive at them. He was too proud of his rank and office as a samurai and too full of gratitude to the Tokugawas to overthrow the system.

2. *The Defender of Peasants*

Though a loyal samurai and a learned scholar, Heihachirō had been roused by the distress of the peasants as well as by the poverty of the small folk in the town. He was a friend of, and had a very intimate relationship with, simple peasants and poor townsfolk alike and they idolised this charismatic figure.

Heihachirō was arrogant, but he still truly had a heart of pity for the needy. He had genuine sympathy towards the poor and destitute who were suffering in the midst of the Tempō famine. Ōshio sympathised with their hard work and trials; he grieved for them when they were the victims of floods and bad harvests; he empathised with them as they bore the onerous burden of excessive taxation. To him it was a precious sight to see the peasants devoting themselves untiringly from dawn to dusk to the cultivation of the fields. This feeling often elicited Heihachirō's sympathy and inspired him to write many poems eulogising their industry. From the beginning Ōshio cherished a deep feeling of familiarity towards these simple and honest peasants and he grieved over them as they were increasingly bowed down and ultimately crushed under the weight of their tax-burden. He saw that the excessive feudal taxes were inflicting hardship on the peasants and he knew that they were being led into ruin from which it would be almost impossible to extricate them. Ōshio had the insight to foresee that it would be the abuse and the ruin of the peasants that would ultimately bring the collapse of the Shogunate feudal system. To one who fiercely worked for the soundness of the feudal system this was a bitter pill, the most feared outcome.

3. *His Friends*

Several authors, including Kōda Shigetomo (1972:134-144), give a list of Heihachirō's friends, peers, and elder acquaintances, taken from a selection of appendices to *Senshindō Sakki* (*Furokushō*) From these various sources we can draw up an interesting list of scholars and Shogunate officials who respected Ōshio and, to varying degrees, were influenced by him.

Itō Jinsai. Literature by Itō relating to Ōshio is carefully preserved in *Kogidō Bunko*. It reveals the surprise in those days that an intell-

ectual such as Heihachirō was throwing his life away. The resultant shock to his fellow intellectuals of the time can easily be surmised.

Satō Issai. Commonly called Sutezō among his other names, he assumed the names of Aijitsu Rō and Rōgoken. He studied at the Kaitokudō, a famous private school in Ōsaka, and at the Rinke School in Edo. In 1833, when Heihachirō presented his *Sakki* to him, he was an old teacher of 62 years old. In the letter which Heihachirō enclosed with *Sakki* he almost looked up to Issai as his teacher and Issai's reply which encouraged him was also full of friendship and courtesy even though the two never had any opportunity of meeting each other.

Kakuda Kan, commonly called Saijirō, was from the feudal clan of Oka. As a youth he studied at the Kaitokudō and among his literary works are *Kinsei Sōgo* and *Zoku Kinsei Sōgo*. According to *Furokushō*, Heihachirō simply gave him *Sakki* through the mediation of the famous painter, Tanomura Chikuden, and so the two had not formerly met.

Saitō Setsudō, commonly called Tokuzō, is famous as the author of *Setsudō Bunwa*. On his first visit to Ise, through Ajiro Hironori's introduction, Heihachirō became acquainted with Setsudō as well as with Hiramatsu Rakusai, Kawamura Chikuha, Shioda Zuisai and others. Since that time whenever Ōshio visited Ise, he made a point of going through Tsu. In September, 1833, Setsudō came to Ōsaka and stayed several days at Senshindō. He also received an old sword through Ōshio's good offices and he composed a book of ancient Chinese seven-word poems in order to thank him. Judging from the fact that Heihachirō requested Setsudō to write the preface for *Kohon Daigaku Katsumoku*, he obviously had respect for Setsudō.

Kawakita Jūki, commonly called Kiemon, a Confucianist lecturer of the Shimahara clan, was not personally acquainted with Ōshio but he frequently made the return trip between Kyōto and Settsu. Because he desired to become acquainted with Heihachirō, he asked a disciple, Yokoyama, to pass on his name card. It is clear from this that he had warm feelings towards Ōshio.

Ōtomo Mairu was from Chikuzen in Kyūshū. Hearing of Heihachirō's fame, he wanted to become acquainted with him, but in spite of this desire, their contact was confined to correspondence.

Yoshimura Shin, commonly called Ryūsuke, was from Aki province. He was originally from the Ōda clan. Being a pupil of Issai, he believed in Yōmei learning. He died in November, 1866, at the age of 70.

Utsuki Taikō, commonly called Shimousa, was an old retainer of the Hikone domain.

Hiramatsu Rakusai, commonly called Kennosuke, and later, Kizō, was a retainer of the Tsu domain. As he gave a congratulatory gift on the occasion of Kakunosuke's wedding, it seems as though he was on intimate terms with Heihachirō.

Fukui Shin, commonly called Ōmi, was the son of the doctor, Fukui Tanba no Kami, of the Imperial Court.

Abe Hakkō, commonly called Tomisaburō, was a man of the Owari domain.

Rai Sanyō. One of Rai's essays and six of his poems are mentioned at the end of the *Furokushō* and the circumstances leading to this collection are clear according to one of Heihachirō's own books written in August, 1834. The six poems were written as Sanyō's appreciation when he returned the complete works of Yōmei which he had borrowed from Heihachirō at the same time as he borrowed *Tokushi Kanken*. Then Sanyō had been presented with a picture by a Chinese painter which he had repeatedly requested. He was so pleased that he wrote a poem as thanks. The essay was the preface which was written commemorating his departure to Owari. This preface frankly exposes current affairs in the same way that Heihachirō himself was thinking and this led him to exclaim, "No one knows me like Sanyō".

Sanyō came down from Kyōto and introduced Shinozaki Shōchiku to Heihachirō in March 1824, in the first instance, and then in April 1832, he came to Senshindō, read the manuscript of *Kohon Daigaku Katsumoku* and wanted to write a preface to it. Also he read a number of items in *Sakki* and promised to comment on them, but that September Sanyō died from illness. Hearing of his illness, Heihachirō went to visit him in Kyōto but was too late to see him before his death. Ōshio greatly mourned his passing. In April the following year, when Sanyō's son visited Senshindō on his way home from Edo to Aki province, Ōshio gave him a volume of *Sakki* and said,

"My heart felt it was just like giving it to Sanyō". At a glance it would seem that Sanyō and Heihachirō were incompatible, but actually they always had a good relationship. Their comings and goings to visit each other were continual. Sanyō, recognising their friendship, called Ōshio "Little Yang-ming". He appreciated Heihachirō's knowledge and courage. Sanyō's eulogy of Ōshio was, "You look at my heart. I am embodying your heart. This relationship will not be broken for a hundred years."

Shinozaki Shōchiku was commonly called Chōzaemon. He was the adopted son of Shinozaki Santō and was called "The Kōnoike of Confucianists". After the revolt, Shōchiku said to Gennosuke, "The nature of Ōshio's study is that he thinks everything that comes out of his mind is what comes from "intuition" and so he becomes more and more arrogant. This is much the same as a certain rich merchant who indulged in the tea ceremony and bought more and more expensive tea cups." Gennosuke replied, "The analogy of this rich merchant is quite true but, at this point, you, Shōchiku, are also somewhat guilty for you have had contact with Heihachirō for all these years and, while knowing his teaching, you have neither criticised nor commented on them but have accepted what he said. In Ōsaka, because you, Shōchiku, a well-known Confucianist, did not criticise Ōshio, nobody else was able to do so. Thus he became more and more arrogant. And Shōchiku, you are partly responsible for making Heihachirō arrogant." So saying, both of them laughed. (Kōsai Hiki)

Sakamoto Gennosuke was a police officer of Tamatsukuriguchi. He was an expert of the Ōgino school of gunnery and had formerly had a close connection with Heihachirō. At the time of Ōshio's revolt he was in charge of the subordinate policemen and he distinguished himself by shooting to death Ōshio's supporter, Umeda Genemon, who was called "The *Rōnin* of Hikone". He rendered meritorious service in helping to suppress the riot. His colleague, Shibata Kanbei, was Heihachirō's lancemanship teacher and, through his introduction, he came to know Ōshio. He also introduced Shōichirō, the son of his colleague, Ōi Denjirō, to Senshindō. He wrote *Kōsai Hiki* which is research into Ōshio's revolt and, seeing his record is probably based on the investigations of suspected participants in the revolt and on rumours current at that time, there are doubtless some mistakes, but the contents of *Kōsai Hiki* are generally regarded as fairly authentic. Gennosuke died in September 1860, at the age of 70 and his grave is in Dairinji temple in Kōzu, Ōsaka.

Shibata Kanbei was also a police officer of Tamatsukuriguchi and was well-versed in the Saburi School of lancemanship. He taught Heihachirō this skill. Five letters from Heihachirō now remain with the Shibata family. On the day of the revolt, together with Sakamoto Gennosuke, he performed a meritorious feat in disrupting the rebels' line and in beating three rebels to death.

Kondō Morishige, expert in the study of cataloguing, was widely known by people as he distinguished himself in the explanation of Ezo Chishima (Hokkaidō area). It is not certain what opportunities there were for Heihachirō and Morishige to become acquainted although Morishige was the commissioner of bows in Ōsaka from 1819-1821.

Yabe Suruga no Kami. His name was Sadakata, and from July 1833 till September 1836, he was famous as Ōsaka's West Commissioner. During his term of office he undertook the dredging of the Yodo River. A story of Suruga is told in *Tōko Zuihitsu* in which he said, "During my term of office I often invited Heihachirō who was in retirement and discussed secret matters with him. I also heard of my own faults and gained considerable benefit. One day when eating with Heihachirō, he was so full of indignation that, forgetting about me, he crunched a gurnard to pieces from head to tail." Seeing this, a servant said, "He is crazy", and admonished Suruga on no account to get close to him, but he continued his relationship with Ōshio. Okamoto suggests that "It is possible to say that he became a famous commissioner because he followed Heihachirō's recommendations. Again, seeing that he entrusted his children's education to Heihachirō, it shows Yabe's strong confidence in Heihachirō." (1975:87-8) In Yoshimi Kyūroemon's *Gimmisho*, Ōshio stated, "I submitted to the previous commissioner some publications that I myself wrote...also sometimes he enquired of me matters concerning his work. In such cases I declared everything that was in my heart and I felt quite happy." It was not clear who this "previous commissioner" was, but Kōda considers him to be Suruga.

Immediately after assuming office Atobe asked the opinion of Yabe, the famous and successful West city commissioner, about the aims of the commissioner and how to handle this position. Yabe first told him about the formalities and then said, "Among the retired police officers there

is a person named 'Heihachirō'. He is an extraordinary person but is something like a wild horse; if you can control his emotions he will be very useful as he is extremely talented. However, if you try to control him with your authority as commissioner, you will just antagonise him and that would be dangerous." Atobe simply nodded when he heard this, but afterwards he told others that, although he had heard that Yabe was a remarkable administrator, when I asked him how to act in this position, he talked about a retired *yoriki* who is a very minor person and was worried whether I could control him or not. In such a way Atobe ridiculed Yabe. Atobe had his own ideas about Ōshio's place. Only Takai before him and Yabe after him discerned Heihachirō's capabilities. Even though Yabe was not like Takai, he appreciated Heihachirō's ability and discerned how to handle his personality.

Kawamura Chikuha was a retainer of the Tsu domain.

Ajiro Hironori (1784-1856), originally Gondayū, a neo-Shintoist, was a priest of the outer Shrine of Ise. He seemed to be a person who had considerable ambition and a wide circle of friends. Almost ridiculing himself he is quoted as saying, "As for myself, from about the age of ten I liked modern war chronicles; from fourteen I aspired to learning and real poetry. At twenty and thirty, I was nothing but a country 'hick' and, in due time, I associated with famous people. Gradually I lost my earlier spirit and now I am a white-haired old student". In 1833 he advised Heihachirō to present *Sakki* to both the Hayashizaki and the Toyomiyazaki libraries. In October 1836, it was Hironori who introduced his colleague and fellow-priest, Yasuda Zusho, to Heihachirō and helped him enter Senshindō private school. It is thought that he had a very close relationship with Ōshio. *Gimmisho* mentions Hironori's connection with Heihachirō. They met on several occasions such as when Hironori came to Ōsaka in 1833. When Heihachirō visited Ise in 1835, Heihachirō said, "In India there is Buddha, in China there is Confucius, but in Japan there is still no saint. But that person has pursued learning and become enlightened, and before long I will be a saint, and so please burn the *Sakki*, which has been written with an outpouring of my mental power, on Mt. Asagumo. If you do, its smoke will reach heaven and I will become more and more of a saint." Hearing this talk, Ajiro felt it strange and thought Ōshio was insane. After that, their relationship came to an end. Hironori maintained that his introducing the priest, Yasuda Zusho, to

Heihachirō was completely Zusho's own desire, but this statement seems to be a distortion of the truth, probably in order to play down his relationship with Ōshio, and thus mitigate his sentence.

Hayashi Jussai. In one of Heihachirō's letters he writes, "The college president, Rinkō, also admires me." We infer that this was Hayashi Jussai, the principal of the official college. But how close was Ōshio's relationship with Jussai? According to what one of Heihachirō's disciples, Tayuinoshō Senri, said it seems that when the Hayashi family were in financial straits they planned the reformation of their household economy. An attendant of the Hayashi family was ordered to set up a banking system with 1000 ryō capital in Ōsaka. He discussed it with Hatta Emontarō, a colleague of Heihachirō. When Heihachirō heard of this he was grieved because, if the story leaked to the outside, it would affect the reputation of the Hayashi family. To save their reputation, and thus spare the Shogunate loss of prestige, Ōshio conceived a surprising plan. He undertook to provide the required money and promised to have it ready by 8 a.m. the following morning. At the same time he urged them to abandon their proposed banking system. Heihachirō immediately called three of his financial supporters who were also his disciples, explained the details, received the 1000 *ryō* as tax in kind and handed it over to the attendant. At the same time he announced that he had a present for the head of the school. Thus saying, he called over ten of his private school students and had them recite the Chinese classics in front of the attendant. Full of appreciation and thanks for Ōshio's kindness, he returned to Edo. Though the date is unclear, comparing the details with the report of the government official, Nemoto Zenzaemon, it certainly seems to be a fact. The report records that Shirai Kōemon gave 500 *ryō*, Kimura Shimanosuke gave 300 *ryō*, and the inference seems to be that it was Hashimoto Chūbei who gave the remaining 200 *ryō*. In March 1837, that is, the month after Ōshio's revolt, according to the written report which was submitted by Egawa Tarōzaemon, the chief magistrate of Nirayama in Izu, there was a broken, unpainted box found in the woods besides the milestone in the territory of Tsukahara Shinden in Izu domain. In the neighbourhood, letters from Ōshio Heihachirō to the Councillors of the Shōgun, Lord Mito and Hayashi, the head of the college, were scattered about, wet with dew and rain.

Hazama Kakusai. He was the eldest son of Chōgai who was famous as an astronomer. Doubtless he was the Hazama who was the intermediary in an

exchange of letters between Heihachirō and Issai. We do not know at what time Kakusai became acquainted with Heihachirō, but he cut off his association with him about half a year before the revolt. The following story is told: In the Autumn of 1836, when Kakusai visited the Senshindō academy, he saw that *geta* (wooden clogs) had been taken off and scattered about in an extremely untidy manner. Ōshio had always asked Kakusai to inform him without reserve about anything at all and so, when he told Ōshio of the matter, he thanked him gratefully and earnestly for his suggestion. But, on his next visit a month later, Kakusai saw exactly the same situation and thus concluded that there was an inconsistency between Heihachirō's heart and his word. It is said that he never again visited Senshindō.

Ikai Keisho. His real name was Hikohiro and he was born in the old capital of Kyōto in 1761. In the beginning of the book *Jumon Kūkyo Shūgo* which Ikai wrote in three volumes, Keisho wrote a criticism of *Sakki* and, in April 1837, in a letter from Keisho to Mitani Kenjō there was this sentence, "Two years ago Ōshio Heihachirō wrote a reply to my criticism in which he humiliated me with a cunning statement and tried to silence me. Since then I have stopped my relations with him."

Asai Chūrin. There is a letter of Chūrin in *Furokushō*. He was commonly known as Taichirō and was the uncle of Heihachirō. His status was that of a retired police officer.

4. *His Disciples*

In view of the austere conditions of the time, it may seem surprising that Ōshio could recruit volunteers by the dozen for his school, but Heihachirō was a brilliant teacher whose powerful personality and vigorous, though austere, samurai spirit inspired young people with a willingness for self-sacrifice. At first, naturally, Ōshio's disciples were police officers and subordinate policemen and their children, and were mainly of the warrior class of family samurai of such neighbouring domains as Amagasaki, Takatsuki, etcetera. But a remarkable and special characteristic of Heihachirō's school was the fact that many of the peasants who adored him came as his disciples from the farming villages near Ōsaka.

At what stage did Ōshio begin taking disciples? Kōda (1972:144) asserts, on the basis of entries in *Gimmisho*, that "Hashimoto Chūbei was a pupil of Heihachirō's Confucianism from 27-28 years previously. If that is the case, he was a pupil in 1810-1, when Chūbei was 14-15 years old and the teacher, Heihachirō, was 17-18." It is not thought of as being a very serious teacher-disciple relationship at that stage. *Furoku III* clearly states that after passing 20, Heihachirō began to pursue his studies more seriously. It may be better to think that Heihachirō and Chūbei were youthful acquaintances and that their friendship matured into a teacher-disciple relationship. Other disciples came to Ōshio for instruction. A register of disciples was kept in Senshindō but it is not now extant, and so it is impossible to compile a complete list of his disciples, nor is that within the province of this thesis, although a basic list is invaluable for showing the network of Ōshio's contacts. So let us commence with Kōda's (ibid., 145-151) list of thirteen graduate students who acted as proof readers of *Zōho Kōkyō Ichū*.[4] Their names are recorded at the end of the volume.

Utsuki Yasushi, commonly called Kunojuichi, was the younger son of Utsuki Shimousa who was an old retainer of the Hikone domain, and together with his fellow-students, Matsuura Seishi and Yukawa Kan, he put in the *kunten* (marks to aid the reading of Chinese script in Japanese) in *Daigaku Katsumoku*. He also recorded two essays in *Sakki Furokushō*. Yasushi entered the academy in 1834 and, on the day of the revolt, was assassinated on Ōshio's order, probably because he remonstrated with Heihachirō over his plans.

Shirai Kōemon was the father of Hikoemon and made a livelihood as a pawnbroker to supplement his farming in Moriguchi town, Manda county in Kawachi domain. He was 37 in 1825 when he became a disciple of Heihachirō and seemed to be on friendly terms with Matta Gunshi whom we shall meet later on. When the Ōshio residence was in financial straits, Kōemon transferred money to the Ōshio family. He was not simply a "pawnbroker", a term for a money market for the masses, but also, as a local village official, he had the right to collect taxes. Taking advantage of the feudal lord's authority, he simultaneously collected the money that he had lent privately, plus the interest on it. It is said

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[4] *Zōho Kōkyō Ichū = Notes on the Supplement to the Book of Piety.*

that in 1832, together with Matsuura Seishi, he followed Heihachirō to Ōmi and had a terrible experience on Lake Biwa. His son Hikoemon also, while still a child, lodged at Senshindō but, as he suffered from depression and was not able to read, he left the school.

Hashimoto Tei. This was Hashimoto Chūbei, headman of Senjakuji village in Higashinari county, Settsu domain, an extremely large-scale, and thus wealthy, farmer who owned fields producing 50 *koku*. He was regarded as the elder brother of Heihachirō's wife, Yū, who was the daughter of a *chaya* (entertainment house) but, as we have seen, was adopted by Chūbei as his younger sister as a tactical ploy to give her more status before becoming Heihachirō's wife. Chūbei was also the real father of Kakunosuke's wife, Mine, and so was Heihachirō's lifetime friend and committed supporter. He was nicknamed *Hōzuki Chūbei* because he had made a fortune cultivating *hōzuki* trees. He became Heihachirō's disciple in about 1811 and was one of the most important figures in Ōshio's faction. Like Kōemon, he helped finance Heihachirō and was one of his leading recruiters, first to Senshindō, and later in raising the rebel army. Chūbei was seen to be the strategic person among the disciple-farmers of the region. He was not only a powerful landowner and village official, but also there was the formation of family links which were intertwined with the Ōshio family of the city commissioner's office.

There were other family tie-ups, for instance, Shirai Kōemon of Moriguchi town and Fukao Saijirō of Sonenji village were related as was Takegami Mantarō, a policeman. Undoubtedly these several family relational groups played a significant part in Ōshio's raising of the rebel army through his disciple-farmers. As far as the wealthy farmers were concerned, through marriage and the adoption of sons, the big landowners were united as relatives and thus formed strong solidarity groups. Then the Tenma police officials and policemen were intertwined as the lower-middle grade warrior class. As warriors they probably expected financial support from the farmers, and the landowners probably entered into the union in order to be included as part of the feudal lord's authority. These relationship groups were also strengthened because they shared the same common interest, and it is thought that they constituted the basis of Ōshio's disciple-farmers. As far as this landlord-village official group was concerned, Inui asserts that "while their economic activities were restricted within the local agricultural villages, they might have been

incompatible with the privileged wealthy merchants of Ōsaka who were based on the nation-wide trade and also with the feudal lords' class which had a link with these Ōsaka merchants and who were represented by the Ōsaka city commissioner." (1975:35)

From the beginning of the Bunsei period (1818), for the first time, over 1,000 villages of the Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi domains mounted a public protest. This union was only possible because of the links of landowners with village officials in the area, as outlined above. By 1823-4, 1460 villages protested publicly against the law regarding oil. Those who joined this protest are the same names that later participated in Ōshio's revolt, such as Kimura Gonemon and his son Kumajirō, Shimanosuke of his branch family, and Sawada Kyūzaemon. This represents a significant step because this landlord-village official grouping which was equivalent to the district merchant class was based on commercial production. They protested publicly against the privileged merchant class of Ōsaka and the *Bakuhan* feudal lord class with whom they were in conspiracy.

Marxists would interpret Ōshio's intentions as reconstructing society (*yonaoshi*). They see in the landowner-village official grouping in the one crop region where commercial production was not very well developed the early stage of high-interest money-lenders. Through the rapid increase of the "semi-proletariat" class, they believed, a situation for the reform of society was developing. In the midst of this sense of crisis, these would be the ones who would be expected to rise with Ōshio in military opposition through ideological sympathy and a sense of solidarity. But, while this disciple-farmer, land-owner class was a strongly united group, and was in confrontation with the poor farmers and the tenant farmers, the former was not able to mobilise fully those under their control.

Whatever Ōshio's own intention was, as indicated in his Manifesto, "When tongues of fire arise from the Tenma district, quickly run hither!", Inui (ibid.) believes that there was no possible method of mobilising these poor and tenant farmers apart from his recklessly distributing the one *shū* coins as alms. The landlord class had no other way of mobilising farmers. The poor farmers did not understand what was going on. Ōshio's army was based on the landlords who had a solid mutual bond, but its limitations is seen in that it had no solid base among the poor farmers

themselves. There still does not seem to be any unity of opinion concerning how to interpret the alliance between the various groups of warriors, peasants, and the common people of the city.

Matsumoto Kanchi was commonly called Hotarō, and was regarded as being skilled in writing small characters. His calligraphy is found in the first volume of *Sakki*, in the preface of *Kūkyo Shūgo*, and in the preface of *Kōkyō Ichū*. Together with Matsuura Seishi and Tajima Moriyaku, he checked *Sakki*, and in 1835 he wrote the epilogue of the annual publication of *Sakki*.

Matsuura Seishi, the son of Rihaku, was a medical doctor of Kojima machi in Ōsaka. He was one of the revisers of *Katsumoku* and *Sakki*, and he wrote the epilogue in the 1835 edition of *Sakki*. Seishi was quite a familiar face among the disciples having had close contacts with *Sakki* for about 10 years. In *Tōnin Rongaku Shoryaku* which was a book of Ōshio's questions and answers, there is an essay by Matsuura Seishi, Tajima Moriyaku, and Yukawa Kan. Seishi did not participate in the revolt, but afterwards he was imprisoned and died from illness.

Tajima Moriyaku was not only one of those who checked *Sakki*, the calligraphy in the woodblock from which it was printed was also his.

Yukawa Kan, from Shingū in Kishū, was among those, mentioned above, who added *kunten* to *Daigaku Katsumoku*. According to the epilogue in the 1835 edition of *Sakki*, Kan was only a disciple for one year. He was the principal of the Senshindō private school, and despite Ōshio's exceptional interest in him, on the 15th February, just before the revolt, on the plea of his father's illness, he left the school and thus managed to cede from Ōshio's faction. His younger brother, Shūhei, also a student at Senshindō, narrowly escaped from Ōsaka at midnight on the 18th with his older brother. After the revolt he changed his name to Geidō.

Isoya Shin was an East group police officer who came from the Tsujimura *yoriki* family in Sakai, but was brought up in the Isoya family. He began a separate family in 1838 and died in 1857, at the age of 52.

Okamoto Korezumi whose personal history is unknown.

Watanabe Zen, commonly known as Ryōzaemon, was a *dōshin* of the East group. At the time of the revolt he was 41-42. Because he was ordinarily a gentle, reliable person, those who heard that he had sided with Ōshio were amazed.

Wakebe Fuku, a samurai of the Ōmizo domain.

Shimura Yoshitsugu, commonly called Rikinosuke, was a doctor of Ogawa in Ōmi domain. When Heihachirō visited Tōju's study in 1832, he was its "manager". After that he went to Ōsaka on occasions and lodged as a paying guest at Ōshio's residence. It is said that he supplemented Heihachirō's income and helped his finances.

Ōshio Shōshi, commonly known as Kakunosuke, was Ōshio's adopted son. Actually, he was the younger brother of Nishida Seitarō, a police officer of the East group. He was among the proof readers listed at the end of *Kōkyō Ichū*.

Besides the above thirteen persons, if we investigate Heihachirō's disciples in *Gimmisho* and other documents, we would find the following names, although it is not clear whether they were really disciples or just those who stayed at Ōshio's residence.

Seta Sainosuke, a police officer of the East Group, was the adopted son of Seta Tōshirō who was a colleague with Heihachirō in the Toyota Mitsugu incident and one of the ringleaders of the revolt.

Koizumi Enjirō, a police officer of the East group, was a younger brother of Aoki Yanosuke, a retainer of Yanagizawa Kai no Kami, the head of the Kōriyama domain. In 1832 he became the adopted son of Koizumi Chūbei, a police officer of the East group. On the day of the revolt, at the age of 18, he was beheaded in the city commissioner's office.

Ogino Shirōsuke was the son of Ogino Kanzaemon, a police officer of the East group.

Shōji Gizaemon, a policeman of the East group, was the son of Sukeemon, a farmer of Higashi Uriwari village in Tanhoku county, Kawachi domain. In 1821 he became the adopted son of Shōji Hyakuzō, a policeman of the East

group. In 1824, at the age of 27, he studied lancemanship under Heihachirō and, from 1831, he undertook study of the Buddhist classics.

Kondō Kajigorō, the son of Kondō Nabegorō, a policeman of the East group. At the time of the revolt he was about 40 years of age.

Hirayama Sukejirō was also a policeman of the East group. At the age of 15, in 1820, he served as an apprentice and the following year became a disciple of Heihachirō. In 1836 he had advanced to a *metsuke* (a city inspector). It was he who was to betray the plot.

Yoshimi Kurōemon was the son of Hayashi Yojiemon, a policeman of the East group. In 1805 he became the adopted son of Yoshimi Kogenji, a fellow-policeman of the same group. In 1828, at the age of 38, he became a disciple of Heihachirō. At the time of the revolt he was serving as an official connected with river dredging and retired from the plot, claiming illness.

Yoshimi Eitarō, the son of the above Kurōemon, began living at the Sen-shindō in 1831, at the age of 12, and continued on till February, 1837.

Takegami Mantarō, a policeman belonging to the group of the commissioner of bows, Ueda Gorōbei. From his childhood he had a friendly relationship with Heihachirō and, in about 1814, he became a disciple. He was also a relation of Shirai Kōemon of Moriguchi town. In 1819, at the age of 17, he became the adopted son of his older brother, Kumasaburō, on his sickness and inherited his position. At the time of the revolt he served as the foreman of the policemen.

Ōi Shōichirō, the son of Ōi Denjibei, a police officer of Tamatsukuri-guchi. In May 1835, at the age of 21, he lived in as a disciple. From early childhood he had been infamous as a lawless rascal. He was head-strong, not listening to the advice of either his parents or family. It was through the mediation of Sakamoto Gennosuke that he was accepted at Ōshio's private school, but his natural lawlessness was not cured in a day. In February 1836, while returning dead drunk from his home to the school, he unsheathed his sword and wounded a person. It was he who killed Utsuki Kunojuichi on Heihachirō's order. The particulars about his joining the academy, his request to cut off formal family ties with

Denjibei before the revolt, and other details of the family can be found in *Kōsai Hiki*.

Yonekura Takujirō was a police officer of Tamatsukuriguchi. Because he formerly studied at Senshindō, on the day of the revolt, he thought there had been a fire in Tenma and that Ōshio's home would have been burnt down. So he proceeded to Ōshio's residence to express his sympathy about the fire. This implies that he thought it an ordinary, accidental fire, and not an uprising, according to *Kōsai Hiki* (224).

Shirai Gijirō was the younger brother of Ichitarō, a farmer of Kinuzuri village in Shibukawa county, Kawachi domain, and was the younger cousin of Shirai Hikoemon, mentioned above. He entered the private school in 1830 and withdrew, on account of sickness, in February 1836. Subsequently he was looked after by Hikoemon. There is a note about a disciple, Shirai Tamemoto, in the beginning of the 1835 edition of *Sakki;* he is the same person as Gijirō.

Fukao Saijirō was the younger brother of Jihei, a farmer of Sonenji village in Katano county, Kawachi, and a relation of Shirai Kōemon, mentioned above. He was an active recruiter for the rebel army. The Fukao family were great landowners of whom it was said that they did not need to tread on anyone else's land all the way to Hirakata *shuku* (stage) and back.

Kawai Gōzaemon was the son of Kawai Zendayū, a policeman of the East group, and served as an apprentice. On the 27th January 1837, he absconded with the third son, Kinnosuke.

Kawai Yasojirō was the son of Gōzaemon. He lived at Senshindō in 1831 at the age of 12, and continued on till February 1837.

Matta Gunshi (Gunji), a farmer of Kadoma Sanban village, Manda county, in Kawachi domain, was one of the main disciple-farmers who participated in Ōshio's revolt. In some documents his surname is written as "Manda" and his given name Gunshi (Gunji) is written with seven or more different combinations of characters. According to Gotō's genealogy, (1977:39) Matta's real name was Hidenobu and he was the eleventh generation of the Matta family. Inui Hiromi (1975:16-37) investigates his personality, agricultural management and the situation in his village during the Tempō

era in order to gain a close-up view of the constituents of the uprising. The Matta family had been in Manda county for many centuries. The family developed greatly under Hidetaka (eighth generation), who entered the Matta family as a son-in-law in 1728. By 1758 he had doubled his holdings and became one of the biggest landlords and an elder in the village. Eventually, Hidetaka changed his name to Gunshi, it is thought, on account of his conceit about his warrior status. He also had a responsible position in his original family, the Imai clan of Izumi domain. The ninth generation Hidetaka also was adopted into the family as a son-in-law. He was the son of Seta Hachiemon, an Ōsaka city police official, the father of Seta Sainosuke, a colleague to Heihachirō and one of the ringleaders in Ōshio's uprising. Thus we see the relation-link emerging between the Matta family and the Tenma police official Seta family.

During the revolt, Sainosuke's whole family, his wife Ryō, father-in-law Tōshirō, daughter Yasu, nurse, and maidservants, because of their family relationship, all sought shelter with the Matta family of Sanban village. In 1829, Gunshi Hidenobu, at the age of 27, received the family inheritance from his father Okihide, and he reported his name to Kobori Chikara, the chief magistrate. Even though he was not recognised as of official samurai status, Gunshi regarded himself as a warrior. He certainly was consumed with the warrior spirit and in the same year he purchased a sword rack and a short sword. He was also elevated to the position as a village official and, as well, he undertook training as a warrior. Kōda (1972:148) adds that in 1830, through the introduction of Shirai Kōemon, he entered Ōshio's private school. He had already visited the school and met Ōshio five times during the previous year and each season had given one or two *shū* as a congratulatory gift. Thus, this powerful landlord of the influential Matta family had voluntarily entered Ōshio's private school and certainly had become a disciple of Heihachirō. Other wealthy farming families were also numbered among Heihachirō's disciples. In fact, through intermarriage between wealthy farmer families and Ōsaka city police officials, a closely-knit group was beginning to emerge, consisting of powerful landowners, village officials and city police officers. Based on this kind of connections, the number of supporters of Ōshio's private school increased. Inui (1975:23) sees these disciple-farmers not as middle-class commercial producers but as parasite landowners who adhered to the authority of the feudal lords. He had the strong impression that they were the early stage of high-interest moneylenders.

A report[5] has been published on the involvement of Matta Gunshi and Takahashi Kyūemon of Kadoma Sanban village in Ōshio's revolt. This report has great significance, especially the detailed account (ibid.,102) of the later circumstances such as the arrest, sickness, death, etcetera, surrounding the fifteen persons from Gunshi's village who ran to Tenma as coolie reinforcements on the day of the revolt. During the brief period between 17th-24th March seven of them died and on the 4th May there was another death, making a total of eight deaths. Various other interesting conjectures are also given prominence.

According to the *Murakagami Meisaichō* (Detailed Notes of Village Administration), (ibid.,103) of March 1848, there were 80 families in Kadoma Sanban village. Among them, 25 households were independent farmers and 55 were *mudaka* farmers. The population was 372 persons, comprised of 177 male and 195 female. The fact that, besides Matta Gunshi and Takahashi Kyūemon, a village of this size could produce as many as fifty others who were connected with Ōshio's affair was significant. Those who acted as coolies were given *sake* money. Gunshi returned home at about 8 p.m. on the evening of the revolt. Seta Sainosuke and his family had escaped to Gunshi's house and Gunshi guided them to his relation's place in Hoshida village whence they fled towards the Yamato road. Later they returned to Sanban village. (ibid.,15)

More details concerning the Matta family history and genealogy as well as of Gunshi's close connections with Ōshio can be found in Gotō Kenichirō's article on "Matta Gunshi". (1977:38-49) The vestiges of the Matta residence are found in the present day 12-3 Dōyama chō and are known as Matta Park.

Takahashi Kyūemon was a farmer of the same Kadoma Sanban village. Again, it was through the good offices of Shirai Kōemon that he became a financial supporter of the Ōshio family from about 1834. Together with Matta Gunshi he was active as a principal leader of the revolt. Their involvement in the revolt is vividly depicted by Mori Ōgai in his famous historical novel, *Ōshio Heihachirō*.

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[5]Full details of this report and other historical materials relating to the Ōshio incident can be found in *Ōshio Jiken Kankei Shiryō* (Kadoma Shi Shiminbu Kōkoku Kōchōka (Ed.), 1984.

Kashioka Denshichi, a farmer and official of the same Senjakuji village, became a disciple in 1833 through the introduction of fellow-villager, Hashimoto Chūbei.

Kashioka Genemon was an elder of Senjakuji village and became a disciple in 1834 through the same process as Denshichi, namely through Chūbei's good offices. Both Denshichi and Genemon were active in recruiting support for the rebel army.

Nishimura Risaburō, also called Shichiemon, was a farmer of Yuge village in Shiki county, Kawachi.

Ueda Kōtarō, the son of Yōichiemon, was a farmer of Kasugae village in Higashinari county, Settsu. He joined the school in 1829 at the age of fifteen and, after growing up, left Senshindō to help in agriculture.

Kimura Gonemon, the headman of Ikaino village in Higashinari county, was a disciple of Senshindō.

Kimura Kumajirō, son of Gonemon, was also a disciple.

Kimura Shimanosuke, of Gonemon's branch family, became a disciple at Senshindō and from about 1828 he often visited Ōshio's residence. He was a special financial supporter of Heihachirō and later was deeply involved in raising the rebel army.

Sawada Kyūzaemon, the headman of Kita Daidō village in Nishinari county, was related on Heihachirō's mother's side to the associated Nishida family into which family his adopted son Kakunosuke was born. Not only was he from a good family which had kinship connections with Heihachirō but, like Kimura Gonemon, he was among the leaders who had proved connections with Heihachirō.

Yokoyama Bunya was born in Mihara village in Hizen domain. From 1821 he lived and practised medicine in Morikoji village in Higashinari county. He had been acquainted with Heihachirō from about 1828 and for the previous seven or eight years his wife's mother, Uta, had lived at Ōshio's house as a seamstress.

Nukata Zenemon, alias Aburaya Kichizō, was a man of Itami Uematsu village in Settsu. At the time of the revolt he was entrusted with the distributiion of the Manifesto. Afterwards he admitted his involvement and strangled himself in Sone village.

Horii Gisaburō was the son of Genbei, a farmer of Nishi village in Katō Gun, Harima domain. At first he was called Nisaburō. He became a disciple in March 1836 and, from January 1837, he lived in and supplemented Heihachirō's finances in the same way as the above-mentioned Shimura Yoshitsugu. His age is unclear.

Yasuda Zusho was a priest of the outer Shrine of Yamada in Ise. He was the adopted son of Yasuda Hiroharu, the son-in-law of Motoori Nobunaga. Hiroharu was from Ise Yamada (the present Ise City) and his principal occupation was that of Shinto priest at the Ise Shrine. Zusho met Heihachirō during one of the latter's visits to Yamada where he often lectured and stayed with Ajiro Hironori. Zusho was moved by Ōshio's fiery spirit and courage, and after one lecture, he begged Hironori's good services in gaining Heihachirō's consent to his entering Senshindō. The letter of consent addressed to Hironori arrived in October 1836, and so Zusho immediately requested the Yamada Commissioner to grant him permission to take healing baths. Before long he set forth to Ōsaka and it is thought that he began studying in mid-October at the age of 20. The revolt thus broke out in the fifth month after he entered Senshindō. In his interrogation by the *Bakufu* after being arrested for his part in the revolt, he said, "Chūsai was exceedingly strict in both his method of study and his actions. He completely prohibited history-related books or other books, saying, 'History books are just for fun'. Moreover he assumed an attitude of feigned dignity and did not readily permit questions. Besides, from about the end of December 1836, lectures continued incessantly." (Jōfuku, 1983:68) Through such attitudes Ōshio alienated people and though he remained in the school, Zusho judged it useless and looked for an opportunity to retire from it according to *Ōshio Ikken Gimmi Ukagaisho*. Jōfuku (ibid.) suggests that, although this cannot necessarily be said to be a falsified statement for the sake of gaining lighter punishment, it certainly shows the confusion that was in Zusho's heart. Jōfuku further feels that, because people like Yukawa Kan and his brother Shūhei left Senshindō at the last moment, surely Zusho

who had not been there long could have fled if only he had wanted to. Instead, he risked his future by remaining on and joining the revolt which shows that he must have continued to respect Ōshio and deeply sympathised with the uprising and the planned action.

During the revolt Zusho was one of the action "bosses", wore a headband, and was armed with a spear. "The priest Zusho was Ōshio's 'trusted hero' and worked hard, chilling the enemy's heart. He was arrested and this became the trigger for the general collapse of the rebellion."[6] Zusho died in prison at the Hosokawa residence. "A criminal at that time was put into a prison where he would certainly die within a year", (Mori, 1940:83) but Zusho died in as little as half a year.

Matsumoto Rindayū was the son of Kango, a city doctor of Senba in Ōsaka. He entered the school in 1830 and at the time of the rebellion was still only 14 years old.

Shiotani Kiyozō was the son of Ichirō, a wine manufacturer of Imai chō in Tenma, who went to live in as a disciple in January 1833, but fled from the school on the day of the revolt.

Tamijirō whose surname is unknown was the son of Kanchū, a city doctor of Yamada Maeno chō in Ise.

Shūhei whose surname is also unknown was a hanger-on to Yōsuke of Shimosato village in Kishū. Both Tamijirō and Shūhei were at Senshindō but left the school on the 16th February, 1837.

Ōkōchi Ryūtarō was the son of Gensei, a doctor of Lord Mito. Both he and Suejirō fled with Kiyozō on the day of the revolt. They were all minors as the word "child" appears against their names in the *Gimmisho*.

Hattori Suejirō was the son of Hattori Okusuke, a retainer of Nagai Hida no Kami, the head of the Takatsuki domain. He came to live in as a disciple in January 1836.

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[6] *Uji Yamada Shishi*, 1929 edition, quoted from *Ōshio Sōdō Kenkunki*, as in Jōfuku, ibid., 68.

Tsuge Hanbei was also a retainer of Nagai Hida no Kami. In October 1836, he invited Heihachirō and listened to him lecturing on Chinese classics. It is said that he exchanged a sword for a hanging scroll of a Chinese painting and entrusted his cannon to Ōshio in answer to his entreaty. He is probably the same as Tsuge Renjō. Although Ōshio's disciples in Takatsuki should have been numerous in number, apart from Suejirō and Hanbei, only two other names can be ascertained.

Shibaya Chōdayū was a home owner of Nishide chō in Hyōgo port. He entered the school in 1832 at the age of 36. Chōdayū's occupation is not clear, but certainly he was one of Hyōgo's wealthy merchants, possibly a grain merchant as there was a grain merchant by the name of Shibaya in Hyōgo. He was the one who dispersed large sums of money in purchasing publications for Ōshio. On the 8th February 1837, he received a letter saying that Ōshio was going to sell the books which he regarded as those bought with money forwarded by Chōdayū. When he went to Ōsaka he visited Senshindō and, on the night of the 18th February, he was made to take an oath and was ordered to come again early the following morning. However, while he was engaged in striking a bell at a memorial service in Shiten-nōji at 4 a.m., Ōshio advanced the time for the rebels to sally forth to raise the army, and so he narrowly missed participation in the rebellion.

Besides recognising Chōdayū's resources as a wealthy merchant, Ōshio also solicited his practical help in dispensing benevolence. His contribution to the "whole nation in distress", he asserted, "was merely in the form of raising funds or requesting money for almsgiving. Participation in the revolt was just what Ōshio himself hoped, but actually..." Certainly from being one of the wealthiest merchants in Hyōgo in 1834, from records it can be seen that, as the result of Ōshio's revolt, he gradually decreased to 35th in 1843 and so the revolt can be regarded as a watershed that affected him personally.

Buntarō was the grandson of Tōemon, a farmer of Kuruma village in Settsu. He went to live in as a disciple in 1834 through Chōdayū's good offices but, because of his grandfather's senility, he retired from the school on the 23rd December, 1836.

Yūi Keigi. There were two families of Yūi as police officers in the East group, but according to the *Saikyojō* both Yūi Mannosuke's foster father,

Hikonoshin, and Yūi Yasatarō were not guilty. Hikonoshin, deceived by Seta Sainosuke, lent a cannon. He was probably the same person as Keiji.

Fujikawa Harusada was a retainer of Yanagizawa Kai no Kami, the head of the Kōriyama domain. According to Kōda (1972:151) there is no conclusive evidence for including either Keigi or Harusada among the disciples apart from the fact that in *Tōnin Rongaku Shoryaku* there are letters of Ōshio answering these two people.

Hayashi Ryōsai served for many generations as councillor in the Tadotsu domain. He died in May 1849 at the age of 43. According to an item in *Engyakujutsu* he was a disciple of Heihachirō.

Tanomura Chokuryū was the adopted son of Chikuden. On Heihachirō's grave in Jōshōji in Tenma there is an inscription "October, Meiji 30 (1897), disciple Tanomura writes." This was probably Chokuryū.

Sakatani Rōro, a man of Bitchū, entered the school during the 1820's, and in 1832 his father tried to move his whole family to Edo. It is said that Ōshio wanted to teach Rōro but his father regarded him as being too young to be taught by him.

Hikita Chikuō, commonly called Hayanosuke, died in 1899 at the age of 90. Besides these there were also others who were named as disciples of Heihachirō, but nothing much is known of their personal histories.

IV. *His Retirement*

After his retirement, Heihachirō devoted himself to research and writing. While in a possible environment of easy retirement, he did not allow himself quietly to recuperate his physical health, but instead, night and day, studied Confucian classical texts and applied himself intensely to the pursuit of learning. As he wrote in *Sakki*, it was "not because I like this or that, nor for the sake of poetry, nor for extensive knowledge, nor out of a desire to seek honour, nor out of a desire to be employed again in the world, but just because I do not dislike studying and I never get bored with teaching people, although actually my heart desires to be assimilated with the great vacuum". Heihachirō believed that he alone knew this secret. This certainly seems to have been his state of mind immediately after his retirement. He even refused the persuasive invitations of his friend, Ōkura Nagatsune, and others, and engrossed himself in study instead of participating in life outside. He felt no lingering affection whatever for government service. Thus he laboured to fill his remaining years with study, seeking to penetrate deeper secrets still. For this reason he forsook mundane affairs and just shut himself up in the mountains of Washū (Yamato). There he engaged in reading in order to forget secular worries. On returning to Ōsaka he was intensely annoyed by the visits of worldly visitors. Doubtless his life belied his retirement as he had no intention of living as a sedate, retired person. However, Heihachirō was not the kind of person who could be taken up solely with academic learning, for, after all, was not his main purpose in study "to be useful in the affairs of society"?

1. *His Resignation*

After Takai was recalled to Edo in 1830, his successor, Atobe Yoshitada proved to be corrupt and heartless. Ōshio found the situation hopeless and presently tendered his own resignation. He devoted himself entirely to scholarship, teaching a number of disciples whom he had gradually gathered around him, and to the correction of social evils. Like Saigō Takamori some 40 years later, he retired from office so that he might reinvigorate himself spiritually, develop his own thinking, train a group of disciples, and try to rectify the unjust system from the outside.

When Takai Sanenori, his direct superior who had shown Heihachirō favour, requested to resign on the ground of old age, Ōshio also decided to

retire with him, handing over the police officer's duties to his adopted son, Kakunosuke. "At this time Ōshio filled several positions; he was first in the list of inspectors, first in the list of local officials, first in the list of supervisors of imported (Chinese) goods, and was the investigating official for all official business, etcetera, etcetera." (Miyagi, 1984:14) As a police officer he had reached the top. With regard to his three great meritorious achievements alone, Ōshio was particularly worthy to be called an "able official" with the result that his fame spread from Ōsaka throughout the whole country. No wonder that, at this stage, he was known more for his part in these incidents than as a Yōmei scholar. That fame was to come later for he was still in his prime when he resigned from office. Both as a Shogunate official and as a scholar, Ōshio possessed surpassing ability but he found the continuous double life of lecturing at Senshindō and the exhausting work of his duties as a police officer which he had carried on for many years to be incompatible. But his sudden resignation while at the peak of fame and efficiency as a police officer called forth various speculations and rumours when noised abroad throughout the country.

However, looking at the situation realistically, it is obvious that under the bureaucratic system appertaining to the period, Ōshio's exceptional advancement and his meritorious achievements were only possible because of the patronage he had received from Takai Sanenori. After Takai's departure, Heihachirō could not expect the same favour again. From this point of view, Ōshio's resignation was timely for he would not again receive such absolute confidence from a superior. He had been enjoying almost complete freedom in exercising his office, he had won applause for his outstanding performance, and he was at the peak of his prowess. In spite of his relatively low rank, his words were heeded and his plans followed. He relished being engaged in "great politics" because, to him, being engaged as an official in the administration of Ōsaka city was great politics. It had been a most worthwhile and rewarding period in Heihachirō's life which would not come again. Henceforth, realistically, he could only expect the situation to deteriorate. Doubtless he thought that he would no longer be able to show his capabilities completely. On the other hand, it seems that he also harboured a feeling of dissatisfaction that under the feudalistic status system the path of advancement was closed even to people of exceptional talents. So it was natural to follow Takai into retirement. Such a one as Ōshio could not be content

with being under the absolute control of a superior authority like Atobe. Doubtless also, Heihachirō had become discouraged by the rampant corruption in the municipal administration and by the indifference of his fellow officers to the sufferings of the poorer townspeople and so, at 37, he cut short his promising career. Besides, Ōshio's arrogance and conceit about his discernment of the true duty of the ruler and the ruled led him to criticise most severely the speech and actions of his colleagues at the Ōsaka city commissioner's office. Naturally, such an attitude hardly endeared himself to his associates. On the contrary, it produced friction between them and him. Thus, in a letter to Satō Issai on the occasion of his resignation, he wrote, "The whole area is filled with personal grudges, and so I bide my time, bending my body like a grasshopper".

Heihachirō was grieved with the moral deterioration of society and the resulting disorder in the administration. His experiences during the period in which he had worked as a police officer made him realise all the more the need for deeper Yōmei learning. In the year of his resignation, 1830, there was a poor harvest due to the lack of the usual rainy season and this was the forerunner of the Tempō famine. The following year saw the great festivities associated with the dredging of the river mouth and so the whole of Ōsaka city was agog with frenetic noise and activity. But Ōshio, who ought to have been released from his exhausting schedule through retirement, took no interest in such worldly matters. Instead he devoted himself to seeking the truth and lecturing at the Senshindō with the same diligence that had characterised him in the past.

"Not long after his retirement Ōshio experienced a spiritual trauma which appears to have had a profound influence on the rest of his life." (Morris, 1975:190) He had made a pilgrimage to the school of the "Ōmi sage", Nakae Tōju, the earliest Yōmei teacher. While returning across Lake Biwa, a fierce storm sprung up and drowning seemed certain but, entrusting himself to heaven, he started to contemplate death and, at that moment, he had an awakening which Mishima (1970:33-4) refers to as "a mystical experience (that led Ōshio) to intuitive knowledge". As he sat there immobile, with waves raging around him, Heihachirō felt he was being directly confronted by Wang Yang-ming himself. He believed that, if only he could forget his own identity, the roaring waves would have no effect upon him. At that moment all fear receded and presently the storm abated. Ōshio was safe and he frequently returned to Tōju's school in

Ōmi where he gathered the local villagers together and lectured them on "the attainment of intuitive knowledge and self-clarification". From this experience Ōshio learned that unless he could criticise himself, the accumulation of a lifetime of learning was vain. Morris (1975:191) opines, "This mystical experience on the lake may well have propelled Ōshio to total emotional commitment and prepared him for his final action and death in a way that no amount of study or abstract reasoning would have achieved".

After his retirement Ōshio continually and increasingly sharpened his mind on Confucius's classics and imparted that knowledge to his disciples. He never spared himself and never wearied of instructing them. Even though he had retired from active work in society, the interests of the nation and the welfare of people were always on his heart. In fact, he said, "If there is ever a time when the government is in serious need of me, I will do my best, even though I am now retired".

2. *His Private School, Senshindō*

It is not clear when Ōshio began lecturing in any time that he could spare from his official duties but it is certain that he yielded to the requests of the sons of his associates to teach them. While still in his twenties Ōshio had a number of disciples. From a fairly young age he was absorbed in study, but on seeing Ro Shin-go's *Shingingo* he turned to the study of Yōmeigaku, and at last reached enlightenment by the age of 24-25, in 1816-7. The number appearing at his gate gradually grew and by 1823-4, at the age of 31-32 years, there were already more than ten who lived in at his residence and received instruction in literature and the military arts. Looking at the lifestyle of his colleagues made him feel the urgent need of explaining Yōmei learning to them and he taught as many as would give ear to his theory. This gradually led to the opening of a private school in his own residence where he lectured his disciples between his official duties.

Then in January 1825, he laid down a fresh eight conditions as an oath of admission to Senshindō. Therein he clearly stated his education policy to new students, and it is thought that this was probably the time when the school was named "Senshindō" and promoted as a private academy. The chief aim of the entry oath was to make clear the moral obligations of

master and pupils. The second article stated that "the essential point of learning was simply to practise filial piety and duty" as well as putting Ōshio's teaching into practice and rejecting abstract and impractical theories (such as Shushigaku). It was made clear that, irrespective of age, violators of school regulations would be prescribed severe, corporal punishment, indicating Ōshio's fierce personality and his serious view of the pursuit of study.

He usually rose at 2 a.m., observed the astronomical phenomena, called his disciples and lectured them for 3-4 hours, even on cold winter days, with the door wide open. Even though the students were all constantly cold, Heihachirō did not relax; he did not mind what they felt and he dominated them with such mental power that they did not dare raise their eyes to look at him. In spite of such a stern atmosphere, new pupils were continually entering Senshindō. It is said that there were always 14-15 in residence and over 20 commuting to the school. In spite of his severe character, many idolised him and there was a strong teacher-pupil bond which exceeded the natural relationship between master and disciple. The curriculum was also severe, usually involving four hours of concentrated study at a stretch, and the puritanical rules, as set forth in the eight articles, were imposed with terrible severity including the liberal use of the whip on delinquents. Abe Makoto (1951:293) can be consulted for details.

Rubinger (1985:192-3) called the schools of Ōshio Heihachirō and Yoshida Shōin "direct action *juku*" (academies) that were "devoted to the unification of knowledge and practice". "The rules Ōshio set down for his students were puritanical and indicated a disposition that favoured passionate repetition over systematic and sustained exposition. His lectures were terse, repetitive, aphoristic -- for the modern reader, excessively cryptic". (Najita, 1970:159) He seemed to eschew extended treatments of Ōyōmei philosophical ideas and relied more on powerful words, expressions, and images to present his ideas.

Senshindō was open to any student, regardless of class, so long as Ōshio considered them suitable subjects for philosophical and moral training. As a result, it was attended by students from all social classes, including small merchants and farmers of varying economic status. Out of fifty students who were known to have studied at his school in the mid-

1830s, at least twenty were from lower social groups. Thus, in spite of several inconsistencies in Ōshio's make-up, he did practise what he preached in the matter of acknowledging the basic equalities of human beings. Certainly up to the early 1830's he had not applied his Yōmei ideas to protest against the Shogunate or its rules governing social status. This was to come as he immersed himself more and more in these ideas which he was teaching ever more boldly at Senshindō.

The majority of the disciples of Senshindō were the police officers and the subordinate policemen who were Ōshio's colleagues in the Ōsaka East city commissioner's office and wealthy farmers who were of the village official class in the surrounding villages of Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima. One of the important characteristics of Senshindō was the proportion of students with peasant origins as compared with the other private academies in Ōsaka of that time such as Shinozaki Shōchiku's "Baikasha". Certainly the Yōmei teaching as expounded by Ōshio appealed to the moral point of view of the farmers, buffeted as they were by historical trends and traditions. At this time there were large-scale public protests because of the increasingly difficult economic climate of the times. An air of unrest and uncertainty pervaded the villages while many poor farmers, despairing of a livelihood, migrated to the cities. The continuous disturbances in the villages were probably one of the motives for many of the village officials joining Senshindō; they themselves were seeking a new basis for the administration of the villages. Their association with Ōshio's other disciples, the police officials, led to many marriage ties being made between the two groups.

"1828 was the 300th year after the death of Wang Yang-ming and Ōshio held that 300th Anniversary at Senshindō. The painting of Wang Yang-ming's portrait was entrusted to the man of letters and painter, Tanomura Chikuden, while Ōshio drafted the congratulatory address." (Miyagi, 1984:13) This address was a solemn statement composed in words well chosen to bring out the theological and historical significance of the founding of Yōmei learning. From the heart of Senshindō Heihachirō confronted his disciples with Yōmei doctrine, the teaching of which had for a long time been discontinued with the death of Miwa Shissai. With the prohibition of heretical teaching during the Kansei period, Shushigaku had swept all before it, none daring to advocate heterodox teaching publicly. Though Yōmei had its private admirers like Satō

Issai, they maintained outward orthodoxy. Even though Heihachirō studied and taught the way of Confucius and Mencius, everybody knew he was a Yōmei scholar. To the purist Shushi scholar, Ōshio's teaching was heretical. To the poets, he was a man of strict morals who did not appreciate the elegance of poetry. But it was politic for the scholars and men of letters of that day to keep him at a respectable distance.

"The teacher at the (Senshindō) private school was known as an intense individual. Often such men are possessors of a character which has a vehement and explosive, charismatic nature which, as Max Weber says, is seen in prophets and heroes, and which inspires faith, has their disciples transcend reason and act completely unselfishly." (Umihara, 1984:16) Heihachirō's personality made a great impact upon the students. His doctrine was teacher-centred.[1] An epitaph in the form of a stone tablet in the premises of the present Ōsaka Mint has been erected to mark the site on which Senshindō once stood.

3. *His Teaching*

Ōshio taught that, irrespective of birth, all men had the spiritual capacity to transform their personality into that of a sage. While ordinary men could transform themselves into sages, at the same time, aristocrats could sink to the level of ordinary men. Thus, he taught: "a prince who knows goodness but does not act becomes lowly, and a lowly man who knows what is not proper and refrains from acting can become a prince. Therefore, let us not merely rely on princes or despise the lowly". (Senshin:136) Ōshio did not despise ordinary men because of their low birth, but he despised small men who had high rank and wealth. The latter ought to know and act humanely. Instead, they feigned learning and professed goodness while all the time leading empty lives and seeking an increase in their own power and wealth with no concern for social justice. He believed that we should have genuine sympathy for the lowly because their anguish was real. They had been so long victimised by the politics and philosophy of class distinctions that they were completely unaware of the sage qualities innate in themselves. Even

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[1]For further details of the nature of the Senshindō and its teacher, see Umihara Tetsu's article "Ōshio Jiken to Senshindō Juku" in *Ōshio Kenkyū* No. 17, March 1984:16-21.

though they lacked status, nevertheless, on that very account, they were without the pretensions of rank, education, and wealth and could become sages with kingly virtues along with Confucius.

Although Ōshio's teachings were complex, there was a consistent, iconoclastic message throughout. He taught that social injustices stemmed from the human attempt to make artificial distinctions between things and beings, man and nature, subject and object, aristocracy and peasantry, and so on. In denying the validity of these distinctions, he also rejected many social conventions as well as the social, political, and economic differences imposed on people. To him, ultimately, there was only one meaningful norm and that was the eternal ideal of "goodness" which intersects all social distinctions. Ōshio was not interested in theories; his philosophy was oriented to action against social injustice. Men of high rank and wealth were despicable, for though they studied about ethics and goodness, and therefore should know how to act humanely, they did not. On the other hand, the lowly, though virtuous, were the victims of oppression. His repeated theme was that it was the aristocracy who produced the injustices in society and not the lower classes. Therefore the latter ought to be delivered from their condition, not despised for it. "'Do right for the sake of doing right' was the main spirit of the doctrine that he impressed upon the ardent followers who now gathered around him to learn wisdom." (Murdoch, 1964(ii):454)

Najita observes that, "The weakness of Ōshio's ethics, however, was not in its elitism. It lay in that same iconoclasm that denied conceptual distinctions. If this iconoclasm provided Ōshio with a framework actively to deny social reality, it also denied him an ideology for sustained protest and revolt." (1970:166-7) In other words, his iconoclasm was less concerned with the practical and theoretical considerations of revolt, and more concerned with realising immortality as a sage and "great hero" of the people.

Although Ōshio's emphasis at Senshindō was on inculcating Yōmeigaku, students were also trained in calligraphy, fencing, and other traditional subjects. Heihachirō's style of lecturing consisted mainly of categorical conclusions rather than analysis and argument, and he depended to a large extent on the emotive repetition of certain central ideas. His approach as a teacher was that of the samurai, relying largely on zeal and discipline.

With scrupulous consistency, Ōshio eschewed open criticism of the Shogunate or the Hayashi family who directed the teaching of Shushi philosophy in Edo. He mainly used historical analogy to argue against them, making extensive use of Chinese historical data of the late Ming and early Ch'ing period as an historical model which proved provocative and, by analogy, threw damaging light on Shogunate thought and politics. There was no room left for anyone to doubt that in Ōshio's mind the essence of eternal truth in Confucianism was, above all, captured by Wang Yang-ming, whose philosophy he espoused. Heihachirō held up as ideals to follow the great loyalists of the late Ming who were either disciples of Wang or students of his school of thought. They were fearless of those above them in government and were deeply concerned for the people. Their one purpose was to bring truth and justice to China. Thus, they openly criticised high ministers and even the emperor himself, they defied petty bureaucratic procedures, and they even confiscated imperial tax money to help the weak and poor. All the while they continued to teach the ethics of universal truth and justice.

To Heihachirō, it was not accidental that such a succession of outstanding men arose over a period of 150 years. He felt it could be attributed to the concept of "reidentification with the absolute" and it explained the heroic quality of the late Ming. But the late Ming loyalists were ruthlessly treated by the Ch'ing dynasty. They were publicly persecuted, brutally executed, either by drowning or hanging and their writings were systematically censored by bureaucrats so that scholars who sympathised with their teaching had to develop the deceitful technique of pretending to comment on the teachings of Chu Hsi. Ōshio's lectures were laced with references to the fate of these loyalists during the early Ch'ing and so it was obvious that whenever he wrote "Ch'ing", "Bakufu" could be easily inserted in its place. Najita[2] suggests that "Indeed, this implication was so plain that when Ōshio asked Satō Issai to pass on his lectures to the head of the Hayashi house after perusing them, Satō refused in monumentally evasive language".

Heihachirō lectured widely in the area around Ōsaka during his days in government and, after his retirement, it seems he probably made annual

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[2]An addendum to Ōshio's lecture, *Senshin*:419-420 as cited in Najita, 1970:169.

visits to lecture on *The Great Learning* or *The Book of Filial Piety* at both Tōju's school in Ōmi and at Ise.

4. *His Publications*

Heihachiro's chief literary works were *Senshindō Sakki* (1834) and *Kohon Daigaku Katsumoku* (1836), an old edition of *Daigaku* with a new interpretation. In his retirement he completed several kinds of literary works. *Sakki* contained Ōshio's famous lectures in printed form. This "established his reputation as the foremost spokesman for Ōyōmei studies in Western Japan". (Najita, 1970:157) On the basis of the ideas articulated in these lectures, Ōshio launched his rebellion against the Bakufu three years later. Heihachirō wrote, "Half of my life is in this book".

We have already seen Heihachirō as a "loving teacher and friend of the peasants". He wrote many poems in *Senshindō Shibun* telling of his feelings for the peasant class. He sympathised with them and their hard life in the farming villages, and wrote of their helplessness in being exposed both to the fierceness of nature and to the heavy burden of feudal taxes. He romanticised over the precious sight of the peasants devoting themselves untiringly to agricultural cultivation. He wrote this poem: "The head of the duckweed and bulrushes shuddering in the wind are like the peasants fearing the pressure of taxation;/ the sound of the cricket in the grass is like the misery of the peasants over poor harvests". Appalled by the suffering he witnessed in the narrow lanes of Ōsaka and in the dilapidated huts of the neighbouring villages, Ōshio was stirred to write this series of Chinese-style poems describing the pathetic sight of the poor foraging for the bodies of dead birds and of despairing parents, unable to feed their children, abandoning them to die of exposure.

He reflected Ōkura Nagatsune's thoughts when he wrote in *Kohon Daigaku Katsumoku*, "To create the wealth of the people is the same as creating the wealth of the state". (Okamoto, 1975:67) That is to say, if the private sector produces wealth, then it means the nation itself produces wealth. He strongly attacked excessive taxation, but he never denied the necessity of feudal taxation per se. He was always careful to protect the *Bakuhan* system and merely attacked its abuses and maladministration. He himself was a member of the warrior class who could only maintain his status by dependence upon the system of feudal taxation and the peasants

were the burden bearers whose role was to support his life. Okamoto (ibid., 68) asserts, "To that extent he must care for the peasants, he must feel deep indignation for the methods of the specially privileged merchants and the gigantic businessmen with political ties who were partners in robbing the peasants. All the while they were being protected by the authority of the feudal rulers who ignored the peasants and levied excessive taxation to such an extent that they destroyed their ability to shoulder the burden of taxation".

In February 1835, he published three volumes of *Zōhō Kōkei Ichū* and, in April 1835, *Dōfu Rokushō* was added as the third volume of the former two volumes of *Senshindō Sakki*, while in June, *Dōfuroku* was added as the third volume to the two volumes of *Jumon Kūkyo Shūgo*. In quick succession in the same year he also publicly published works which had formerly been private publications. As the result, Ōshio's name was becoming more widely known as a Yōmei scholar. In response to the publication of his main literary work, *Senshindō*, many families sent poems to him. On the occasion of his Owari journey to visit his head family, Heihachirō published Rai Sanyō's poem and added *Sōjo Shihen*. Here and there throughout, he left blank spaces, particularly in the sensitive parts which clearly pointed the finger at the corruption in the Ōsaka city administration to obscure its meaning lest it be thought he was publicly criticising the Bakufu. But even so, it is clear that Heihachirō's criticism of the administration did not arise from any anti-Bakufu, anti-feudal thinking. Some raise the question, if the reason for the blank spaces was to avoid the consequences for the various families who sent poems, why were blank spaces necessary in Sanyō's poems seeing he was already deceased? There surely must be some other explanation.

In 1835, Ōshio gathered together numerous letters which came in response to his original *Senshindō Sakki* and published them together with poems from the late Rai Sanyō as *Senshindō Sakki Furokushō*. Miyagi (1984:44) suggests that "The replies from these people were not cool slights like that of Satō Issai, but only exaggerated eulogies and the usual words of praise", and so Heihachirō wondered how much of the contents they had really understood.

Heihachirō's publications soon spread his scholarly reputation through the country. Some interpret Ōshio's premeditated anti-Shōgunal action as

the result of his eccentricity and short temper, and also of his righteous indignation which exposed the injustices among some government officers, rather than as the natural result of his philosophy. But in *Naniwa Sōjō Kiji* (*Record of Ōsaka's Riots*), Tōko[3] writes, "Ōshio's recent uprising was not the result of the quick thinking of one morning or one night". Certainly the shake-up of dishonest bureaucrats had been his urgent crusade for many years. Unless we investigate his various writings, beginning with *Sakki*, in which he freely and voluntarily spoke his own will, we will certainly come to a premature judgment. Actually his strange action after finishing the writing of *Sakki* in July, 1833, may help to put his thought into perspective. He first burnt a copy of *Sakki* at the summit of Mt. Asagumo near Ise and announced its completion to the Sun Goddess. Then he went to the trouble of climbing Mt. Fuji to hide another copy in a stone cave, and, on the recommendation of Ajiro Hironori of Ise, he donated *Sakki* to the Hayashizaki and Toyomiyazaki libraries at Yamada. Heihachirō's wide reading of Chinese philosophical writings, especially from the Ming Period, is reflected in his own works. The logical clarity is exhibited in his critical commentaries. Within just two and a half years of his retirement, in April, 1833, Ōshio published two volumes of his main work *Senshindō Sakki* at his private school. It is difficult to ascertain when this literary work was started because like *Kohon Daigaku Katsumoku* it was written down during intervals in his official duties while working as a police officer, and retirement merely afforded the time in which he eagerly pursued their completion.

Kohon Daigaku Katsumoku was a commentary on *Daigaku* (*The Great Learning*) from a Yōmeigaku point of view. This book had been drafted in 1823-4 when Ōshio was 31 or 32 and had consumed 13 years. Several years after coming to grips with Yōmei learning, his own theory seems to have gained greatly in confidence. *Sakki* was a compilation of Ōshio's own aphorisms plus commentaries on the words of the earlier Wang Yang-ming Chinese Confucianists. It contained over 300 unrelated articles without regard either to the time when they were written or to any sense of order of arrangement and, thus, on the first reading their meaning was often not evident. Besides there was no clue given of any analysis.

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[3]Kokushō Gen, *Hyakushō Ikki Gaikan Oyobi Nenpyō*, (Revised Ed.), 1959, gives 1635 incidents. According to later research the number has further increased.

"At the end of the year (1833) again he sent Issai two new works, *Tōju Sensei Chiryōchi Sandaiji Shinseki ni Bassu* (A Comment on the Genuine Writing of Nakae Tōju's Three Characters *Chi-ryō-chi*) and *Jumon Kūkyō Shūgo Jijo* (Self Introduction to a Collection of Meaningless Statements by Confucianists), and requested his criticism". (Miyagi, 1984:43) He also asked Issai to write a preface to *Kohon Daigaku Katsumoku*, but as with the two volumes of *Senshindō Sakki* which Heihachirō had sent to Issai for comment, it seems that again, after a quick perusal of these two other books, he refused to accede to the request for a preface on the ground of his official position as principal of the Rinke School, answering, "Putting aside my own interests, if I write an introduction to this book, it means that I am taking a different position to that of the Rinke school and that is not good for Rinke. So I do not want to write anything in a publication which sounds like Wang Yang-ming's school".

The position of the two men, Heihachirō and Issai, could not be more different apart from the fact that they both accepted Yōmei teaching. Satō Issai, as the head of the Shōheikō, the official government Confucianist school, was twice as old as Oshiō, he had educated many talented people who were active at the end of the Shogunate period, he lived till he was 88, and left scores of volumes of his literary works but he was extremely nervous about publicly espousing the heterodox Yōmei teaching. In contrast, Ōshio's academic sincerity was striking. As a retired police officer, he was not content to "play it safe" and a rebel's death awaited him at 44. They both believed the Yōmei philosophy; the difference was that Issai believed privately without publicly practising his beliefs, whereas Ōshio attempted to put his teaching into action.

All Heihachirō's main literary works were published in rapid succession within the four years from 1833 to 1836. Maybe the frenzy of speed with which he published his books indicates that he, like a modern day fan, Mishima Yukio, sensed that death lay imminently ahead of him.

V. *Economic, Social and Political Factors Influencing Ōshio's Day*

There was growing discontent, both social and economic, particularly during the second half of the Tokugawa period.[1] As a result there was much suffering, dislocation and trauma during this period. "Natural calamities such as earthquakes, floods, famine, and fire ravaged the country throughout its later years. Agrarian conditions were so wretched that a poor crop inevitably brought famine in its wake". (Norman, 1940:33) The Shogunate faced widespread social unrest which was compounded by the frequent peasant uprisings and urban riots. It was in parlous financial straits, lacking a means of direct taxation outside territory held directly by the *Bakufu* itself. Merchants prospered at the expense of the daimyō and samurai, while the latter became restive and sought to change the status quo. Much of the urban way of life proved destructive to feudal society, just as the mercantile economy of the cities was injurious to the agrarian basis of feudal rule.

Against the general stability of the Tokugawa Shogunate, there was a growing dissatisfaction with economic conditions. The most obvious signs of unrest occurred among the peasants in the agricultural villages. Peasant riots increased in number and violence as the period continued. The causes of their uprisings were many and complex, probably the most significant being the fact that the peasants were the bearers of the tax burden and, in fact, were the only regular taxpayers. Most of their rice crops went to their lords to support the whole military aristocracy. Any new burdens that the Shogunate might lay on the military or merchant classes were passed on to the peasant in the form of additional taxation or through the manipulation of the currency or the market. Even a bumper crop was a mixed blessing, for it just meant that he handed over more of his crops to his lord. Agararian distress was exacerbated by usury, flood, drought, extravagant spending and sudden price rises. By the end of the Tokugawa period there was a "large class of relatively wealthy, educated and ambitious peasant families." (Smith 1958:14)

The next important factor was the distressing problem of population which increased rapidly during the first half of the Tokugawa period. This population explosion impacted heavily on the food supply, especially in

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[1]See Clyde and Beers, 1975:117 for a general description of the period.

famine years. Because of Japan's isolation from the external world at this stage, there was no foreign trade to relieve the food shortage crisis and no effective way to control the price of rice. The merchants usually gained from market fluctuations and the peasants always suffered.

Failure on the part of the Shogunate to pursue sound financial policies also undermined its stability. Because the state was organised in a feudal pattern, the *Bakufu* derived regular revenue only from its own domains. Thus, in times of emergency when faced with chronic deficits, the *Bakufu* resorted to drastic measures which bore little positive results. Because peasants were already taxed to the hilt, the authorities would call upon the merchants in the large cities under Shogunate control for emergency levies. As often happened, when these levies failed to relieve the government's financial plight, they debased the coinage, thus aggravating the economic conditions that were already bad by encouraging wild fluctuation of prices. The eventual downfall which overtook the Tokugawa Shogunate has frequently been ascribed to economic stagnation. Such an interpretation now appears to be unwarranted because, in spite of all the economic troubles of this period, there was constant and gradual development reaching into the remote areas and resulting in a modest rise in the standard of living of most of the population. Hanley and Yamamura believe that it seems likely, therefore, that the disaster which finally overtook the Tokugawa system is to be explained rather in the inflexible character of its political and social institutions. (1971:373-8)

The 1830's, with which we are especially concerned, brought Tokugawa Japan to the brink of another period of crisis with financial insolvency at the top and reaction to the desperate conditions at the bottom. A series of famine years in the countryside brought the populace to breaking point and peasant disturbances mounted. "Those who were doing best economically were the successful merchants and village entrepreneurs. But balancing the wealthy few in the upper levels of the urban and village communities, were the great masses of peasant and urban poor who lived on the edge of starvation." (Hall, 1970;235-6)

The once secure Tokugawa Shogunate was infected by a deepening sense of crisis as officialism failed to ease the burden of the peasants. Curiously, the pressures of a limited food supply were more severe on the

farmers who produced it, because the financial burden of maintaining the feudal structure fell disproportionately upon the agrarian sector of the economy. The very feudal system which was based on agricultural production penalised the farmer class which the Shogunate professed to respect. In theory, farmers were ranked next to the samurai, but in practice, the Tokugawa authorities treated them abominably, squeezing the peasants unmercifully for every bit of revenue they could extract from them. The poor, as often, bore the burdens of the rich. The measures often backfired as, in desperation, many peasants abandoned the land for the life of the cities, their land lay fallow, and less farmers were left to bear an increased load both in production and taxation.

Though, in theory, there was supposed to be security of land tenure, often the land of the poorer peasants passed into the hands of rich farmers or even of city merchants. They were often in debt, not only in hard times, but just as often when bumper crops brought the rice price down and so, when their mortgages were foreclosed, they lost their land. The only two alternatives left were flight to the cities or riots. Hence, organised demonstrations and destructive riots increased in prevalence; sometimes they were directed against the rich landowners and merchants and sometimes against the feudal authorities. Such disturbances had increased in frequency under Tanuma during the repeated famines of the 1780's, known as the Tenmei Famine; now again they increased during the 1830's, commonly called the Tempō Famine; and then again they would escalate in the last decade of the Shogunate.

During the famines in the 1820's and 1830's, "many of the farmers were no longer able to make a living farming and so left their villages and became vagrants. Of these, quite a few drifted into the cities but even there, because of sudden jumps in prices, etcetera, the life of the general common people was hard". (Inagaki, 1964:171) They aligned themselves with the distressed farmers in the villages and joined in rioting, particularly opposing the price rises and the merchants who cornered the market, and so they raided rice warehouses and wealthy merchants.

"The Tokugawa society contained within itself seeds of its own destruction. Commercialisation and urbanisation brought about unprecedented riches among certain groups, but in their wake also left trails of corruption". (Lu, 1974(ii):1) After over two centuries of peace, the

samurai class which had been the backbone of Tokugawa society little resembled their forefathers who had fought to win the nation. For long periods they resided in Edo and other castle towns. This had weakened their spirit and they gave more attention to the fine things of life than to the martial arts. They adopted a more luxurious lifestyle than their humble incomes could support. Hence, they were hopelessly in debt to the merchants and their morale was generally low. The economic conditions of the country had gradually declined and, as daimyō went deeper into debt, they exacted a large amount of taxes from the peasants of their domains.

"Yet for all the evidence of economic distress and dissatisfaction there was a lack of overt and effective protest." (Hall, 1970: 237) Any intellectuals who raised voices of alarm were for the most part isolated individuals -- none developed a following dedicated to revolutionary action or created a lasting political organisation. The same could be said of the outbreaks of mob violence both in the cities and the villages. Although discontent was strong, it was not politically motivated. There were no calls for the overthrow of the regime. There certainly was no thought of revolution; nor was there the vaguest hint of subversion towards the existing order. The unrest had an economic base. "Peasant rebellions, if not necessarily always directed against merchants, nevertheless involved looting of warehouses and other merchant possessions, and indeed, attacks on their persons." (Lehmann, 1982:75) Most samurai were staunch defenders of the status quo and neither townsmen nor peasants showed any clear desire for political change or even awareness that society and government could be modified.

The deterioration in the shortage of rice followed its relentless course and the peasants in the areas around Ōsaka, stripped of their granaries, flowed into the towns. But merchants raised their prices on the pretext of their obligation to comply with orders from Edo and of increased demand on the market. "Class lines inevitably became blurred in the topsy-turvy economy of the great cities of the Shogunal domains. Runaway peasants became the city proletariat, impoverished samurai and *rōnin* sank to the status of mere townsmen and rich commoners began to acquire samurai status," (Reischauer and Fairbank, 1958:634) either by purchasing the privilege from a needy daimyō, or frequently as bankers, managers of monopolies, and financial agents. Instead of lightening the tax burden on areas contiguous to the cities which has resulted in the flight of farmers to the city, such measures succeeded only in dramatising the

dilemmas of the situation. The discontent caused by poverty and social discrimination smouldered until it finally burst into flames, resentment focussing mainly on the constantly increasing tax burden. "As the Tokugawa period entered its last fifty years the traditional reforms were patently inadequate to meet the problems at hand." (Jansen, 1971:14)

More recently, the Tempō period (1830-44) has often been regarded as the first step in the process of dismantling the Shogunate system. It had been evaluated from many and varied viewpoints but in the 1950's the question was raised concerning its link with the Meiji Restoration. Tōyama Shigeki believes that the Tempō period was the time when the socio-political forces which played a major part in the Meiji Restoration virtually made their appearance and that the Tempō Reform was the prototype of the political nature of the restoration. Thus he evaluates it as the starting point of the Meiji Restoration and the way towards absolutism. Inoue Kiyoshi countered, maintaining that the *Bakufu* position was reactionary. On the other hand, he says that the way towards absolutism is to be found in the large fiefs of the South-West clans, e.g., Chōshū, Satsuma, Hizen and Tosa. How to evaluate the Tokugawa *Bakufu* and the South-West domains has been the major point of argument among recent historians studying the Tempō period, such as Okamoto Ryōchi, Tsuda Hideo, Inoue Kiyoshi and others.

Some feel that the Tempō Period was the turning point towards the parasitic land ownership system as the basis for Meiji absolutism. In the cotton growing villages of the advanced Kinai, they first discern the collapse of the middle-class farmer stratum and the development of parasitic landowners and they see the Tempō Period as epoch-making in this regard. But let us look at the characteristics of the deterioration of the Shogunate feudal society at this time. Commercial production had attained a high degree of development in many parts of the country, particularly in the Kinai region, and it had its basis in the size of the domestic markets, particularly in the farming areas. As yet the city market demands were limited. Commercial production was organised on the wholesale system and the producers were kept in isolation from the distributing process, their products often being controlled by the Ōsaka city merchants. The development of a monetary economy accelerated the dissolution of the traditional farmer class. Tenants lost possession of land as they had to pawn it to city pawnbrokers and the merchants who

made high-interest loans. Land was accumulated more and more into the hands of wealthy landowners and city usurers. This trend doubtless led to the *yonaoshi* riots at the end of the Tokugawa Period.

Against this trend, in several farming areas, like Kinai, the farmers formed a unique distribution pattern through a mutual organisation of the producers in opposition to the Ōsaka merchants. This secured for them a more fixed commercial profit, and, through sharing this profit equally, it produced regional prosperity. But such a market system was also exposed to the dangers of competition between the various production areas and was apt to collapse.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, several situations arose which anticipated the crisis in the Shogunate system. It had shown a lack of flexibility in changing from an agrarian-based society to a monetary, commercial economy. In spite of the development of commercial production, the *Bakufu* was not able to exploit the gains from this development because land tax was the unalterable basis of the feudal system. With the change of the distribution pattern, Ōsaka no longer fulfilled the function as the central market of the nation. Also, when the long period of low prices came to an end, there was a tendency for sudden jumps in prices. At the same time, the amount of land tax gathered in the regions under the direct control of the Shogunate had shown a tendency to drop since the time of the Kansei Reform. It is thought that this drop in the rate of land tax in the farming villages of Kantō was due to the vast areas of fields and paddies that lay waste in the wake of the Tenmei Famine. Even in the farming areas of Kinai, where commercial crops were more developed and agriculture production was stable, the amount of land tax did not increase.

"As an example of farming in Kinai which is included in data in the two volumes of *Fuse Shishi*, taking six villages in the Kawachi domain...if you calculate the rate of land tax, the average between 1789-1793 was 41%, between 1830-1834 the average was 30%, a large decrease." (Ōguchi, 1976:359,n.9) Thus something had to be done to change the traditional basis of tax assessment based on the crop yield system. Some provinces tried a new system of taxation to take advantage of the fruits of the commercial agriculture industry but, due to the resistance of farmers who opposed the extra taxes, it was not successful. In many villages the

attempt to impose extra land tax proportionate to the amount of one's holding ruined the poor farmers. This led to the laying waste of arable land or the accumulation of land in the hands of the wealthy farmers, a process which had already begun.

Looking at the decline in status of the Ōsaka market, according to an investigation by the Ōsaka city commissioner's office during the Tempō Reform period, it is pointed out that "with regards to a list of 14 articles such as rice, salt, cotton, etcetera, it was clear that from the Bunka to the Tempō periods all articles suffered a decrease in the amount that arrived in Ōsaka".[2] The reasons for this seem to be the direct shipment to the consumer market through the monopoly of *han* management, the success of dealing through the distribution structure apart from the Ōsaka wholesale merchants, and the fact that rice shipments were organised to take advantage of the price rise of commodities before despatching them.

For further details of the gradual development of direct alternative markets in Edo by an increasing number of domains see Ōguchi's chart.[3] As an example of the effect of this breaking of the monopolies of the Ōsaka merchants, the amount of cotton transactions by the Ōsaka wholesalers which was eight million *tan* annually during the Bunka Period (1804-18) had been reduced to three million at the beginning of Tempō (1830).

The tendency for commodity prices to rise had already begun in the Bunsei Period (1818-30). During the Kansei Period there had been a period of stagnation in the price of consumer goods, and in the last year of Bunka (1818) they were low, but from the beginning of Bunsei they gradually recovered, although they rose suddenly and explosively during the Tempō famine in the 1830's. Ōguchi's diagram shows the fluctuations in the prices of ginned cotton and raw cotton between 1818 and 1847. (ibid., 330) For instance, with an index of 100 in 1818, ginned cotton had reached 150 in 1830, and during the Tempō famine, it rose to 200-300,

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[2]Ōsaka Shishi Vol.V:639, as quoted in Ōguchi, 1976:329.
[3]Ōguchi, ibid., 329 (Chart 1), as taken from *Dai Nippon Kinsei Shiryō*, Shotonya Saikō Chō 7.

but, after good harvests in the late 1830's, it returned to the pre-famine price. It is obvious that the sudden rise in production costs accompanying the development of commercial agriculture, together with the stronger position of the producers due to the success of their protest, was reflected in the price of ginned cotton. On the other hand, the price of raw cotton was controlled and so showed no such sudden fluctuations. This further affected the powerful wholesale merchants in Edo and Ōsaka. They faced difficulties in operation because of the sluggishness of business conditions.

The supreme commander during the Tempō era was the eleventh Shōgun, Ienari, who ruled from 1787-1837 and whose lifestyle of luxury and extravagance was epitomised by the fact that he had forty concubines who produced 55 children by him. The final years of the long Shogunate of Tokugawa Ienari were marked by natural disasters and famines but they did nothing to curb his notorious extravagance and the resultant drain on the *Bakufu* treasury. The Kansei Reform had merely glossed over the disastrous state of the *Bakufu*'s financial affairs. Each year produced a deficit in excess of 500,000 *ryō*. All this time in the districts, there had been a dramatic transition to a mercantile economy which already was undermining the foundation of the Shogunate system and its reliance on an agrarian-based, feudal taxation system. This gradually ushered in a period of structural crisis throughout the whole country which was expressed by the most numerous and conspicuous peasant riots and protests against the authorities of the whole Tokugawa era. During Ienari's rule alone there were 498 incidents, about 30% of the whole era, at an average of ten per year.[4]

Peasants had disputed water rights and mountain rights for years, and they had often co-operated on the basis of common interest to engage in some united action. Now they co-operated on a large scale to protest in many areas. Kinai, and especially the districts of Settsu, Kawachi and Izumi around Ōsaka which were known as the *Settsu-gata* (Settsu-pattern) region, was a region where the most advanced agricultural management was employed, but being a directly administered Shogunate area, there was a bewildering number of complications in its administration.

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[4]Kokushō Gen, *Hyakushō Ikki Gaikan Oyobi Nenpyō*, (Revised Ed.), 1959, gives 1635 incidents. According to later research the number has further increased.

The Sansho wholesalers were the Tenma city vegetable wholesalers, the Kyōbashi fresh-water fish wholesalers, and the Tenma Matakurō Chō raw cotton wholesalers, but later the "Sansho wholesalers" were limited to raw cotton wholesalers. Since 1772 they had been a stock organisation that monopolised the purchase of raw and ginned cotton which was shipped from such cotton producing areas as Kinai and Chūgoku. Before that, the producers had had freedom to ship their cotton to Ōsaka and sell it at favourable prices but, after 1772, the cotton market was monopolised by ten houses of the Sansho wholesalers and the prices were settled unilaterally. Thus, the producers were at a great disadvantage and so naturally the farmers of Kinai and Chūgoku who produced commercial crops of cotton and rape seed, and especially those of Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi who had maintained operations only with extreme difficulty, demanded the abolition of the Sansho guilds in order to remove this monopoly.

Even in 1805, the year before Heihachirō came to work as an apprentice police officer at the commissioner's office, "peasants from 568 villages in Settsu and Kawachi began by co-operating and petitioning against the monopoly that the Ōsaka city stockbroker-merchants had over the sale of rape seed which was the raw material for lighting fuel". (Okamoto, 1975: 68) Then in 1807, the same kind of confrontation was repeated in the 24 villages of two counties in the Hojo domain in Sayama, Kawachi. In 1810, this was followed by the Okabe domain in Kishiwada, Izumi and other villages rising up in opposition against the Sakai wholesalers for their monopolistic cornering of the cotton market.

In 1823, 1107 villages or 75% of the total number of villages of Settsu, Kawachi and Izumi provinces formed a great alliance to oppose the distribution monopoly that the cotton wholesalers of Sansho had held since 1772. They even demanded the abolition of the guild, as the fixing of prices was completely in the hands of the ten Sansho wholesalers while the farmers who were the producers had been relegated to an extremely unfavourable position. At that time, the region of Settsu, Kawachi and Izumi was the central cotton producing area of the whole country and their product was known as "Kawachi cotton". Thus this united front of 1107 villages from the cotton bowl of Japan was a powerful voice, and the result was that the farmer-producers in the local districts won the decision from the commissioner's office and consequently they were able

to sell directly to cotton merchants in other provinces, both near and far, without respect to the Sansho wholesale brokers. This was a great victory to the farmers and a further blow to the prestige of the Ōsaka wholesalers. (Kobayashi, 1963:241f)

From 1823-4, emboldened by such success, there was a further extension of the organisation of those who had already fought against the Sansho cotton wholesalers, and this time, peasants from 1460 (80%) of the villages in Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi united with a common purpose, based on a common interest, to appeal against the monopoly of the oil wholesalers. Being of such a wide-scale, united front, this petition to abolish the monopolies of the privileged city merchant guilds was brought to the commissioner's office.

Rape seed which was the raw material for lighting, cooking and barbering oils, was not only a raw material crop which was more indispensible to everyday life in those days than cotton, its extracted waste, oil cakes, were used as an important fertiliser. "Under the Meiwa Law of 1770, the farmers who were engaged in the production and processing of rape and cotton seed were not permitted to retain even the smallest amounts of oil for their own everyday use. They were enforced to purchase it from the city merchants which was an extremely illogical and unprofitable method." (Okamoto, 1967:216) Because the *Bakufu* controlled this West Japan product in order to provide this necessary commodity at a cheap price, it meant the farmers who had gone to the trouble of producing the rape seed had to sell it at a cheap rate and then turn around and buy high-priced oil. Besides, rape seed was the greatest cash crop the farmers in this district had to cover the expenses of repairs, new agricultural implements, coolies' wages, the cost of fertiliser to support continued production, as well as covering the many and varied expenses during the year. Thus, it was natural for the farmers of Settsu, Kawachi and Izumi, together with the oil merchants of the country districts, to oppose persistently the privileged city oil merchants of Ōsaka. The earlier protests in 1788 and 1805 had been rejected by the *Bakufu* as contrary to the law. But this time an unprecedently large-scale public protest of 1307 villages was made in April 1824 and, as a result, the *Bakufu* substantially adopted the farmers' demands which meant they had to re-examine their former oil policy. This resulted in the Aburagata Kaisei Shihō of 1832. (Tsuda, 1961:110f)

"Even if it did not have the brilliance of a military conflict, we can say that it truly had great significance." (Okamoto, 1975:70) The farmer-producers of commercial crops such as cotton, rape seed, etcetera, suffered intolerably through such monopolies. But also within the villages, there were farmers who had become part-merchants and who shared in the profits by joining hands with the privileged city merchants as their accomplices, and who thus were already on the way to wealth. Consequently, the poor peasants who had been plundered by the authorities through tax and by the wealthy city merchants through exploitation, were now plundered further by the wealthy farmers. Herein lies the cause of the great peasant riots. Besides their opposition to the authority of the feudal lords, they daily struggled economically against the wealthy merchants. Basically and originally, it was merely an economic struggle. But even the wealthy farmers which included the village officials, such as headmen or elders, often led protests to the government. They were crucial to the success of the people's appeals. In this, as we have seen, Ōshio's relationship with these village officials was significant. In the farmers' protest there was not the violence of the peasant riots or urban smashings. But the fact that as many as 80% of the farmers over a wide area of Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi, in a body, sought a change to *Bakufu* policy, pointed to the serious structural crisis that existed. It was a denial of the traditional economic system based on the feudal lord on which the Shogunate system relied. (Okamoto, 1967:217)

In the Yamaguchi domain in 1830, a law was passed providing for the *han* to buy the products of their domain at a cheap price, load them on to ships and sell to Ōsaka. This meant that the profit which the wealthy farmers and merchants used to receive now all went to the *han* and this practice gave rise to the great riots and smashings of 1831 as the farmers opposed it.

Viewing briefly the politics of the Tempō period and the trend which saw the masses plunge into a desperate crisis situation, we can discern a progressive country-wide development of commercial production in the villages, with the accompanying dissolution of the independent farmer-class which had been the mainstay of agriculture. According to Hatanaka, (1970:254-5) this produced the following local characteristics:

1. Many farmers in the cotton-producing villages in the advanced regions of Kinai and the Inland Sea went bankrupt on account of the introduction of high-interest loan capital by the fertiliser merchants and of the regulation of capital by the merchants in Ōsaka and districts who controlled the market. Many of them fell to the status of poor farmers and farmers who were not responsible for paying tax (*mudakaso*). Also, the so-called "semi-proletariat" class was gradually born as large numbers of those who lived in agriculture villages were making a living as small tenant farmers while labouring for wages outside agriculture. For the wealthy farmer-class, the economic transformation into landowners was seen simultaneously, but in the Inland Sea area where there was not so much influence of Ōsaka capital, the wealthy farmers became village merchants and embarked on transactions with distant places. This was different from the original commercial structure.

2. In the backward regions, such as San'in and the Kantō districts, there was the continuing abandonment of land by the farmers and, consequently, the farming villages were left in desolation. In order to supplement the major crop (rice), commercial production was popularised and, thus, there was the development of tenancy and pawned land. These two factors intertwined and caused an increase in the number of poor and tenant farmers who, though released from their farms, remained living in the agricultural villages.

3. In the rice producing area of Echigo, where only one crop of rice could be harvested annually because of the cold climate, with the commercialisation of the main crop, the big landowners were established. The tenant farmer-class disintegrated and reached the situation where they had to rely on a money income outside agriculture. Such poor farmers and *mudakaso* were the main supporters of village uprisings. Thus, with these daily struggles as background, riots broke out all over the place during Tempō. Whether justified or not, Hatanaka sees the commencement of "an alliance between small farmers and the lower classes in the towns", even though at that stage it was only partial.

Certainly the structural crisis stimulated the lower-ranking warriors of the South-West domains to form a party to reform *han* administration which shook the lords' ruling system. Also the exploitation in commercial agricultural production and the distribution process through the daimyō's

monopoly system, not only caused the intensification of farmer resistance, but it also forced a confrontation with the *Bakufu* marketing regulations. Thus, the *han* authorities had to grope for a new method of organising trade between the domains.

Ōshio was concerned at the peasants' plight, squeezed as they were between extreme extortion from both sides, namely the excessively heavy feudal tax on one side and the money economy on the other, so that even raising their bare requirements became impossible, let alone being able to maintain production. While standing in awe of their feudal lords, they had to appeal to them for relief of their burdens. During Heihachirō's work as a police officer there had been numerous large peasant revolts in the outskirts of Ōsaka. Often they bypassed the feudal lords and appealed directly to the Tokugawa authorities.

Though the direct cause of the distress of the people were poor harvests, their efforts to support themselves were greatly aggravated by the unrealistic and harsh economic policies of the Shogunate. The ruling samurai class was forever increasing pressure on the farmers to produce more and consume less, firmly convinced that they should be governed in such a way that "they do not die and that they do not enjoy life". (Akamatsu, 1972:26) By the eighteenth century the poorer farmers had reached their utmost capacity in production and no more could be squeezed out of them by taxes, nor could they accumulate any reserves as a buffer against crop failures.

Morris (1975:200-1) was of the opinion that "the underlying cause of the famines was demographic. In a closed, isolated economy like that of Tokugawa Japan, any steep increase in the population was bound to be dangerous. "It is probably no coincidence," he notes, "that the economic crises of 1782 and 1832 both occurred at a time when Japan had exceeded its 'safe' population threshold of about 27 million." There is no doubt that the intensity of human suffering could have been mitigated by a more rational and beneficent administration. The authorities were unwilling to take the necessary emergency measures to protect the population and so the misery spread rapidly. "Even in Nagoya, where an attempt was made to provide relief, some 1,500 corpses lay unburied in the Spring of 1837". (Borton, 1938:88) Ōsaka, whose economy was at that time largely controlled by Kōnoike and a few other large merchant families in close co-operation with the municipal officials, was seething with unrest.

1. *Kyōhō Famine (1732-3)*

The first major famine during the Tokugawa period occurred in South-West Japan in 1732 as a result of a severe locust plague and an unseasonably cold and wet summer. "The harvest decreased by four million *koku* of rice and prices which had been unusually depressed soared out of control. Stricken farmers flocked to the cities to seek relief, further adding to the misery of urban residents, and early in 1733, a large riot (*uchikowashi*) broke out in the Shogunal capital of Edo." (Nakai, 1983:330) The Shogunate sent officials to various domains to direct relief measures; they controlled the distribution and storage of rice, emptied their own grain reserves, granted loans and tax remissions to the most severely afflicted areas, issued orders prohibiting hoarding, limited wine production and exhorted wealthy individuals and religious institutions to provide food for the starving. Still, many died of starvation, and in all, over two million were affected. Relief finally came with the bumper crops of 1734 and 1735.

The Kyōhō Reforms were a series of reforms and economic retrenchments carried out by the Shogunate under the direction of Yoshimune, the eighth Shōgun, during the Kyōhō era and for a few years into the next era. They can be regarded as a major attempt to resurrect those values, policies, and attitudes that were identified with Ieyasu at the very beginning of the Tokugawa regime. Traditionally they had been regarded as the most successful of the three great reforms of the Edo period, and as the model for the later Kansei and Tempō Reforms. Basically, the reforms sought both to increase the financial resources available to the Shogunate and, through curbing expenditures and stabilising prices, make it possible for the Shogunate and the samurai class to live within their means.

2. *Tenmei Famine (1782-7)*

This was a severe famine that affected nearly all of Japan. "Several hundred thousand (estimates vary from 200,000 to 900,000) people died as a result of the famine which was one of the worst in the Edo period." (Lamont, 1983:381) In 1782 unseasonable weather resulted in poor crops in large areas of Japan. In 1784, many domains yielded no harvest at all, while more productive areas produced only 40% of normal yields at

most. Cold winds from 1784-6 continued to destroy crops and poor administration by the central and local governments compounded the problems. In many cases taxes already exceeded normal farm capacities, leaving peasants no reserves of rice against such disasters, or even for the next season's planting. Rice prices soared as speculators, often in conspiracy with the officials, hoarded the meagre harvest. Although the Shogunate attempted to solve the problem by distributing relief food and setting up shelters, these countermeasures were largely ineffectual. The destitute were reduced to foraging for roots, eating dogs and cats, and in extreme cases, to cannibalism. Peasant riots and rice smashings occurred in unprecedented numbers and scale. The famine was one of several factors that led to Tanuma Okitsugu's fall from control of the government. "The Tanuma Period did, in fact, witness a high incidence of peasant uprisings (*hyakushō ikki*) and acts of mob violence (*uchikowashi*) in the cities." (Hall, 1983:345)

Between the end of the eighteenth century and the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate more than 200 riots occurred in the cities. When a famine in the Tenmei era drove the price of rice sky-high, more than sixty riots erupted throughout the country. Considerable confusion and social unrest led to riots in Ōsaka, particularly in 1782, 1787, and 1789.

The most influential minister of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758-1829). He was *rōjū* (councillor) from 1787-1793. "A learned and strict Confucianist, he came to power after the great famines and declared the reform of the Shogunal administration. All he did was practise the traditional principles of austerity and moral regeneration." (Akamatsu, 1972:48)

During the Tenmei famine, as the result of a poor harvest of 60% of the usual yield, the commissioner's office repeatedly warned the Dōjima Exchange and rice merchants not to raise rice prices, but it had no effect. Whatever the period, when the hike in rice prices became inevitable, those who had a surplus hoarded rice and those who eyed huge profits cornered the market on a large scale and this fanned still higher price increases. Naturally, the poor resented those who took advantage of their suffering and it resulted in cities being filled with unrest. Okamoto (1975:8) mentions two merchants who were the particular objects of attack by the starving, resentful masses, "Kajimaya Hisaemon of

Tamasui Chō and Matsuyasu Shōemon of Dōjima Shinchi who had for a long time had an evil reputation for cornering the market on rice, hoisting prices, and making excessive profits". On February 1, 1783, the angry masses attacked Kajimaya, rased the mansion and then mercilessly destroyed it. They also attempted an assault on Matsuyasu but the city commissioner, hearing of the emergency, immediately despatched officials who scattered the masses, arresting several who were slow in fleeing. Through ordering the arrest, not only of the direct participants in such riots but also of the bystanders, the authorities were gradually able to prevent the spread of riots. There had been a large scale "smashing" in Edo in 1733, but this was the first riot in Ōsaka. Nor were the riots limited to Ōsaka city. The famine incited *ikki* and *uchikowashi* among rural and city dwellers throughout the whole country; in fact, in 1783 alone, 25 incidents were reported. This was a record for any one year since the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate. The fact that an *uchikowashi* had broken out in Ōsaka, the nation's kitchen, was different from the *hyakushō ikki* which frequently occurred in other areas, for "it was like thrusting a sharp dagger into the breast of the Tokugawa feudal system which had begun to expose the bankruptcy which was gradually becoming hard to conceal". (ibid., 11)

3. *Kansei Famine and Reform (1789-93)*

The reforms that followed the Kansei famine did not last beyond the tenure of Matsudaira Sadanobu, Shogunate councillor, 1787-1793. As head of the Council of Elders (*rōjū*), he was the author and promulgator of a brief edict known as "The Kansei Prohibition of Heterodox Studies" (Kansei Igaku no Kin) of 1790. It called upon Hayashi Kinpō, the head of the *Bakufu* college, "to reaffirm the school's commitment to more orthodox versions of Neo-Confucian teaching and to repress heterodox teachings within the school". (Nosco, 1984:20) Like Yoshimune before him, Matsudaira was confronted with serious fiscal and social dilemmas. Faced with such problems it was the common practice of leaders to seek to resurrect the policies of the founding fathers. Among other things, he provided for the establishment of emergency reserves of rice against future famines. "In spite of many attempts to reform, economic conditions continued to deteriorate and tax exactions were unabated." (Lu, 1974(ii):3)

4. Tempō Famine

The Tempō period (1830-1844) in Japanese history is important, not only for the events that occurred during its 15 years, but also because of its close connection with what followed. Many historians see it as the turning point, the beginning of the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate, and Ōshio's revolt of 1837 could be regarded as the pivotal event of the period.

The Tempō Famine, as in other regions, had exerted a great influence on the five provinces around Kyōto; it triggered the sudden jump in rice prices and the consequent difficulty in obtaining rice and other grains. As a result, people suffered anguish of heart and starvation of body. Ōshio felt this state of affairs could have been avoided if the bureaucracy had cared for the distressed and relieved the starving masses instead of urging more and more frugality by advocating a reduction of expenditure. The masses needed food, not instruction. What little relief that was given was insufficient. It sufficed neither to assuage their hunger nor to calm the unrest of their hearts. For instance, "In Suita village volunteers gave out 5 *koku* 7 *shō* 5 *gō* of relief rice; in Makami village 1 *gō* of relief rice was given over 60 days...However, such measures were definitely not enough". (Kawai, 1982:56)

Some of the poor and distressed country folk, tired of waiting for relief, took positive action themselves. Kawai tells of the case of Hirose villagers going directly to the administrators of the area and demanding to be able to borrow rice. He feels that, possibly, this kind of action developed into the unlawful riots and smashings. Not only did rice prices suddenly rise during the famine, the depressed economy led to chronic unemployment, particularly for day-labourers whose labour was in ever-lessening demand. They and servants had no resources to fall back on, and thus many townspeople died of starvation, falling in the streets and by the wayside in coming and going to the shrines. Agricultural production stagnated, workers suffered a great reduction, or even a complete cessation, of income and both towns and country alike had been reduced to a pathetic state of affairs.

Even in Ōsaka, the "kitchen of the nation", a similar trend pertained. Rice prices rose unilaterally and so the Ōsaka city commissioner's office announced price controls, but it was legislation that was impossible to

enforce. A fire destroyed the whole of Tenma and Dōjima in 1834. The administration's response, as ever, was negative: exercise frugality and restrict expenditure. Thus, houses were not rebuilt, burnt areas were not tidied up, and many places became waste grassland. If only the authorities had stimulated the economy by releasing finance for reconstruction, there would have been work for carpenters, tradesmen and their labourers, and they would have received some money to buy food. Instead, the burned out ruins were left as they were. This was typical of the policy of the bureaucrats. Even the bustling, thriving city of Ōsaka lost economic vitality during the Tempō era. As an expression of the hopelessness and desperate situation, riots and smashings increased in the 1830's.

In 1833, low temperatures and heavy rain continued from the beginning of Spring and other disasters were added one after another, resulting in poor harvests particularly in Eastern Japan. Damage was most severe in Tsugaru, Akita, and Yamagata while in some villages there were no harvests at all. Many died of starvation and, even in Edo which depended upon rice shipped from the North-East area, many big social problems arose because of the sudden jump in rice prices and the lack of food.

In Ōsaka, the increase in the number of foundlings in the city indicates the severity of the suffering of the lower-class people, and in 1833, symptoms of a definite famine appeared. As was its custom, the commissioner's office issued a warning for the regulation of rice prices. In August 1833, there were smashings of rice shops in Hyōgo and, in September, peasant riots broke out in Harima. This was a large scale riot, extending to 76 villages in the 7 counties and for several days violence erupted in the Kakogawa river basin. The objects of attack were usually the wealthy merchants and wealthy farmers who enriched themselves through unjustly exploiting the peasants. Police were hurriedly despatched by the Ōsaka city commissioner's office and they suppressed the riot, but popular feelings in the city were agitated still more.

"In 1833, when *Senshindō Sakki* was printed, the Dewa flood, the washing away of crops at Ōu, the Kantō great rainstorm, and other natural disasters continued and so it was a year of extreme famine." (Miyagi, 1984:45) In September of that year, a smashing occurred against the cornering of the market by the wealthy merchants in Kakogawa in Banshū

(Harima), and there were indications that it would spread to every area in Banshū. In Ōsaka the rice price suddenly doubled and even in the next year, 1834, it did not fall. In May, about 350 poor people met in Tamatsukuri Inari which was between the boundary of Ōsaka's three districts and the outlying villages, and there were some moves towards breaking into the rice merchants' shops. The result was that the Ōsaka city commissioner's office sent out notices to restrain rice price rises and *sake* manufacture was limited to two thirds that of the usual year. Further, the wealthy were encouraged to give food to the distressed, poor people. At this time, the Western group commissioner, Yabe Suruga no Kami Sadakata, was the focus of the famine countermeasures. Having heard of Ōshio's ability and methods, even though he was now retired, he discussed relief countermeasures with him. Ōshio, knowing the distressed state of the masses and seeing people suffering from starvation, appealed to the commissioner to do something. Heihachirō believed in the unity of creation and so the people's suffering was his suffering; he could not remain unmoved by their distress. As he was retired, he no longer had any place in government and thus he grew impatient with the lack of positive action by the city commissioners. He decided to do something positive himself and so leaving Senshindō, he applied himself to research in various places. First he went to Tōju's study in Ōmi and then he went to the Ise Shrine where he had presented his publications. He also visited his own disciples who had peasant backgrounds in the towns and villages around Ōsaka, people like the wealthy farmers, Hashimoto Chūbei of Senjakuji village in Settsu and Shirai Kōemon of Manda county in Kawachi, and to other places in the vicinity of Ōsaka. In the process, his heart was further afflicted at the sight of peasants groaning under the heavy burden of taxation and the long-continuing famine. This sight moved him to write some poems to which we have already referred.

From his experience at the Ōsaka city commissioner's office, Ōshio knew who should have taken responsibility for the plight of the masses. Instead, the authorities turned a blind eye to their needs and continued to indulge their self-interests. To Ōshio, it was the peasants who embodied pure *ryōchi*, not the authorities.

As an example of the social conditions at this time, we can look at the situation in Kadoma Sanban village. Inui (1975:31) tells us that "In the closing years of Bunsei (late 1820's), poverty in the village became

severe, and in 1827, they began a system of lending money through the village for the relief of those who had suffered on account of the distress of recent years". Again in August 1829, they agreed upon a policy of intense frugality. In July 1830, the first year of Tempō, through heavy rainfall the Yodo River flooded to the extent of 11 feet and the area suffered much damage. The number of sufferers increased and it was decided to begin a small scale banking system in Sanban village to rescue those suffering from the famine. It was a strategy for strengthening the community system of the village as a unit so that it would not disintegrate.

In 1832, the Yodo River flooded twice and the villagers applied to borrow rice. In 1833, there was a sudden jump in rice prices due to a poor harvest caused by excessive frosts. Each village made big public protests to the Shogunate as no one village by itself, could rescue all its tenant farmers who were in distress. Then, in April 1834, the village provided relief for the sufferers; a total of 15 *koku* of relief rice was provided by seven of the wealthy farmers of the village and it was distributed to 56 homes of the distressed. On this occasion, Matta Gunshi delivered two and a half *koku* and Takahashi Kyūemon one and a quarter *koku* of rice to the administration. Out of the 99 houses in the village, it is recorded that the majority, 56 in all, were the objects of relief rice.

The village appealed to Edo not to have the *tsukegō* tax imposed that particular year because of its destitution on account of the bad harvest. As the result of this appeal, low-ranking officials of the commissioner's office went around and assessed the villages with the result that, in 1835, except for Kadoma Yonban village, the other six villages were exempted from the *tsukegō* duty for ten years because of their poverty. For this reason, substitute villages were necessary and hence the same officials went round inspecting and assessing prospective villages all of which, with one accord, claimed hardship. Forty-one of these villages were punished with a correctional fine and five were reprimanded.

Again, in 1835, the Yodo River flooded in both April and May and so every village was in distress. With the August floods and official corruption as their cause, violent peasant riots erupted in the Mino area. Fanned by rumours that several officials had been killed by farmers with bamboo spears together with news of the frequent outbreak of fires in the city,

unrest filled the hearts of the populace. Stormy weather was continuous from the beginning of 1836. Rain fell almost incessantly from April and there was a fierce and continuous rainstorm in May causing the Yodo River to flood, overflowing its banks, and washing away several bridges within the city. Dykes were breached in various places in Settsu, Kawachi, and Izumi. Heavy rain persisted in June. While still suffering from this, again and again during July and August there was country-wide damage to crops caused by unprecedented, unseasonably cold weather and floods. On top of these, a further big rainstorm in August not only washed away crops, but also caused fruit to fall prematurely.

In anticipation of an atrocious harvest, the commissioner's office forbad the sale of rice by auction and ordered the reduction of *sake*-making. But still the rice price steadily soared from 80 *momme* in May, over 100 in June, 110 in July, 120 in August, 140 in September, and it showed no signs of stopping. Naturally, this made the tax burden all the more onerous and impossible. As a consequence, the lower classes suffered extreme hardship and their distress was much more severe even than that which they had suffered in 1833-4. The 1836 harvest was disastrous. In particular, the tenant farmers suffered intolerably and, in each village, the victims held meetings and banded together to appeal to the authorities. The state of affairs in the villages was turbulent at this time. In every area of society morale was low, while outcastes, beggars, and thieves increased continually as the perilous plight and the economic conditions of the poor led them into stealing to maintain life.

In many poor families who had nothing to sell, the wife and daughter engaged in prostitution on the roadside to receive a pittance to cover that day's food and so the administration issued warnings about women loitering on the streets. Smashings of the homes of the wealthy and of the rice merchants continued unabated as people were at starving point. Even at such a critical time as this, "merchants were contriving excessive profits through illegal trading as they had a chance to make outlandish profits". (Okamoto, 1975:31) Dishonest rice merchants poured wax or inserted a board in the bottom of their measuring boxes to make them shallow and hold less. More than twenty of them were arrested by the authorities and thrown into prison and, on 24th September, thirteen rice shops in Kōzu were broken down by a violent mob of exasperated townspeople. Atobe, the newly-appointed incumbent as city commissioner,

immediately despatched policemen and arrested over 80 people.

There seemed signs that the price of rice might fall in October but, with only a poor 40% harvest at that time, prices started to rise again in November to 150 *momme* and continued to rise. By then there were rumours of beggars and poor people dying of starvation and of people committing suicide by throwing themselves into the moat of the Ōsaka Castle. With such country-wide destitution, notices of complaint increasingly appeared throughout the cities. Even the Shogunate came under severe criticism. For instance, at the beginning of September, an obviously anti-Shogunate notice was posted at Kōraibashi 3 Chōme:

> "Again this year, because natural disasters and calamities have been continuous, crops are not ripening, and inevitably, all the people are distressed. They are suffering destitution and are being driven to the wall. Edo's administration is completely partial, full of graft, and although they call it public government, the authorities are impervious to the grief of the masses and do nothing for them. Despite the people's cries, they live extravagantly within their castles, and treat the people like dirt. They summarily deal out rigorous measures to the lower-ranked people. Now the order has come from heaven that, not only the samurai but also farmers, townsmen and priests, should stand up and consider this as service for heaven."

The fact that the Manda and Higashinari counties were in the region on the left bank of the Yodo River which was a single crop, rice-growing area and was also susceptible to flooding while the surrounding area, known as *Settsu-gata* was an advanced agriculture cropping area, made Manda and Higashinari feel vulnerable and left behind.

During the Tempō era, famine was chronic and agrarian uprisings were both frequent and violent. With the sudden rise in rice prices due to successive poor harvests, those who needed relief, such as the poor peasants and those who had abandoned agriculture and migrated to the cities, grew to more than half of the village population.

In June 1836, Ōshio launched the publication of his life's work *Kohon Daigaku Katsumoku*. Of this book, Ōshio, in a letter addressed to Hiramatsu Rakusai dated 13th May, 1836, wrote, "Although I quote theories of the ancient people, I also discuss the merits and demerits of financial matters and how to use human resources". (Miyagi, 1984:47) The phrase, "the merits and demerits of financial matters", was a quotation from *Daigaku*. In his Manifesto, Heihachirō was to write, "If you allow minor

people to rule the nation, it leads to calamity and harm". To Ōshio, the continuous succession of natural disasters could only have been invited by their statesmen who were minor people who forgot benevolence and virtue. Doubtless he felt he must publish the book at this juncture.

On their part, the Ōsaka city commissioners had proposed every traditional measure to alleviate the famine, such as regulations which restricted the manufacture of rice wine, prohibited the city rice merchants from cornering the market, restrained the sudden rise of rice prices, opened public and private famine-relief rice stores, urged wealthy city merchants to provide relief for the victims, and so on. But, as may be expected, the merchants did not feel any sense of responsibility. In Autumn, the time when new crops normally entered the port, any lingering hopes for rice arriving from all the outlying provinces were dashed as the yield was only 42% of an average year.

In Ōsaka city there were more thieves and highway robbers than ever before, driven to this expediency by the hardness of the times. At least forty people died of starvation daily. At this time, the city commissioner responsible for famine countermeasures was the newly-appointed East group commissioner, Atobe Yamashiro no Kami Yoshitada, the real younger brother of the Councillor Mizuno Tadakuni. In spite of Yabe, the Western commissioner, advising Atobe to use Ōshio's considerable talents, and in spite of the fact that, on his arrival at his post, he had sole responsibility for the conduct of famine relief, he completely shunned Ōshio. As the famine continued, the people's distress deepened and some died on the roads while suicides increased. Ōshio, sensitive to the poverty that increasingly plagued the poor, lavished advice on his former superiors, and made some unsolicited recommendations to Atobe to organise relief by opening the reserve stores, but his counsel was harshly spurned. "He (Ōshio) then turned to the merchants and asked for a loan of 60,000 *ryō* which he would have distributed to the poor, but he was met with refusal." (Akamatsu, 1972:60) In spite of Ōshio's repeated pleas to the authorities and then to the giant merchant houses for famine relief to relieve the starving and distressed poor, nothing was forthcoming. The wealthy merchants could not be persuaded to give aid; their only concern was for the huge profits to be gained by cornering the market and forcing up profits. Thereby they aggravated the situation. Even while witnessing the terrible sights of famine before their very eyes, they continued, as

their custom was, to live extravagant, luxury-loving lives. They refused all of Ōshio's pleas either to loan him money or contribute directly to the relief of the needy.

As the famine grew worse within the city of Ōsaka, victims of starvation were in a pathetic situation and the conditions were continually deteriorating. Ōshio "often appealed to the Shogunate administrator of that time, Atobe, for emergency measures but, not only were his appeals completely disregarded, he was reprimanded as an insolent person who did not behave as his status required". (Okamoto, 1980:605) As a result, Ōshio gave free rein to his indignation and vehemently denounced the callous selfishness of the bureaucrats and merchants. Atobe Yoshitada, the person with the supreme responsibility in city government in Ōsaka, not only announced no suitable emergency measures at all, but he also arrested any starving citizens who bought even a little black-market rice from the farmers' personal supplies, and cast scores of them into prison as law-breakers. One of the measures he took was to restrict the forwarding of rice or grain to other places in order to guarantee that there was rice in the city. If the situation in Ōsaka was desperate, the conditions in Kyōto, Fushimi and other rural areas, cut off from the rice shipments from Ōsaka, were beyond description.

The year 1833 was memorable for the calamities which befell the country: cold weather, floods, and storms. In some villages there were no harvests at all; in others, 30%-70% of the normal yield. Years of famine followed one after the other and according to Borton, (1938:88) "Even in Nagoya, where an attempt was made to provide relief, some 1500 corpses lay unburied in the streets in the Spring of 1837". In the thirties of the nineteenth century when the whole empire was being pinched and emaciated by a seemingly interminable famine, the indifference and callousness of the rich mercantile class provoked the most bitter resentment among those to whom the claims of compassion and humanity still counted for something. Unseasonable weather and poor harvests succeeded one another in 1834 and 1835, and in 1836, a disastrously low yield of about one-third the average year brought scarcity which sent prices even higher. As a result, many destitute peasants flocked to the cities and "many died of starvation and disease, particularly in Northeastern Japan, and there were even reports of cannibalism." (Totman, 1983:2)

The *Bakufu* assayed to meet the crisis by distributing rice, setting up shelters, regulating prices, prohibiting hoarding, and restricting wine production but these measures were largely ineffective as were the relief measures of the various domains. The nation-wide crop failure in 1836 meant that the total amount of land tax from all Shogunate territories was only 1,030,000 *koku* in that year, the lowest figure since the great Tenmei famines in 1784 and 1786, and the damage then was legendary. But now, because the commercial economy had permeated the farming villages and the self-supporting farming villages had gradually broken up, the number of farmers who purchased rice had steadily increased and the lower-class farmers had no power of resistance to overcome the famine. Also, now that the distribution of rice was in the hands of individual domains, strict distribution controls were carried out which meant that there was unequal distribution of rice and various places experienced local famines. Country-wide, the *Bakufu*, having learned a lesson from the Edo smashings during the Tenmei famines (1782-7), had a policy of stabilised rice prices.

During the Tempō Famine, the emergency reserves which had been established in 1791 as part of the Kansei Reforms by the *rōjū*, Matsudaira Sadanobu, were used to feed the people of Edo. But what actual effect did this Shogunate relief policy have? Let us take a practical look at the Tempō famine relief in Yamase village in Takai county, Shinshū.

Exceptional damage had been caused by poor harvests in Yamase, beginning in 1833. Especially affected by severe famine was the Sugagawa group of newly developed, mountain, dry fields. The ruling chief magistrate's office immediately devised countermeasures for each district. In the first place, they strictly enforced a policy stopping the transfer of rice outside their territory. The second measure was the reduction and exemption from the annual tribute during bad harvests, especially in 1833. Rice was loaned to the farmers on the condition of repayment within five years. Thirdly, rice which was stored for emergency purposes since the Tenmei famine was released and loaned but it had to be repaid within five years. The fourth measure which relied completely on the funds which the wealthy farmers paid as tax was implemented. In 1833, five wealthy farmers such as Aoki Genbei of Yamase village submitted a total of 300 *ryō*. Of this, 35 *ryō* was lent to the Sugagawa group to be repaid in 3 years. In the same year Genbei delivered 100 *hyō* (bales) of

unhulled rice. This was loaned to the starving lower-classes of the Uki group in the same village on condition that it was repaid in 5 years. In the 1836 famine, after the stored rice was exhausted, again the magistrate had to rely all the more on the wealthy farmers, of whom Genbei forwarded 200 *ryō* which was loaned to the Sugagawa group. Again in 1837, Genbei provided 40 bales of unhulled rice towards the relief of poor farmers. In that same year, which was the time of the most serious famine, the upper-class farmers in Yamase village, such as Genbei, boiled rice gruel for the poor for 76 days between February and July. Also the wealthy farmers in the neighbouring villages sent unhulled rice and millet as relief. In spite of all such relief measures, some died of starvation in the Sugagawa area, but because of such measures, as a village, Yamase was gradually on the road to recovery from 1838 on and the various loans had generally been repaid in full by 1842. Thus, although the relief policy of the feudal lords of reducing and exempting annual taxes and releasing reserve stores of rice was not sufficient, through relying on the loans of money and unhulled rice accumulated in the hands of the wealthy farmers, they were able, with difficulty, to survive the crisis.

"Aoki Genbei who contributed a total of 300 *ryō* of money and 140 bales of unhulled rice, was a rising wealthy farmer who received the support of the small-scale farmers and was elected as a village officer in the time of the village disturbance which solved the injustices of the established village authority in the Bunka period." (Ōguchi, 1976:359,n17) In 1828, before the famine, he already owned the biggest land holding of 109 *koku* in the village. With regards to tenanted land, he had 25 tenant farmers; in 1831, together, they reached 255 bales of unhulled rice, but in 1839, after passing through the famine, he had 45 tenant farmers and the tenanted land had increased to more than 367 bales. Ōguchi concludes that we could say that the village relief by the wealthy farmers was the lever for the landlord's own development. On the contrary, in districts where relief countermeasures by the feudal lords and wealthy farmers did not function adequately, there was an inequality in the distribution of rice which led to confrontations and was linked with the outbreaks of peasant riots and urban smashings.

Whenever the Shogunate saw the symptoms of a sudden rise in rice prices due to the expected nationwide crop failures, their first countermeasure

was to concentrate their efforts on the stabilisation of rice prices within the city of Edo. In July 1833, the authorities had taken steps towards the rice wholesalers and brokers in Edo, prohibiting the movement of rice, and incidentally, in September they announced throughout the whole country that those in local districts who had rice could polish it, and it could be sent to Edo in March 1834. Anybody could freely sell it, whether they were wholesalers or ordinary people; thus they encouraged the sending of rice to Edo. On the other hand, Ōsaka developed a unique rice price policy based in the city commissioner's office, and in June 1834, as well as commanding the various domains to increase the amount of rice sent to Ōsaka, they stopped the former precedent of shipping to Edo 30% of the amount received in Ōsaka on the grounds that there was a shortage of rice in Ōsaka.[5] Obviously, there was opposition to the Shogunate's policy which advocated the priority of sending rice to Edo but, because there was a normal year's harvest and rice prices tended to stabilise, the crisis did not reach serious proportions in 1834.

However, in 1836, again threatened with crop failures, the Shogunate, as well as encouraging the sending of rice to Edo, once more had Senba Tarōbei and other Edo government officials who were in charge of purchasing rice, buy rice from all the domains including Ōsaka. But the Ōsaka city commissioner, in order to maintain the stability of rice prices in the city, could not agree to this, and he prohibited the city's rice brokers selling rice to other places. Even so, Edo merchants came to Ōsaka to buy rice and the Ōsaka city commissioner ordered rice merchants not to help them under any circumstances. But, in the end, when requested directly by the Shogunate, adhering to their policy of treating Edo well, the Ōsaka city commissioner, with the help of his police officials, shipped rice from Settsu, Hyōgo, and neighbouring districts to Edo, which action Ōshio disdained.

Sakai Hajime (1975:3f) has made an interesting survey of the effects of the Tempō Famine in the Itami district, West Settsu. 1830-1 were two seasons when people in the districts celebrated their abundant harvests; but after that, due to inclement weather, poor crops succeeded each

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[5] *Ōsaka Shishi*, Vol.IV, Part 1 as quoted by Ōguchi, ibid., 335.

other, getting worse and worse until 1836, when the whole of the Kinai region was visited with severe famines. The rural districts of Itami and Ikeda and their surrounding farming villages suffered as the result of the rise in food prices and the scarcity of food. It is said that in Kawabe county, one *kanme* of dried vegetables, which even oxen would not eat, had reached a price of 250 *mon* and so people went out into the fields and picked plantain to eat in their soup. Wheat also was at a price unheard of a generation ago and even farmers had insufficient wheat to eat. There was also the spectacle of many beggars pouring into the countryside to beg. But, by April 1837, all the plantain in the domain had been used up and thus people had to go out farther and farther until ultimately they met farmers coming into the Itami district in their search of plantain.

Seeing this was the situation in the farming villages, one can imagine that the famine conditions were all the more severe in the towns of Itami and Ikeda which always had to purchase their rice. According to rumours, the handing out of rice gruel was even carried out in these towns; in Ikeda, one bowl, and Itami, three bowls, were granted. In Ikeda in March 1837, the amount of 1724 *koku* had to provide for a population of 5,239 people of whom only 821 people could survive without relief. The remaining 4,418 (84.3%) were regarded as starving people. Itami was in similar straits and, from 1836, records of relief rice and reserves were drawn up to investigate all the farmers' names and their amounts of reserve rice. In many cases farmers' rice crops hardly covered the amount of annual tax they had to pay in rice. Because of the shortage, prices jumped so that in 1836, 1 *koku* was worth 158 *momme* of silver. In 1830, 1 *koku* of rice had cost 88.5 *momme*. The price rose to 119.9 *momme* in 1833, 158 in 1836, and 294 in 1837, but by 1839, after the famine had ended, it was down to 73 *momme*, and in 1840 it had fallen to 63.4 *momme*. Borton's *Peasant Uprisings* can be consulted for more details. (1938:208-9) Needless to say, the sudden jump in rice prices put a heavy burden on the lower classes.

Even in such cases as Uematsu village, where the amount of annual tax was almost as much as the rice producing ability of the village, the landowners did not reduce the amount they exploited from the small tenant farmers, and so it is obvious that the heavy burden of taxation was merely transferred from the landowners to the farmers and what some modern historians call the "semi-proletariat". As we can see, the villages in the Itami district would be prime candidates for Ōshio's almsgiving.

The picture of the Tempō famine depicted in contemporary sources is dire. "An official observed, 'The harvests were almost completely lost. Many poor died on the streets from starvation.' The years 1833, 1835, and 1836 were extremely bad, but the peak came in the Spring of 1837." (Hanley, 1972:526) Conditions in surrounding areas were similar to those in Ōsaka. Even at New Year in 1837, there was no animation among the people as rice rose to 160 *momme* and above. Relief measures were speedily devised and on 27th January, it was decided to distribute 2,000 *koku* of rice to the desperately poor in Ōsaka, Hyōgo, and Nishinomiya. It seems that there was delay in implementing this decision but, maybe stimulated by news of Ōshio selling his library and donating alms to the poor, on 17th February, each house was given three *shō* eight *gō*, and thus, over 50,000 poor in the above three cities were able to breathe a little more freely.

5. *Peasant Riots (hyakushō ikki)*

"Chronic agrarian distress bred peasant revolts which toward the end of this epoch grew in number and violence." (Borton, 1938:120) These large-scale uprisings occurred in increasing numbers throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century, but the most serious so far was that of 1787 at the end of a long Tenmei famine. Thus far, these riots had lacked political motivation. But now the price of rice had tripled in two years and there were riots, not only in Edo, but throughout the country. Sansom (1931:527) notes, "It is an ironical commentary on the position of the samurai under the Tokugawa regime that on most of the rare occasions when they were called to arms it was to suppress a mob of starving indigents. They themselves were victims of circumstances." The peasant riots were nearly always directed towards the cancellation of debts, the reduction of crushing taxes, or the correction of obvious cases of misgovernment. The riots certainly did not represent a conscious desire for participation in government by the peasants.

Most of these peasant revolts in the Tokugawa era would now be regarded merely as mass protest meetings. Some were even led by village headmen. "But there is no doubt that after the middle of the period, villagers were increasingly being driven to violence to express dissatisfaction whether their grievances sprang from the severity of tax collectors or

arose from the shifting pattern of class relationships in rural society." (Beasley, 1972:57) There were some 400 recorded incidents between 1813-1863, in some of which thousands of farmers were involved. It is estimated, for instance, that 100,000 took part in a march on Wakayama in 1823 when they attacked rice dealers, pawnbrokers and village headmen, although this figure is thought to be inflated. The main issue in this instance was the high rice prices as they were in similar uprisings in Kai in 1836.

Peasant revolts increased sharply in number in the mid-1830's, after which a period of relative calm lasted until the final years of Tokugawa rule when rice prices again rose sharply. While the meaning and evaluation of the peasant riots is still the subject of much scholarly debate, there is no doubt that they filled the feudal administrators with considerable anxiety. At times, particularly during famine years, there were dozens of serious uprisings in various parts of Japan in a single year. Since tens of thousands of angry peasants took part in the longer disturbances, the authorities were forced into making concessions. However, the defenceless peasants never really presented a serious military challenge to the system. Usually the authorities easily squashed the riots and soon reasserted their control by executing the ringleaders. But, increasingly in later years, these peasant riots contributed to the economic and political disruption of the Shogunate system.

As the result of nation-wide crop failures and the consequent famine of the mid-1830's, the countryside was seething with displaced peasants and the cities were choked with migrant peasants seeking menial employment. Any relief that the *Bakufu* or *han* governments gave was insufficient and the poor were in a desperate mood. Outbreaks of violence and smashings of rice warehouses became more frequent. Yet, in spite of all the economic distress and dissatisfaction, there was a lack of effective protest. Isolated intellectuals expressed their alarm, but there was, as yet, no concerted effort mounted.

In the Edo period, the term *ikki* was used to refer to any kind of peasant revolt, the most common form being the *hyakushō ikki*. "Recent research has established that during the Edo period there were more than 2,500 peasant uprisings." (Earns, 1983:269). Borton (1938:39) gives 1153 cases

and Kokushō Gen, quoted earlier, gives 1653 incidents. There were three general phases of these "peasant riots" under the Tokugawa rule. In the early phase, 1600-1750, the uprisings took the form of mild resistance against economic burdens imposed by the authorities. These protests were usually organised by the village heads. The middle phase, 1750-1830, saw larger and more violent riots. They were also better organised and were planned and executed by the peasants themselves. The farmers attacked the merchants and privileged rural groups who exploited them as well as the authorities. The final phase, 1830-1868, usually tried to bring political reforms within the village organisation although economic motivations were still important. Even the 1830's mass peasant rebellions were "pre-political" movements but they portended worse things to come. Often these later uprisings offered such a formidable threat to the Shogunate that they had to be severely suppressed by large military forces.

There were many uprisings in different places for different reasons and it is difficult to generalise about the causes and nature of these incidents. By no means were all those who participated in these riots protesting over the same thing. The causes of unrest in any one area, let alone the whole of Japan, were many and varied. For instance, sometimes it was the domain monopolies that were the objects of resentment as in Chōshū, culminating in a major riot in 1831 after nine earlier uprisings. At other times, it was the level of taxation, local maladministration, or the failure of officialdom to take bad harvests into consideration when levying taxes, and so on. On still other occasions, people, made desperate by poverty, protested over some trivial grievance. None of these uprisings was aimed at overthrowing the regime, even though it was often the officials who were the objects of grievances. One common ingredient seems to have been the farmers' anger and this was usually vented against their most visible antagonists, the wealthy farmers who were often the landlords and, at the same time, pawnbrokers and the village headmen. The farmers often appealed to their lord for justice or relief. In the beginning there was some antagonism between farmers and townsmen, but these differences were later resolved and then they stood together in organised resistance against the government and the aristocracy.

The peasant riots in the Edo period served as the major vehicle for organising local warriors and peasants to challenge the authorities. At the end of the Shogunate, *yonaoshi* (society renewal) rebellions occurred

in protest against the precipitous rise in prices. These uprisings show what an active and important role peasants played in the social changes that occurred during the period. On 20th September, 1836, riots suddenly broke out in the mountainous area of Kamō county in Mikawa domain, which was under the direct administration of the Shogunate. Dry field cultivation predominated here and when the movement of rice was prohibited, the situation of the lower-class peasants became desperate. They assembled in the South part of the county, appealed to wealthy farmers to sell rice cheaply, and demanded the feudal lord to reduce their annual tax. On the 21st they smashed the residence of a village headman and successively attacked wealthy farmers as well as the rice and wine shops. With the help of neighbouring farmers the riot extended to the whole of Mikawa, involving 240 villages and more than 10,000 farmers.

The peasant riots continued to gain momentum and grew in strength, extending to various places throughout the whole country. Even in Shogunate territories riots frequently occurred. Those recorded in 1837 alone included riots in Kaga, Suruga, Settsu, Musashi, Echigo, Uzen, Tajima and Iwami. Wherever the riots broke out, it was the poor peasants who were at the centre of the struggle. They usually began with appeals or protests to the wealthy farmers and rice merchants and ended up in smashings. Although these riots occurred simultaneously throughout Japan, there was not much common to them all -- the needs and demands varied, but the frustrations, starvation and poverty were shared. It is impossible to determine the exact number of disturbances, but what is certain is that they increased in frequency as the period progressed and, over the last one hundred years of the period, there was an average of over six uprisings per year. The cycle through which most of the peasant uprisings of the Tokugawa period passed is described by Borton (1938:16) as follows:

> "As a direct result of some grievance, natural disaster, or displeasure on the part of the peasants, they would assemble into a party or "mob" (*totō*) for the purpose of presenting an appeal (*esso*) to the authorities concerned against the prevailing grievance. If the appeal was presented by the mob as a whole in the form of a "mob appeal" (*gōso*) before the castle of their lord, it was usually accompanied by destruction of the property of the wealthy or the officials representing the fief as the mob approached the castle town. After the appointment of an intermediary, the demands were then presented to the proper authorities for their consideration. If the uprising was successful and the demands were granted, the peasants would return to their villages. If unsuccessful, they were often

> dispersed by the soldiers. In either case, an investigation of the affair followed and the leaders were usually severely punished, either by crucifixion, decapitation or banished."

The whole Tokugawa period was marked by peasant protests. "By 1868, according to a recent compilation of recorded incidents, peasants had 'rebelled' 2,809 times and rioted approximately another 1,000. During the last 30 years of the Edo period alone, some 786 incidents of rebellion were recorded." (Scheiner, 1978:41) Scheiner summarises the type of "rebellion" as varying during the period. For the first hundred years *daihyō osso* (direct petitions through representatives) were more frequent, from then on *gōso* (violent collective actions) took over until the later eighteenth century when *uchikowashi* became dominant. Each type had strikingly different concepts of society. For most of the period many of the complaints and demands of peasant rioters were similar. There were always economic demands for relief from onerous taxes, objections to additional taxes, and requests for aid when crops were bad and when consumer prices soared. Merchants were often the objects of hatred and their collusion with the lord and his agents were repeatedly attacked. At every stage usurers were regarded as parasitical, but only in the last 100 years of the Shogunate were the merchants' shops and homes smashed or burned. At the end of the era, as throughout, Scheiner (ibid., 43) suggests, peasants did not "express any rational consciousness of themselves as an economic or social class whose subordination brought them into inevitable conflict with the political or social superiors".

Almost without exception Tokugawa peasants believed that they lived in a world of justice where they were ensured a hearing of their demands by the lord who owed them his benevolence because of his commitment to a higher justice (*gi*) and because of his obligation to the Shōgun. They believed that they were owed such justice. Peasants never questioned the rightness of paying taxes -- they often just wanted relief and justice in order to be able to pay a fair tax. The lord was honour-bound to his servants as the Confucian concept of a benevolent lord required. There was a deep sense of mutual obligation, of duty owed and mercy shown, of true loyalty to a lord and obligation of station pervading all relationships in the Tokugawa period. Peasants respectfully bound themselves to pay taxes, but they did so with the proviso that the lord would realise his duty to oblige them when their needs so demanded. They lived in a society of conditional loyalties, established duties, and mutual oblig-

ations. Peasants did not seek to overthrow the government of any domain.

"In most rebellions, Tokugawa peasants, represented by a village headman, such as Hayashi Hachiemon of Maebashi territory in Bushū in 1821, would petition the lord for a reduction in taxes. They would revolt as a village only when all legal means failed." (Hayashi, 1968:437-9) They still believed in the fairness of the lord and the possibility of sound principles of government. But, in about the same area during the late Tokugawa period, poor peasants, tenants, artisans and day-labourers, under the leadership of several of their number, were in full revolt, describing their intentions in more drastic terms such as "to help the miserable people" and "to root out evil in the country". They raised flags and slogans declaring themselves as the people of *yonaoshi*.

But, on the whole, peasants were not motivated to overthrow the government, just to change the economic system and gain relief from the financial stringencies of their lives. For most of the Tokugawa period peasants revolted as whole villages under the leadership of the headman who represented their collective interests. Thus, Hayashi Hachiemon who led the Maebashi rebellion explained his participation as both a duty and a responsibility of a village leader in this way: "I was aware that if I had ignored the pain of my villagers, I could not keep my office as village head. To do so would be like leaving my own wounds uncared for." When the village rebelled, everyone in the village was expected to join, whatever his personal convenience. To refuse his compact would result in refusal of daily aid, threatened violence, and frequently ostracism (*mura hachibu*), or expulsion from the village. Scheiner (1978:54) explains this compact thus:

> "Peasants acted as if they lived in compact with their lord. Peasants of the Kamō uprising in Mikawa in 1836, for example, asked their lord to 'resolve the difficulties of life'. Nose rebels in 1837 begged their lord 'to bring about order'. Throughout the whole period, peasants insisted that good government would recognise the justice of the peasant demands, and that they rose in rebellion only when the 'covenant' of trust had been broken."

Most rebellions were responses to an unjust lord who refused to acknowledge the hardships of the peasants and the merits of their complaints. They signified the failure of the lord to dispense his benevolence. Peasant rebellions, even if not necessarily always directed

against merchants, nevertheless involved looting of warehouses and other possessions and even attacks on their persons. Merchants were despised.

Later the *yonaoshi* revolts represented a more drastic revision of the peasants' sense of reordering society. They could no longer be represented by the village headmen who had by now become rich and rapacious. Besides, often there was so great a difference between interests that there was no common cause. But where there was, they had to look elsewhere for leadership, to their *yonaoshi daimyōjin* (divine rectifier of society renewal). Such men as Sono Masakoto who sought to redress the evils of the world by assassinating a Junior Councillor, Ōshio Heihachirō who led a rebellion, and Matsudaira Sadanobu who carried out a drastic programme of relief for the poor, have all been called *yonaoshi daimyōjin*.

Faced with intolerable hardship and a callous, ineffective bureaucracy, the people, in spite of their tradition of resignation and obedience, periodically exploded in outbursts of anger. Most of the riots occurred in rural areas where most of the workers lived at that time, but as the cities grew in size, they too were the venue of large-scale rice riots, triggered for the most part by food shortages and rising prices.

6. *Rice Riots (uchikowashi)*

Whether through famine or misgovernment, the cities were seething with unrest in the first decades of the nineteenth century, and the citizens frequently engaged in the rice riots and smashings which were the counterpart of the peasant uprisings. In fact, sometimes it was difficult to distinguish peasant uprisings from the revolts of townsmen. Not all city dwellers were prosperous merchants; much of the population was made up of recent migrants who had fled the economic pressures of rural life. They became servants, day-labourers or petty storekeepers and eked out a precarious livelihood. In hard times, like the peasants, these urban poor sometimes resorted to destructive riots because of the soaring price of rice. Day-labourers, small shopkeepers, and unemployed vagrants joined in wrecking the houses of money-lenders and rich merchants in many of the largest towns.

The first large-scale riots of this nature broke out in Edo in 1732-3 in the time of Yoshimune. Severe riots also broke out in Ōsaka, Edo and

many other towns between 1783-87 during Tanuma's supremacy. A characteristic of the city of Kyōto over the centuries was that there had been hardly any violence in the form of *uchikowashi*. But the sudden rise of rice prices due to the nation-wide famine of 1787 gave a serious blow to Kyōto as well as other cities. Even so, "the townspeople of Kyōto did not raise any riot such as 'smashings', but obtained the cheap sale of rice through a legal demonstration in which damage was small. They conducted a demonstration over a long period around the Imperial palace which was called 'a thousand circuits' (*osendo mawari*)." (Inui, 1979:31) Following the pattern of the peasant riots, other series of wild "smashings" occurred in 1836-7, and again in 1866.

These peasant riots and urban smashings were sporadic and did not become an organised movement for social reformation, but they did shake up the feudal social order, and gradually developed into a power which threatened to dismantle the system. In 1834-1841, "there was increasing evidence of unrest in the form of peasant revolts. Rioting accompanying demands for tax relief had begun in the previous century but the number of outbreaks had increased sharply since 1800 and their scale had grown". (Beasley, 1963:25) In 1823, a mob estimated at 70,000 stormed the town of Miyazu in protest against a special tax designed to repay money which the feudal lord had borrowed. Later in the year a more serious riot broke out in the Tokugawa domain of Kii, while in 1836, the whole of the province of Kai, which was under *Bakufu* control, erupted into revolt. It was the largest of the 26 incidents recorded that year. An ominous symptom of these rice riots which broke out in the great cities from time to time was that they were often led by *rōnin* or even petty officials. The urban outbreaks were usually protests against food shortages. Poor crops precipitated a rash of such riots in 1833, 1834, and 1836. When rice prices sky-rocketed because of poor crops, riots broke out in which the poor attacked the homes of the hated rich merchants who had received special privileges from the *Bakufu* and their officers. The houses of these merchants were destroyed and their possessions, rice and other goods were looted. The rioters felt that violence was their last recourse in pressing their claims for justice. Some riots stimulated others on a larger scale and they became increasingly political in nature and the ruling class was forced to make concessions to the enraged citizens.

During the Tempō era, over 45 urban uprisings followed the sharp rises in rice prices occasioned by successive years of crop failure. Then another

35 riots broke out in the last 20 years of the Shogunate, half of them in a three-year period when people were desperate over tax demands and price rises. Rioting usually spread from the rural areas to the great towns where short supplies of rice and bad management of resources had caused starvation among the poorer citizens. "In protest against the exorbitant rice prices, starving mobs destroyed the storehouses of rice merchants and pawnbrokers". (Nakai, 1983:124) *Uchikowashi* grew increasingly frequent toward the end of the Edo period." The situation is described by Ōguchi (1976:333):

> "From early Spring in 1836, signs appeared of a sudden jump in rice prices, and in April in Watanoha chō, Sendai domain, several hundred people gathered. Then, from June to August, in farming villages throughout the whole country such as Kaga Kanazawa chō, Shinano Iida chō, Rikuzen Ishimaki chō, Echizen Katsuyama chō, Izu Shimoda chō, Ise Iwa village, Sagami Ōiso no Shuku, Kaga Takahama village, Komatsu chō, Ōsaka, Sunpu, as well as in castle towns and in the country districts surrounding towns, smashings of the stores of grain merchants frequently occurred."

With the poor harvest and the rising prices in 1836, disturbances engulfed dozens of villages in the districts of Kōshū county. Being a region where textile production predominated over rice cultivation, even in normal times, they were dependent upon rice being brought in. Now with the rise in the rice price and an order prohibiting the movement of rice they were in a serious crisis situation. Labourers and farmers from neighbouring villages assembled along the highways and in post towns and began "smashings" of the grain merchants who were cornering the rice market. They extended in all directions along the highways, demanding loans of rice from wealthy farmers and rice merchants. Everywhere they smashed the homes of wealthy farmers while the main force confronted the office of the *daikan*. The Shogunate, using the magistrates and the 200 samurai stationed in Kōfu, resisted the rioters but were not able to suppress them until they were reinforced by samurai from neighbouring domains.

Outbursts broke out in towns and cities, castle towns and villages, and were characterised by the smashing of rice merchants' shops by the urban poor. These were desperate outbursts of violence in which day-labourers, small shopkeepers, unemployed artisans and vagrants joined together to wreck the houses of rich merchants, *sake* dealers and money-lenders. Ōsaka, as the nation's granary, was characterised by its *komeya kowashi* (rice-dealer smashings), but all the large cities experienced some kind of uprisings. For instance, "on the night of the 24th September 1836, a

grain merchant, Kōzu, in Goemon chō (in Ōsaka) was destroyed for its illegal trading". (Inui, 1979:13) The feudal authorities reacted to these riots with a ruthless efficacy which they never displayed in attacking the causes. The immense repressive power of the government usually had no trouble in suppressing the poorly planned riots of peasants and townsmen and each outbreak was followed by reprisals and a slate of new edicts. Ōshio's insurrection was just the culmination of a long series of these but, because it was led by a former police official, it was of a different nature from the "smashings" by the townspeople.

VI. *Knowledge Leads to Action*

1. *Appeal to Commissioners*

In spite of being despised and overlooked by Atobe, Ōshio could not abandon the people to their fate as they were starving to death before his eyes. Even though he was in retirement, through Kakunosuke, he advised various famine countermeasures to Atobe. However, the city commissioner refused Ōshio's recommended suggestions, warning him that he could be punished for using unlawful coercion on the government. All the time the famine in Ōsaka was worsening and, as it became obvious that the authorities were not going to take any remedial action, Ōshio filed a petition with Atobe asking that rice be released from the government granaries to feed the sufferers. At the same time he approached Kōnoike, Mitsui, and other large merchant houses, urging that they lend money for relief. After some hesitation, the merchants, seemingly acting on Atobe's orders, turned down the request. Atobe not only refused Ōshio's request, but scornfully threatened him with prosecution for having submitted a direct petition (*gōso*) and for meddling in public affairs when he no longer had official status. All Heihachirō's pleas to the commissioners to "save the people" from distress having fallen on deaf ears, he called upon the virtuous people to right the wrongs of society. As Najita aptly states, "He refused to be a tool of despotic government and took a course of action consonant with his inner moral dictate and transformed commitment to inner principle into political rebellion on behalf of the common people." (1971:390)

2. *Command to Send Rice to Edo*

Because of the disastrous harvest in 1836, the Shogunate ordered Atobe to send rice to Edo to assure that there was rice on hand. On the 29th November 1836, the irony occurred that the commissioner (Atobe) who had put into prison the starving citizens who bought black-market rice, and had given the order restricting rice being transported from Ōsaka to other places like Kyōto and Fushimi, now gave the order to ship rice to Edo. Thus, Atobe averted his eyes from the people starving to death in Ōsaka and from the pitiful plight of Kyōto, Fushimi and the surrounding rural districts and acceded to the Shōgun's directives with neither objection nor hesitation. He schemed with his most trusted police

officers, Uchiyama Hikojirō, Yoshida Katsuemon and Asaoka Sukenojō, and immediately had them secretly arrange with various wholesalers and grain brokers to despatch the rice. Okamoto asserts that "He dared to be involved in such tyrannical government practices". (1980:606) "From September 1836 till May 1837 they made the Kitakaze family submit and send a total of 37,347 *koku* of rice to Edo." (Sakai, 1981:218) Thus the depleted storehouses of Ōsaka were further depleted, prices were driven still higher, and the urban population was brought closer to starvation.

While it is true that the famine in Edo was serious, the order to deliver rice to Edo was really to provide ample rice for the celebrations of the following April when a ceremony was being arranged for the Imperial proclamation of the next Shōgun. Probably the expenses for this were also guaranteed. Ōshio, seeing the destitute state of the masses around him, was enraged at Atobe for responding to this government order for the mere sake of securing his own personal advancement. Heihachirō is quoted as saying, "The people's pains are my pains. The people's hunger and the people's sufferings are my hunger and my sufferings." The "friend of the peasants" was one with the people, and he exploded in anger against the city commissioner, all the officials, and the city's privileged merchants who lived in luxury and turned a blind eye to the plight of the people.

Heihachirō believed that those who bore rule must also bear complete responsibility for the people. Abandoning the people who were suffering from starvation, and merely scheming for their own advancement and profit, were acts of pigmies who forget "the virtues of co-operation". Of Shōgun Ienari, Sadler (1946:234) says that, on the one hand, he "treated the Imperial Court with great respect and provided quite lavishly for the celebration of the accession ceremony of the Emperor and also for a new palace for him, as well as for many other celebrations in Kyōto." But on the other hand, "he paid very little heed to the condition of the people and to the neglect of their interests by his officials".

3. *Ōshio Heihachirō's Decision to Act*

The law-abiding government official, the loyal samurai, and the famous scholar made the decision to act for the welfare of the people and so, doing, he was to be branded with the stigma of "Rebel Boss" and to bring his illustrious career to an ignominious end in the sight of many.

"Rather than shaped by an objective purpose, Ōshio's action was guided by a diffuse, aesthetic vision. Personal guilt merged with, and perhaps largely defined, a vision of social evil which could be eradicated only by a completely honest, and therefore, uncontrollable outburst. That result for Ōshio was a catharsis of violence in which his own death was preordained." (Koschmann, 1978:23)

Ōshio considered it intolerable that the rulers were unmoved by the poverty and suffering that was common during the famines of the 1830's. On the ground that men were fundamentally one with heaven, and their essences one with moral truth, he called upon the virtuous people to right the wrongs of society and, to achieve this end, he decided to launch the ill-fated rebellion of 1837. Thus he turned the Yōmei principle of intuitive knowledge into political action. His actions may have seemed inscrutable to scholars of his day, but now in hindsight, many suggest that it was by no means accidental that towards the end of the Edo period, when the contradictions in the *Bakufu*'s organisation were exposed, that Heihachirō, the noted Yōmei scholar, despite having been a loyal *Bakufu* official, rose in arms against the rulers in order to "save the people". He has been revered by many for his courageous stand, for instance, Yamashita (1983:335) says, "Ōshio is notable for his exceptional bravery in transforming his 'good knowing' into moral action...Ōshio led an uprising in protest of the suffering endured by the people during the great famine of the Tempō era...This revolt is related to his individual interpretations of Wang Yang-ming's doctrine." He certainly put his convictions into practice by refusing to rest content with a notable official career or a safe life of teaching and scholarship in retirement. As an eminent writer of the Meiji period observed, Heihachirō was "even more consistent in his activism than the great master Wang Yang-ming himself".

Having been rudely treated and refused by Atobe, Heihachirō finally decided in his heart to translate his knowledge of the situation into action. "Before his eyes, the evil effects of the decrepit Shogunate system in the cities, in the villages, and throughout the whole country, exposed an unsightly form that was impossible to save." (Okamoto, 1975: 57) By this stage words were not enough. Morris considers that "in early 1837 Ōshio finally had a perfect field for the type of action that his philosophy prescribed." (1975:203) The failure of his appeal to

Atobe and the merchants, and the fact that such a person as Atobe should be in a position of so great responsibiliity at such a critical time, convinced Ōshio, if he was still in doubt, that nothing could be gained through legal, non-violent channels. The knowledge that he had acquired privately from his books he now applied to action in public. We do not know exactly when Ōshio decided on armed insurrection. Some feel that the decision had theoretically been made years before when he was teaching his theories at Senshindō. Certainly his fury at the unconcern and inaction of the authorities was the final catalyst. Morris (ibid., 182) draws an analogy between Ōshio's revolt and the final act of the famous novelist, Mishima Yukio. Mishima's hero in the second volume of his final tetralogy is Isao, "a dedicated youth who risks his life in a hare-brained rightist coup during the 1930's and who, after the plot had been betrayed and wrecked, slashes himself to death with a dagger".

Ōshio's philosophy of action automatically caused him to direct his attention to the practical crisis at hand, the rectification of the economic injustice by saving the oppressed people of his city, even though this set him on a collision course with his superiors, the Shogunate authorities. As a loyal member of the samurai class he was aware of this contradiction, but he resolved it to his own satisfaction by insisting that loyalty to the absolute spirit takes precedence over loyalty to one's lord. Far from his action being an "act of treason" and a "rebellious uprising" as the government called it, he believed it was a "righteous undertaking". He was prepared to forsake traditional loyalty that prescribed blind obedience to his feudal superiors in favour of justice for the common people.

4. *Sale of Library and Almsgiving*

Ōshio decided to take things into his own hands, and, immediately before the outbreak, during 6th-8th February, 1837, Heihachirō completely sold his library and other possessions that he had diligently gathered together, turned them into money and distributed alms of one *shū* silver coins to 10,000 poor. Of course, all he could do was but a drop in the ocean. He then distributed his Manifesto calling for the co-operation of peasants in the surrounding villages. The only value of his sacrificial act seemed to lie in providing a model for imitation, but there were no immediate imitators! The one outcome of his action was to endear himself

still more to the poor, his supporters, and later admirers. As a scholar, his library of 50,000 volumes would be his most treasured possession. It is calculated that this precious collection of books realised about 1,000 gold *ryō*, a considerable sum of money, maybe in excess of $15,000 in current values. Ōshio distributed most of this amount among the destitute. Though ridiculed by Atobe as "an act of undignified self-advertisement", it earned him widespread popularity in Ōsaka. Ōshio secretly used the remainder to buy a cannon, a dozen rifles, and several hundred swords.

As February showed no alleviation in the situation and the authorities were not responding effectively to the crisis, a notice particularly aimed at the poor people in the neighbouring districts was suddenly distributed throughout the city. It read, "Because of the continuing high prices of rice and grain in recent years, there are many destitute people. Ōshio Heihachirō, currently in honourable retirement, has sold all of his own books and documents, and with that money, he will give to every poor family which is in difficulty, one *shū*. He will do this for 10,000 homes. So come with this notice and apply for this money to the following places..." Ōshio had been noted for his many virtuous and kind deeds and was highly esteemed throughout the city and by the lower classes in the neighbouring districts. Even though he had retired from public office, there were rumours that in view of the present famine, in order to relieve the distress of the destitute, he had often petitioned the city commissioners to provide relief measures. Even after many years, destitute people gratefully remembered Heihachirō's sacrificial giving and they also remembered, with great resentment, the half-hearted measures of the Shogunal authorities. Rumours of Atobe's harsh censure of Ōshio spread and this further fanned people's admiration of the one and dissatisfaction with the other.

Immediately before Ōshio raised the army of revolt, he used the capital realised from the sale of his library to distribute alms. Sometimes alms tickets were distributed and the recipients were told to go to a central meeting place or to Ōshio's residence in Tenma to exchange them for one *shū* coins and sometimes, it seems, the one *shū* silver coins were given out directly to the needy.

5. Those who Distributed and Received Alms

At the beginning of February 1837, Ōshio gave the proceeds from the sale of his library as alms to the poor. He distributed them through his chief disciples to 33 villages. For the most part, this distribution to the poor peasants was through the wealthy disciple-farmers in each village. According to documents written after judgment was handed down by the court, Hashimoto Chūbei of Senjakuji village was responsible for the nine villages of Higashinari county in Settsu, namely, Shimotsuji, Uchidai, Bamba, Sekime, Imaichi, Senbayashi, Kamitsuji, Segi, and Kitajima; Ueda Kotarō of Kasugae village for the four villages of Nakano, Tomobuchi, and Kasugae in Higashinari county and Hiejima in Nishinari county; Shirai Kōemon of Moriguchi town for the nine villages of Eno, Besshō, Naka, Minamijima, Kōsei, Kitaderagata, Ikeda Shimo, Ikeda Naka, Ikedagawa; Yokoyama Bunya, the doctor of Morishōji for his own village; Nukata Zenemon of Uematsu village in Itami for his own village and Itami's Ise chō; Nishimura Risaburō of Yuge village in Shiki county for his own village. "If we leave out Nukata Zenemon of Itami, the distribution depended solely on the wealthy farmers of the village official class." (Sakai, 1981:212) The distribution of alms was also linked with the later distribution of Ōshio's Manifesto. Between the two, in many cases, there was only a difference of several days.

It is certain that these wealthy farmers used their contacts in their villages to aid in the distribution. For instance, Sakai tells how "Fujikura, a day-labourer of Kitaderagata village, who was employed by Chūbei on an occasional basis, on 5th February received from Chūbei 41 alms-tickets and distributed them to the distressed people in the village". (ibid., 213) Each was given a one *shū* silver coin and it was rumoured that "Heihachirō had been benevolent". Jisaburō of Segi village and Kinsuke, a hunter of Shimotsuji village, also received alms-tickets and one *shū* coins from Chūbei. "Kōemon of Moriguchi town received 250 tickets, of which he distributed 70 in Ikeda village in Settsu and the remainder he gave to distressed people in nearby villages." (ibid.) An interesting point is that because Takeyama Mantarō, (doubtless the same as Takegami Mantarō, already mentioned under "disciples"), a policeman belonging to the group of Ueda Gorōbei, the bow commissioner, was a relative, he was entrusted with 100 tickets and requested to "deliver them not only to those you know well, but also to the poor people that you see and hear about". Ichitarō of Kisuri village in Kawachi also,

through Kōemon's introduction, visited Ōshio for the first time on 10th February and received 30 alms-tickets and 30 one *shu* coins.

Ueda Kotarō, a farmer of Kasugae village, who had been a student at Senshindō in his young days, was requested to help with the alms distribution and, on 18th February, he received 99 one *shū* coins which he immediately distributed to the people in his own village and to those in nearby villages. Then, early on the morning of the 19th, he took 30 copies of the Manifesto and handed them out, first to his father Yoichiemon in his own village, and also to the village head, Heijirō, whom he met accidentally. He then ran straight West and gave one to his uncle Shirōbei of Hiejima village. In this way distribution was carried out among the farming villages, and this network system was to become a future form of organisation among the villages.

Sakai Hajime[1] takes from *Kōsai Hiki*[2] a rather full account of Nukata Zenemon of Uematsu village in Itami, a "horse-owner", which would have been the equivalent of today's independent freight transporter. Even though there are some mistakes, and the relationship between Ōshio and the Itami "horse-lenders" is not confirmed in modern literature, the description is lively and its credibility is regarded as high. Doubtless Sakamoto Gennosuke's record was based on the inquiries and rumours which followed the revolt. When Heihachirō was lecturing[3] on Yōmeigaku in the house of an Itami *sake* manufacturer, two horsemen who could not read were interested in the lecture and listened behind sliding doors in a separate room. They greatly admired Ōshio and his teaching, and devoted themselves wholeheartedly to him. One, Masuya Mohei, had recently been gambling and, afraid that Heihachirō would reprimand him, went home while the other, Zenemon, visited Ōshio who told him, "These days the price of rice is very high and you will be suffering". Thus Ōshio gave him a handful of one *shū* coins and showed him another handful for the man who had not come. Zenemon replied, "I am very grateful to you for your lecture, and, on top of that, you have given me this money." At that, Heihachirō

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[1]Sakai Hajime, "Ōshio no Ran to Zaigō Itami", *Chiiki Kenkyū Itami*, No. 3, March 1975, Tōkyō, Itami Shi Shichō Kōshitsu, 1975:11-26.
[2]*Kōsai Hiki* is a record of research into Ōshio's revolt written by Sakamoto Gennosuke which can be found, among other books, in Okamoto, 1975:199-282.
[3]As recorded in *Itami Shishi*, Vol.2:510.

showed him his Manifesto and gave him many copies to give anonymously to people in Nishinomiya, Nada, Hyōgo, village by village, by leaving them at Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. He also asked him to have his friend help him distribute them as far as possible. As a precaution against danger at night Ōshio gave him two swords. The horseman replied that such a thing was no problem; it was a simple matter for him as walking was his job. Ōshio told him to start with villages on the outskirts of Ōsaka, and to distribute them to the villages all the way back to Itami. It is thought that his responsibility extended West from Tenma, and that he delivered it to his acquaintances at the ferry at Jusō by hand, and threw them into the villages that he ran through on the way home. So he did as he was told, distributing the Manifesto, and then visited the other horseman's place to pass on Ōshio's message. Mohei could not understand the Manifesto very well but, from what he could read, he thought it was very dangerous and refused to distribute it. He also warned Zenemon against doing so. Zenemon was not able to do anything about the copies already distributed, but he decided not to give out anymore. On hearing of Ōshio's revolt on the 19th, he went beserk, shouting and running around Itami town in a mad state. Then he went out into the woods and hanged himself.

Such was the fate of Nukata Zenemon. His strangled corpse was discovered on 1st March in Sone village which was in Toyoshima county, Settsu, just a mile to the East of Itami. Beside his remains were scattered the pages of his last written document on which was written "Nukata Zenemon". It was very much like a will and the confusion of his feelings immediately prior to his suicide can be inferred. He said he had no intention of supporting Ōshio's revolt and he asks the government to pity the residents of Itami and their families who might suffer because of his invitation to participate in the revolt. He showed his concern for his family and acquaintances because he believed they would suffer the consequences for what he had done. He wrote, "What Ōshio planned was extraordinary and not at all what I was imagining." Sakamoto Gennosuke says that Zenemon trusted the good motives of Ōshio's almsgiving and respected him as a benevolent person. Because he did not even read the Manifesto which called for an uprising, it seems that he did not directly know of the plan. Many reports from the villages where the Manifesto was discovered state that it was difficult to understand. Even so, given the fact of his staying overnight at Senshindō on the night of the 18th, and

his association with the rebels, it would be difficult to regard him as completely ignorant of what was taking place.

Sugiyama Sanbei stated, "Zenemon, a resident of Uematsu village, often visited Heihachirō and stayed at his home. He was an able person with talent. Among the disciples Heihachirō regarded him as useful." (Sakai, 1975:20) It is important to note that Ōshio especially evaluated Zenemon's ability and ready wit. If that be the case, could Zenemon truly insist that he never entered into any discussions about plans? In Zenemon's will he indicated that only ten people from Itami received alms and sought to go to Ōsaka. It was probably not until the 19th that he first handed to the poor peasants the money that he had received from Ōshio. After distributing the alms-tickets, he returned to his village, immediately handed over the money, and requested workers. Referring to this incident, Ukiyo no Arisama VII (1975:443-4) confirms that Ōshio called two horsemen in January 1837, but only one came. To him he handed five *ryō* and commanded him, "Soon I need manpower and so please organise that". Then on the 18th February, Heihachirō summoned this person, gave him ten *ryō* and instructed him to despatch some dozens of men. It seems certain that Zenemon, "using these alms-tickets as a lever, tried to organise the poor peasants, the semi-proletariat classes of Itami, as coolies and as the military force of his faction". (Sakai, 1975:15)

Sakai, quoting *Ōsaka Sōdō no Mokuroku*, says: "Zenemon knew of Ōshio's plan the day before as it says that ten men ran together to Ōshio's residence with alms as their aim." (ibid., 27) Out of this ten, seven were investigated and their charges were based on the fact of their promises when they received the alms-tickets. *Gimmi Shisho* states, "When the arson and violence started in Ōsaka city and they saw the flames, they were already running on their way to Ōshio's place and were arrested midway." *Ōsaka Sōdō no Mokuroku*, which seems to be a transcription of rumours and, therefore, not primary historical material, confirms the relationship between Ōshio and Zenemon of Uematsu village.

When investigated after the revolt, his wife Mon testified, "My husband, Zenemon, earned a livelihood as a horseman and so was normally away from home for two or three days, and even five or six days, at a time. On 15th February he departed, saying that he was going to Ōsaka. On the 19th, at about 10 a.m., he returned wearing a sword and a short sword,

but soon afterwards he ran out of the house and did not return. After my husband left, Mohei came and said that Zenemon thought Ōshio was a benevolent person and so hired workers, calling it 'distributing alms' but he ought to apologise publicly about this matter as it had a suspicious appearance." Mon, hearing that, thought it strange and enquired of her husband's whereabouts, but could not find him. Just then she heard the rumours of Ōshio's incident and felt uneasy.

Mohei testified that, about 10 a.m. on the 19th, Zenemon met him and told him that he regretted hiring coolies for Ōshio. Mohei suggested that if there was anything unusual he should declare it to Lord Kōnoike's office, at which Zenemon went mad and ran out of the place. Thinking that suspicious, he had passed it on to Mon. Co-ordinating these two testimonies, we see that Zenemon went to Ōsaka on the 15th. Because it is reported that on the same night members of the faction met at the Senshindō, it is fair to say that he was present on this occasion. Then he seemed to stay till dawn on the 19th, probably not the first time he had stayed at Ōshio's home, according to the testimony of Sugiyama Sanbei.

From the 16th, the comings and goings of faction members were intensified and, on the 18th, Ōshio welcomed Shibaya Chōdayū of Nishide town in Hyōgo. At night they held a feast and together with the chief associates, Watanabe Ryōzaemon and Hashimoto Chūbei, they stayed the night. Early the next morning, as soon as Zenemon arose, he left Ōshio's house with the Manifesto, and returned to Itami by 10 a.m. The distance between Ōsaka and Itami being a little less than ten miles, even if he hurried while distributing the Manifesto, it would take him between three and four hours. As he left Tenma early he would not have heard of Hirayama Sukejirō's betrayal of the night before for Seta Sainosuke only reported this emergency to Ōshio at 7 a.m. From then on Ōshio's residence was in an uproar.

On the evening of the 17th, mourning for the people and advocating justice for them, Ōshio decided to give copies of the Manifesto to the people in Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima. Several of his loyal disciples including Ueda Kotarō and Nukata Zenemon were to be in charge of distributing it throughout a radius of tens of miles from the night of the 17th to the morning of the 19th. Printed copies of the summons were delivered to the villages in saffron-coloured, silk bags inscribed with a

Shinto liturgy from the Grand Ise Shrine and bearing on the front the inscription "Given down from Heaven". Copies of the summons were distributed mainly to nearby villages along the banks of the Yodo River and reached only a small proportion of the audience that Ōshio had intended. It is significant of Ōshio's rural orientation that there was no organised distribution within the city itself. Kōda (1972:166) describes the type of print, the paper, and the envelope used in this *otoshibumi* Manifesto. He also cites the villages in which the Manifesto is reported to have been dropped as Kasugae, Hiejima, Akagawa, Nozato, Tennōji Shō, Kajima, Ōwada, Kami Fukushima, Morishōji, Kōritsuji, Shimo Sanban, Ebie, Mitsuya, Shinzaike, 14 villages in Settsu; Ikeda Nakamura, Shimomura, Kawamura, three villages in Kawachi, and besides these, there are many others that can be verified in Settsu. Sometimes it was dropped on the road, sometimes placed or thrown into farm houses, or given to children.[4]

Chūbei, accompanying Kyūemon of the same Senjakuji village, visited Ōshio's residence on the 9th February, received ten *ryō* in one *shū* coins, and at the same time, signed the Manifesto and the command to raise an army. At the time of the alms distribution, it is thought that Ōshio asked people to rush quickly to Ōsaka when fire broke out in Tenma. They believe this was a part of the mobilisation of his army.

6. *Removal of Family*

Just at the time when preparations were steadily progressing towards raising an army, in December 1836, Heihachirō at last was blessed with his first grandchild. Delightedly he called him Yumitarō, doubtless with his ancestor Namiemon's deeds of arms in mind. On 7th February 1837, Heihachirō entrusted Yu (his wife), Mine (Kakunosuke's wife), Heihachirō's adopted daughter Iku (the daughter of Miyawaki Shima of Suita village) and Yumitarō (the son born between Kakunosuke and Mine), plus a maid-servant Ritsu, a party of five, to the temporary custody of Chūbei of Senjakuji village. Then, all of a sudden, on 15th, Chūbei escorted them to the paper-merchant Kōgorō of Itami's Ise chō in Kawabe county. (Sakai, 1975:7) Kōgorō had become acquainted with Ōshio and when he visited Ōshio in February 1837, Ōshio asked him if Chūbei's family could stay at his place when they visited the Goddess of Mercy at Nakayama

[4]Kōda, 1972:166 quoting government documents investigating the affair.

Temple as it was not far from Kōgorō's place. Because he was on friendly terms with Chūbei he consented to the proposal and let them stay.

VII. *Ōshio's Manifesto*

Finally, in order to "save the people", Ōshio issued a manifesto "from heaven to the minor people in all the villages", and, leading his disciples whom he had summoned to Senshindō, he conducted a punitive expedition on "all the officials who caused distress to the lower-ranking people" and against "the wealthy merchants of Ōsaka city who live in arrogance". It is thought that "the Manifesto was written in full at one sitting as the direct result of the issuing of the order to send rice to Edo on 29th November, 1836". (Miyagi, 1984:49) Miyagi wonders whether "it was because he was afraid that his plan would be leaked, that the Manifesto was carved on blocks that were joined latitudinally and that there were only several characters written from top to bottom in each column." (ibid., 50) The blocks were first cut, then carved, and finally the separately-carved wood-block sections were put together so that the original text could be reconstructed in this way.

1. *Background*

Although the growing confusion of classes and the redistribution of wealth, and thus power, brought the wealthy townsmen to a new position of importance in society, it worked against the poorer townspeople. The mercantile organisations of the *chōnin* were almost as rigidly regulated as the feudal hierarchy, and their charters and guild privileges were jealously guarded, making free competition impossible. Thus, they often held the community to ransom by either unilaterally raising prices or keeping wages down. The reason was that the wealthy merchants grew exorbitantly wealthy at the expense of all others who became more and more impoverished. The Shogunate tried to reduce the wealth of the rice brokers, great wholesale dealers, and the usurers, by levies called *goyōkin* (money for the government's use), but it usually came back to the merchants in some other way. The mass of urban dwellers comprising the ordinary citizens, small shopkeepers, and day-labourers, suffered deprivation and depredation at the hands of the wealthy merchants.

Whenever the officials intervened for the sake of the samurai class in order to stabilise rice prices at a high level, the people were brought to the verge of starvation. Then the *Bakufu* would take other, often tried but always unsuccessful, measures such as prohibiting the hoarding

of rice and lowering the rice price, but their interference only aggravated the situation. Inevitably, this led to rice riots which occurred ever more frequently. The shops and houses of the rich were smashed and raided, buildings were wrecked, and food was looted. Heihachirō sympathised with the destitute citizens and poor peasants who were destitute in the midst of the continuing famine, and his anger burned against the wicked merchants who made excessive profits through the raising of rice prices. At the same time he censured the apathetic, law-breaking officials who not only mounted no strategy of relief for the poor, but rather joined hands with the unscrupulous merchants in exploiting them. Such chronic ills as the plight of the poor, the corruption of the officials, and the covetousness of the merchants, were the primary factors behind Ōshio's taking up arms. Let us look at each of these three concomitant causes in turn.

i) *The Plight of the Poor*

We have already seen Heihachirō's concern for the poor peasants, burdened with excessive taxation, and who, together with the urban poor, were the chief victims of the famine. That sympathy and concern heightened as the famine and its dire consequences intensified. The social inconsistencies burned him up. Though retired, buried in his books and lecturing, Heihachirō could not be apathetic to the social conditions of the 1830's. Through successive poor crops, the pitiful condition of the poor worsened daily. As the result of the 1833-4 famine, there was a sudden jump in rice prices which deepened the distress of the masses. Heihachirō was moved by the unrest in his fellow human beings. He saw the pathetic forms of people who abandoned their beloved children, as though without regard for them, through being pressurised by starvation. He pondered deeply the faults and the neglect of an ineffective administration and the corrupt practices of petty-minded officials who were responsible for the serious financial state of affairs. And now the 1836 famine far surpassed that of 1833-4. The city was in an uproar over the rumour of an uprising in the Kai (Kōshū) domain in August 1836. Then on the 24th September, a rice riot broke out in Kōzu and the situation was grave.

Some think it was about this time that his decision to raise an army solidified, confirmed maybe by Ōshio's undertaking artillery practice. But, even then, Ōshio had said, "If there is a riot in Ōsaka, the

government should suppress it, and I myself will do my best for the government." (Okamoto, 1975:89-90) This does not sound like a person who is already committed to rebellion. So obviously, in September 1836, Heihachirō had not yet decided to revolt.

ii) *The Corruption of the Officials*

Against the pathetic poverty of the poor, Heihachirō saw the insatiable luxury and extravagant lifestyle of the upper ruling class who often, in order to line their own pockets, conspired with the merchants who, to Ōshio, were nothing more than pleasure-lovers.

Officialdom was riddled with bribery and corruption from top to bottom. Law and order were in tatters. "The Councillor, Mizuno Tadanari, patronised the indulgent Shōgun Ienari", (ibid., 80) and nepotism was rife. In all, political corruption was worse even than in Tanuma's days. The whole administration, with its degenerate officials, was lampooned. The political world was full of shameless characters but nobody did anything about it. Naturally, with Heihachirō's rigid, ethical code, he was indignant with the situation for, in spite of the recent series of natural disasters, crop failures, and starvation, the Councillor and his officials were unconcerned. They did not understand the pathetic sufferings and plight of the virtuous and dutiful common people whom Heihachirō respected so much. Heihachirō realised that the cause of the problem had to be addressed, not just the symptoms palliated with a few, totally inadequate relief measures. The corrupt, self-indulgent officials who sat in seats of authority had to be removed. The political world had to be cleansed with an injection of fresh personnel, men of ability. If necessary, he himself would have been willing to have come out of retirement and returned to public office to set an example of impartiality, rectitude and justice. But, given the chronic malaise of the administration, such dreams were rather idealistic.

To Heihachirō, Mizuno's death in January 1835 was construed as "divine punishment". The appointment of the new Councillor, Ōkubo Tadamasa, seemed to give Ōshio hope of better things, that even he and other "men of talent" might be called to serve in Edo. He had great expectations of such an appointment. Even though retired, Ōshio was willing to do his utmost to help the government in any important sphere. He could not rest

content in retirement when his doctrine needed to be put into action as he had greater ambition than that. But the feudalistic class system was not going to crumble so easily. Even though the strict lines demarcating the classes were being blurred, it was not happening because of the studied policy of the administration; it was a by-product of the economic changes, not the product of Shogunate directives. The rumours were never substantiated. It was too much to expect the conservative administration to break with tradition and promote a mere police officer to high office. Sadly, the Shogunate structure, then in the final stages of senescence, did not have the flexibility to select men of natural ability. Hereditary offices and appointments following traditional lines of selection were their only "modus operandi". It was a bitter disappointment to Ōshio as his expectations had been so great. He had such an inordinate conceit concerning his own ability that he would not have been able to refuse the prospect of promotion and of being "useful in society".

In Spring 1836, the Isshinji incident occurred and, although particulars of this are obscure, it was a further heartbreak to Heihachirō for it involved his former associates of the East group city commissioner's office in a scandal of monumental proportions. It seems the chief priest of Hōsaka Isshinji had an ambition to build a temple for Tōshōgū within his temple in order to make it prosperous. He had won over the police officials of the East group but, when an inquiry was carried out by the commissioner of temples and shrines, sharp practices were exposed. The result was that the priests of HŌsaka Isshinji were punished and Ōkubo Sanuki no Kami, the East city commissioner, was relieved of his post and replaced by Atobe Yamashiro no Kami who was appointed in May 1836, but he did not actually assume responsibility until July 27. "Atobe was the real younger brother of Councillor Mizuno Tadakuni and had a background of being a self-reliant person." (ibid., 87) When he took office he treated Heihachirō with disdain. Clearly he was jealous of Ōshio's popularity and it riled him that a person who was nothing more than a retired police officer could be regarded as such an extraordinary and useful person. Atobe was completely different from Takai, Yabe, and his other predecessors. Whereas they had committed things to Heihachirō, Atobe did not. It seems he deliberately changed Heihachirō's former method of administration, changed police officers around, and refused to implement any former decisions. This attitude aroused Heihachirō's resentment.

While exacting the rigorous punishment of imprisonment on those who sold even a handful of rice to sustain the daily needs of a starving people, they acceded to the Shōgun's request to send huge quantities of rice to Edo. From Heihachirō's point of view, all that Atobe did from start to finish was for his own wealth and fame. Though Ōshio despised Atobe, in view of the people's piteous condition which was becoming more and more intense, however distasteful Atobe was to him, he had no choice other than appeal to him and the West Commissioner for relief for the poor and starving masses. Thus, through Kakunosuke, time and again he urged Atobe to implement his suggested plan of relief. Reported opinions agree that Heihachirō's policy was a wise one and was admirably suited to the situation. Yet Atobe summarily refused to accept it. Doubtless this further damaged the poor relations between Ōshio and Atobe as did Atobe's supine yielding to Edo's request for rice to celebrate the proposed change of Shōgun the following Spring. How could a man like this understand the heartbreak of the nation?

Thus, Ōshio had to rethink his plan, and try to find an alternative way of saving the people from their distress. He was not the kind of person to retreat or give in. The only solution seemed to be to remove Atobe in order to be able to give relief to the starving. As a staunch supporter of the Shogunate administration and the feudal system, Heihachirō was cast into a dilemma but, for the sake of the common people, it had to be done. Overthrowing him with military power was necessary and it would also be a worthy social service. Crisis situations demand emergency measures. This was such a time for such an action. The matter of whether success was possible was not a consideration. When duty is plain, Ōshio believed he had to "act intuitively", do right, and let the chips fall where they may. Whether successful or a failure was immaterial. He decided to advance along the right road. This is the philosophy which he had consistently expounded in *Senshindō Sakki*. Now was the time to practise what he had preached so long. Once committed, there was no turning back.

iii) *The Covetousness of the Merchants*

Next to the corrupt officials, Heihachirō's second target of attack was the covetous city merchants. Against the utter helplessness and despair of the poor peasants and townsmen, Heihachirō saw the great accessions of

wealth and the tyranny of the merchants who monopolised the markets and set the prices to their advantage. Through the remarkable development of a monetary economy during the Tokugawa period, increasingly, wealth and status accrued to these merchants. Heihachirō, as we shall see, railed against their affluence and extravagances, but he was not alone in his assessment of the merchant class. It was shared by all the samurai as Matsudaira Sadanobu[1] had said:

> "The merchants at the foot of the castle live in complete luxury and indulge in boisterous dancing, tea ceremony, *haikai*, and ball-kicking play; they decorate their residences and collect curious treasures; they indulge their wives and children, and entrust all their business matters to their clerks, and so what do these people do? Warriors exert themselves with archery and horsemanship, with their *hakama* and longswords -- this is their daily work, but the merchants alone have nothing to do; they are just like the frivolous people of the world."

It sounds just like Ōshio! Heihachirō was vehement in his antagonism to, and avid in his repulsion of, these grasping merchants. He persistently opposed their unscrupulous and heartless methods of money grubbing. Although he believed that all merchants tended to degenerate into inhumane profiteers, he reserved his most venomous attacks for the giant political merchants and those with specially privileged monopolies. Even the feudal lords themselves had resigned themselves to the wealth and political influence of the giant merchants who gave credit to them and the warrior class. The irony of the situation was that the group which was traditionally the lowest rung of the social ladder had acquired power over those on the highest rung simply through their financial power. It grieved Ōshio to see the feudalistic social system so cruelly trampled underfoot and he resented the collapse of the feudal order.

In an extreme manner of speaking, it had been said, "Regarding lending money to daimyō, if the transaction is carried out as promised it is better than any other business. Not many people are needed. A merchant only needs one notebook and one balance. Truly, this is the way to make money while sleeping."[2] Their profits were excessive while the ultimate victims were not the daimyō but the peasants, for the daimyō's losses were recouped through their extra harsh demands on the peasants.

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[1]As quoted by Okamoto, 1975:93.
[2]Mitsui Takafusa's *Chōnin Kōkenroku* as quoted by Okamoto, 1975:96.

Naturally, the "fan of the farmers" resented these exorbitant taxes and grieved over the sacrifice of the blood, sweat, toil, and tears of the farmers in the course of feathering the nests of the merchants. Besides the detestable means employed in the amassing of their wealth, they were callously taking advantage of the destitute condition of the people in this time of famine. They were satiated with their extravagant lifestyle and spurned to offer a hand of relief to the starving masses.

Some rise in prices was unavoidable, but Heihachirō knew that making poor harvests the reason for there being no rice and for a sudden jump in rice prices was just a pretext -- an excuse for the merchants to contrive exorbitant profits and for wicked bureaucrats to use sharp practices in swelling their own wallets. It was these two latter causes, the greed of both the merchants and the officials, that were the real problem that exacerbated the effects of the famine. But, with humane and enlightened relief and tax policies, the ravages of the famine could have been minimised. With each jump in rice prices, the commissioner's office issued a warning to the Dōjima rice market to trade in a legal manner, but there is no evidence that it was ever enforced. The feelings of resentment and frustration that the people harboured against the merchants were revealed during rice riots when their homes and stores, if not their persons, were attacked.

The merchants and stockbrokers were at first licensed by the government to stabilise the price of goods so that there could be a plentiful flow of resources. However, by the Tempō period, their reason for continued existence was simply so that the government could take the fees, often as high as 1,000 *ryō*, for official guild membership. This fee, not the maintenance of equitable prices, had become the sole purpose of the guilds. The farmer-producers particularly felt keenly the abuses and harshness of the system, and the resentment they bore against the merchants with special privileges was justified. Consequently, the corrupt and inept officials were Heihachirō's primary target of attack, and next to them were the covetous and heartless merchants.

2. *Manifesto*

Fortunately, the text of Ōshio's Manifesto (*Gekibun*) has been handed down to us and so, through this, we can see his reason for raising an army.

For a translation of the Manifesto itself, see Appendix II. "Since the document was written in complicated Chinese, it cannot have conveyed very much to the majority of its intended readers, but such practical questions were the least of Ōshio's concerns", (Morris, 1975:204). "If the whole world is suffering destitution, the food which is given by heaven will not last long" is the famous opening sentence of the Manifesto. It continues, "The ancient sage warned all future generations that 'if the nation is ruled by common people, both disaster and harm will follow'". As the situation in the city deteriorated, Ōshio observed the people's misery with growing indignation. He launched a vitriolic attack on the authorities and declared that the famine was not an "act of heaven" (*tensai*) as the official Confucianists asserted, but an "act of government" (*seisai*). They could have ridden out the famine with a more benevolent government.

In February 1837, in the midst of the continuing famine, Ōshio Heihachirō distributed this Manifesto to the small people in the villages and he then organised the farmers and city dwellers to rise in armed revolt against the corrupt officials and callous administrators. His purpose was to act on heaven's behalf and visit punishment on those who richly deserved it, and then, construct an authentic feudal society. His revolt was not simply an impulsive uprising. Even if the final decision to act was taken fairly suddenly, it was the ultimate outcome of his earnest thinking and fervent teaching over a fairly extended period of time. The kernel of his Yōmei scholarship and thinking was "intuition" and "to act intuitively" was its application to real life. Herein the human heart surpasses all the objective world, nature, politics, economics, and morality. The way in which "intuition" works upon the objective existence is said to be "to act intuitively". This was the essence of Heihachirō's teaching, "the unity of knowledge and action".

This is why Ōshio could not be indifferent to the injustice of the officials and the suffering of the people. One is not permitted to be a mere spectator in life. Even if the acting out of his knowledge brought him into collision with the authorities, so be it! From beginning to end, Ōshio taught consistently that if *ryōchi* is born in the action of serving one's parents, that is true filial piety; if it is born in the action of serving one's ruler, that is true loyalty. If not, even if you show formal filial piety and loyalty it is false, not true. Therefore,

the original feudal system which had *ryōchi* as a principle was his ideal. Although this was not necessarily revolutionary thinking, it was a standpoint that was critical of the Shogunate feudal system which did not have the youthful flexibility to adjust to changing times, and which acted in a reactionary way during the feudal crisis during the late Tokugawa period. The ruling class could not come to terms with the newly emerging system based on the developing mercantile economy. This leaning towards the distribution of merchandise under the Shogunate system had changed the form of feudal morality. "People had become objects to be used for the advantage of others. Even such traditional morality as kindness, justice, courtesy and knowledge were all used as a means to achieve their ambition. Under such a situation, even the feudal relationship between lord and subject was based on the relationship of money." (Miyagi, 1970:279) Ōshio despised such utilitarians as "serpents and scorpions", as "feudal lords who fought each other with all sorts of dirty tricks", and as "corrupt officials and corrupt merchants", and he ceaselessly censured them.

Heihachirō believed that if "intuition" was not actualised, the feudal system was denied and overthrown. He supported the concept of unethical persons, even rulers, being overthrown by force. Rulers who cannot realise *ryōchi*, which Ōshio regarded as the ideal for feudalism, should be overthrown in the name of duty. This idea everywhere penetrates his philosophy. With the emphasis on "intuition" there would increasingly be a manifestation of love toward the people. Politics should be bathed and carried out by the feudal rulers "acting intuitively", and anybody who does not understand this is not fit to rule people. The feudal crisis caused him to pursue more and more vehemently the moral and personal responsibility of feudal leaders. The rulers who indulged in excesses of wasteful luxury and were resourceless and unconcerned in coping with the crisis were unqualified to be rulers and should be removed forthwith. He was so incensed by the incompetence of the authorities in the face of such desperate poverty that he drew up a Manifesto justifying his action and instigated an uprising of the poor. Hence Ōshio decisively scattered the Manifesto around the common people in the villages, organised the farmers, and rose in revolt.

The summons begins with a reference to the recent series of earthquakes and other natural disasters which Ōshio pointed out, in typical Confucian

style, were signs of heaven's anger with the corrupt self-seeking bureaucrats of the Shogunate government. But the warnings had not been heeded. It was a long article of over 2,000 characters but, because he wanted it read carefully, Ōshio had the whole text printed. Ōshio poured out his heart in its writing. "Given from heaven to the common people in all the villages" was written on the front of the envelope and a Shinto prayer of the Ise Grand Shrine was stamped on the back. It was printed on Nishi no Ushigami with five pages gummed together and the completed Manifesto, a majestic work, was put into an envelope of saffron-yellow Kaga silk. It was then distributed throughout the surrounding villages by selected disciples. Copies were often affixed to the pillars of temples and shrines. Through strict management it was successfully duplicated and circulated with the farmers, particularly poor tenant farmers in the vicinity of Ōsaka, as its immediate target of appeal.

Let us look at some of the salient features in each paragraph of the Manifesto:

i) The Manifesto began with the famous words "If the whole world is in poverty, the food which is given from heaven will not last long. If the nation is ruled by the common people both disaster and harm will come..." which are taken from *Analects* and *The Great Learning*. To Ōshio, "common people" meant people of small ability irrespective of their hereditary status and position. The words of the ode (She III.iii; ode X.5), "(Good) men are going away, and the country is sure to go to ruin," are descriptive of the consequences of there being no good men to rule the State. (Legge 1893(IV):563)[3]

Ōshio openly refers to the Tokugawa Shogunate and blamed it for failing to bring just and moral government to the people. In spite of nearly two and a half centuries of "peace", injustices and chaos increased. Morally decadent and arrogant officials ruled the country by accepting bribes and taking the advice of women in their inner chambers. The fact that "lower-status people without morals or sense of duty are being promoted to position of importance" solely through bribes and their connections

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[3]"The Book of Poetry", *The Chinese Classics*, Vol.IV, Legge,J., 1893/1960/1970:563.

with the personal maids of the household caused Ōshio great apprehension. He believed it jeopardised the future health of the nation. They did not understand morality or duty and were appointed to important positions which were inappropriate to their mean ability. It was a mere repetition of the state of affairs appertaining to Tanuma Okitsugu's rule where bribery was called by the euphemism "a service charge" and it was well-known that Tanuma shared a part of the bribes with his harem in order to buy their satisfaction. Heihachirō would certainly agree with the wisdom of *The Great Learning* (X.16): "To see men of worth and not be able to raise them to office; to raise them to office, but not to do so quickly, this is disrespectful. To see bad men and not be able to remove them; to remove them, but not to do so to a distance, this is weakness." (Legge, 1893:378) Ōshio bemoaned the fact that these untalented officials who were unfit for their posts "only use their wisdom for the consideration of making themselves and their own families rich." *The Great Learning* (X.23) has another pertinent section:

> "When he who presides over a state or a family makes his revenues his chief business, he must be under the influence of some small, mean man. He may consider this to be good; but when such a person is employed in the administration of a state or family, calamities from Heaven and injuries from men will befall it together, and, though a good man may take his place, he will not be able to remedy the evil." (ibid., 380)

These untalented rulers plundered the hard-working farmers of their deserved rewards, not only by regular annual levies, but also through excessive extraordinary levies. They felt no compassion for the peasants suffering from the various natural disasters and passed on their ever-increasing needs to support their ever more extravagant lifestyle as demands to the farmers who already worked their fingers to the bone to keep body and soul together. But, even if it was an open criticism of the Shogunate administration, its spirit was not anti-Shogunate so much as anti-callous and corrupt bureaucrats, and its purpose was neither the overthrow of the Shogunate system nor the liberation of the feudal peasants. If we see this, we will understand that from birth to death, Heihachirō was not against the Shogunate system per se, nor was he completely one with the oppressed masses. Yet he has been interpreted by some as trying to liberate the oppressed masses and by others as belonging to the "revere the Emperor, overthrow the Shogunate" movement.

ii) In referring to the Ashikaga family, Ōshio was doubtless thinking of the first Shōgun, Ashikaga Takauji, a powerful Minamoto vassal, who,

though despatched by Kamakura against Emperor Daigo II, treacherously crossed over to the Emperor's side. Although Daigo II occupied the throne and was surrounded by a number of his own ministers drawn from court nobility, the real power lay with Takauji and other feudal lords in the background. Takauji became Shōgun in 1338, but, for more than fifty years after the fall of the Kamakura government, civil war ensued between rival feudal lords. Ōshio's oft references to the revered Emperors of the past such as: "Since the period when the Ashikaga family ruled, the Emperor especially, is like a retired person", "We will treat everybody generously as Emperor Jimmu did", "Even if we cannot restore the period...of Amaterasu, we would like to restore the age of Emperor Jimmu, the restorer", and the fact that on the morning of the insurrection the first cannon shot was fired at the national temple which enshrined Ieyasu who ought to have been the most venerated by loyal samurai, cause some historians to point to Heihachirō's reverence for the Emperor and advocation of Imperial rule and not think of his words and acts as those of an opportunist as earlier historians have thought. But Heihachirō was not trying to restore Imperial rule. He just wanted to return to the benevolent government symbolised in these idealised, but mythical persons.

Ōshio bemoans the fact that, now that the emperors have lost their authority, there was no one to whom commoners can turn for redress or to lay their complaints. But, even under the former emperors, was there a channel for commoners to appeal for the redress of injustices suffered? The inference seems to be that until the emperor is returned to his rightful place and was able to mete out justice, there could not be peace and harmony in the land. Heihachirō was certainly being idealistic to build his hope for future justice and benevolence on the myths of the past.

In recent years natural disasters in the form of earthquakes, fires, floods, and landslides had been prevalent. Ōshio interpreted these as an undoubted warning from heaven to the high officials. Regarding natural disasters as "acts of God" was an old Chinese Confucianist concept as can be seen in such passages as:

> "Why is it that Heaven is (thus) reproving (you)?
> Why is it that the Spirits are not blessing (you)?...
> You are regardless of the evil omens (that abound)
> And your demeanour is all unseemly." (She III.iii; ode X.5; Legge 1893(IV):562)

To Ōshio, natural disasters were heaven's punishment on the inefficient and insensitive bureaucrats, and the distress resulting from the famine was the direct result of poor official management of resources and of unconcern for the suffering. In fact, he believed that the disasters which had occurred one after another in recent times had been caused because lowly people were engaged in the financial affairs of state. He felt that if you allow untalented people to rule the country, disasters will undoubtedly occur, and that, in rapid succession. Ōshio had the conviction that natural calamities were the grudges of the lower-class people, who suffered under evil government, being heard in heaven. Heaven responded by admonishing these wicked administrators with the various disasters that had been prevalent of late. If they still did not amend their evil ways, famines occurred.

Even though Ōshio acknowledged the natural disasters as the immediate cause of the parlous condition in which the poor found themselves, there is no doubt that he believed the situation was basically man-made. There were resources and reserves of food if only the feudal administrators would act in a more humane and enlightened manner. He censured the rulers and feudal officers and pointed out their personal and moral delinquency in failing to fulfil their responsibilities. It was a cause of constant distress to Ōshio to see the ruling class who had the responsibility of being benevolent towards the people who faithfully yielded fealty and physically supported the life of the upper classes, just further distress the people by taking advantage of their vulnerability. It was intolerable to him in such a lowly position "of useless seclusion" for he could do so little to alleviate their sufferings.

Even though there had been a succession of natural disasters which Ōshio interpreted as "strong warnings sent from heaven", he attributed the social abuses to the inhumanity, incompetency, ignorance, and immorality of the authorities who controlled the important affairs of state. Heihachirō did not try to conceal his obvious contempt for the "scoundrels" who had a hand in officialdom as he regarded them as men of mean ability, unfitted for responsible office. From start to finish, the Manifesto was a scathing criticism of the Shogunate administration. But a careful reading of the Manifesto will show that, in spite of such a vitriolic attack on the *Bakufu*'s incompetence and corruption, it is the Shogunate officials that are the object of Heihachirō's vehement criticism, not the

Shogunate system per se, nor the Shōgun. He was not anti-Shogunate. It was the bureaucrats of mean ability "without morals or sense of duty" that bore the brunt of his attacks. Ōshio believed that they undermined the strong, healthy Shogunate system and he pleaded for the restoration of the founder's "benevolent rule" as we saw in the opening paragraph.

Tō (T'ang) and Bu (Wu) were two who exemplified the gaining of the throne by rebellion. "Since the Ch'in and Han dynasties...those who usurped the throne by destroying their royal houses and murdering their rulers always pretended to be following the examples of T'ang and Wu." (Nakamura, 1964:472) Any modern ideology of liberating the masses was far from Heihachirō's mind.

iii) In this section, Ōshio begins with an attack on the heartless whims of the Ōsaka commissioner who neglected, or treated harshly, the starving masses but who treated favourably the wealthy merchants who preyed on the peasants and lived so luxuriously. He likens the self-indulgences and debauchery of the great privileged merchants to "King Chou's all-night feasts". Ōshio condemned the wealthy city merchants who plundered enormous personal gain from the poor in collusion with the officials. The Manifesto refers to the high price of rice but also dwells on the oppressive treatment of the masses by the officials whose habit was to use force rather than persuasion. Ōshio pointed out the irrationality of sending rice to Edo, with the full co-operation of the great merchant houses of Ōsaka, while the populace of Ōsaka was starving. Nor was any despatched to Kyōto where the Emperor resided. They contemptuously ignored the onslaughts of the famine around them, and they treated the Emperor and his court with the same arrogant contempt with which they treated the lowly. These rulers were no better than common robbers who stole lunches from little children. This was obviously the "last straw" to Ōshio and stirred him to write the Manifesto and raise a revolt.

It galls Ōshio that "even though they are merchants they were treated as, and appointed to positions with the status of, retainers and elders". Herein we see his unchanging conviction that the feudal social strata should be inviolable and that merchants should forever be fourth in ranking. Heihachirō still maintained, to a degree, the system of social ranking as that alone guaranteed the superiority of the warrior class. He shows his utter contempt for the merchant class and the *Kabuki* actors,

calling them *kawaramono*. His sympathy with the suffering masses turned immediately into fury against the corrupt and inactive officials and the callous merchants who were responsible for the people's hardships and who "see the poor and beggars starving to death, but do not try to save them." He pictures them as disporting themselves at expensive banquets with wine, fine food and dancing girls. They left unattended the conditions of abject famine among the people while drinking fine *sake* and living a life of pleasure with rich merchants, disreputable "men of the theatre" and wicked women.

iv) The inept Ōsaka commissioner and his officials had the authority to control the merchants and relieve the oppressed, but they were idle and resourceless, and did not try to save the people. He branded them as "bandits stealing government salaries". They were more concerned with their own excessive profits through the manipulation of the rice market at Dōjima than in alleviating the plight of the poor. Everyone knew that, with each sudden jump in rice prices, the commissioner's office issued a hollow warning to the Dōjima rice market to transact lawful business and keep the lid on prices. They also knew that the same officials were in collusion with the rice brokers and that nothing would alter much. This was intolerable to people like Ōshio. It was impossible, said Ōshio, to continue bearing this injustice in silence. So he issued this call to action. Even though Ōshio knew his course probably involved martyrdom for himself and incurred certain retribution and disaster to his relations, "for the sake of all the people" who had no other defender, he called upon all of like mind to take what he regarded as the only possible action in relieving the people. He was willing to sacrifice his whole life in order to annul completely the evil administration of unjust bureaucrats who were represented by the city commissioners. This was Ōshio's ultimate aim, the removal of corrupt officials.

v) The Manifesto is full of resentment against these "corrupt officials and corrupt merchants". Ōshio calls upon the peasants of the four domains around Ōsaka to "rise up and conduct a punitive expedition, killing the heartless officials who have made the poor to suffer" and "who afflict and distress the common people" and then to turn their attention to "the rich, luxury-loving merchants who live in extravagance" and profited while the poor starved. He promised (some would say "bribed") "people of ability" without regard to status, to "appoint them

to government positions". But that promise was as idealistic as his strategy was impractical. Heihachirō insisted that this was no ordinary sporadic peasant revolt, but it was ironic and inconsistent with his ideology that he had to rely on the peasants in order to construct a genuine feudal system. Doubtless, to Ōshio, it was an unavoidable emergency measure when every other expedient had failed and he had reached the point of desperation. But his very calling on the masses to rise in revolt was significant in that it heralded a new revolutionary body. He emphasised that this was not just another ephemeral uprising but one that would be sustained until justice had been fully realised for the people. Although he dared to raise this violent insurrection, it was to be different from a peasant uprising.

The guilty, including the city commissioners, must be punished and the food immediately distributed to the distressed people. The immediate plan was to kill the worst of the officials and merchants, but the practical objective of the revolt was the distribution of food to the starving populace, even though details of how it would be accomplished were rather vague, a further evidence of Ōshio's impractical idealism. The ideal which he cited was the construction of an authentic feudal society. "Even if we cannot restore the period of the idealised Emperors of China and the period of Amaterasu", Heihachirō would like to try to return to the age of the mythical "restorer", Emperor Jimmu, and to the benevolent administration of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Ōshio seems to impose on the Japanese Emperor, as the son of heaven, qualities of unchallengeable moral purity. Even though hoping for an era like that of the idealised emperors of China was not possible, at least he longed for a return to the more benevolent rule of former days.

Ōshio had a certain sense of religious mission and he saw his mission as that of a loyalist sage who would "save the people from the hell they were experiencing during their lifetime and establish paradise before their eyes". According to Najita, these words "mark the end of criticism by analogy, the beginning of armed rectification of injustice. For the historian, however, they also point to a problem of deeper significance; they throw light on the fascinating process in which action shaped Ōyōmei thought in a concrete historical situation." (1970:170) Heihachirō was determined to "save the people" and "restore the age of Emperor Jimmu" which he believed would be moral and benevolent. He faced the dilemma

that, unlike the idealised Emperors of China, there had really been no Utopian age of justice in Japan under the Imperial house. Maybe for this reason he alludes so much to mythical figures like Jimmu and Amaterasu. Ōshio was not saying that the Tokugawa Shogunate was not the legitimate ruler as the *Kokugakusha*, the neo-Shintoist nationalists, maintained.

The "hell" from which Ōshio wanted to save the people was the economic misery of the poor. The peasants were the principal victims in the long famines that periodically plagued the entire country during the Tokugawa period. But the urban masses also suffered cruelly from shortages of food and sudden jumps in commodity prices. The vast majority of the inhabitants of the great cities like Edo and Ōsaka lived close to the economic margin and so they were extremely vulnerable to any sudden price rise. Many of the urban inhabitants were recent migrants who had been driven from their villages by economic pressure and eked out a precarious subsistence as day-labourers and servants. A period of famine claimed them as immediate victims and their situation became even more desperate. Ōshio was an impractical idealist who believed it was possible to purge away the accumulation of centuries of corruption and return to the pure, moral, but mythical government that Japan had enjoyed in the days of Jimmu, the founder of the Imperial dynasty.

Even though Ōshio made repeated references to the Imperial House, as a loyal samurai, he never aimed to "restore the Emperor", but merely to "save the people" (*kyūmin*), and, in particular, the economically oppressed poor of Ōsaka. Morris (1975:408,n8.64) sees Heihachirō, in a sense, as "a precursor of the loyalist movement that was represented later in the century by leaders like Ōkubo and Saigō", but adds that "it is anachronistic to regard his revolt as an attempt to overthrow the political status quo in favour of centralised Imperial rule." From the several references to the Sun Goddess, Emperor Jimmu, and the Imperial household it seems that Ōshio may be advocating Imperial rule and arguing against the *Bakufu*. But this does not prove his admiration and reverence for the Emperor. In all his writings in *Sakki* and other works there is no expression which would cause us to think he supported the restoration of the Emperor.

Okamoto (1975:107) looks for the significance in Ōshio's reference to Amaterasu Ōmikami and believes there is an intended analogy "between

Amaterasu Ōmikami and the idealised sacred emperors of ancient China, Gyō and Shun". He also opines that extolling the Sun Goddess and Emperor Jimmu was an attempt to gain the sympathy of the masses. (ibid., 108) He believes that the banners at the head of the rebel army, emblazoned with the names of Amaterasu Ōmikami, the sacred kings Tō and Bu, and of Tōshō Daigongen (the deified Ieyasu), endorse this opinion. He was a zealous supporter of the Tokugawa Shogunate system. Without a shadow of doubt, he affirmed that "every region" and "the people" ought to be under "the rule of the Tokugawa family". To him, at least, the Tokugawa Shogunate system at the time of its inception under the leadership of Ieyasu, was a political system that was close to ideal, based on the principle of simplicity and benevolent rule. Ōshio believed that there was no alternative to the restoration of the founder's law. Only then could he expect the reappearance of a good age, but to think that all social inconsistencies would be eliminated through benevolent feudal rulers was quite naive.

Ōshio promises that the new administration would reduce land tax and the various other taxes, treat everyone generously under benevolent government, change the luxurious habits and decadent manners, return to a frugal lifestyle and provide a social environment in which all the people could live in peace. Obviously Heihachirō accepted, without question, the existence of the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. He also frowns on the money economy which had developed during the Tokugawa period and wistfully longs for a return to the natural economy based on the feudal system. Having been especially critical of the excessive feudal land taxes which caused the ordinary farmer of that time to suffer, he believed that rulers ought to rule benevolently and levy only appropriate annual tax.

vi) Ōshio urged the villagers to be careful that plans for the uprising were not uncovered by the watchmen-officials from Ōsaka who patrolled the area. They were "to kill without hesitation or exception any officials" in their area who had learned of the proposed action. As soon as the villagers heard that the uprising had started in the city, they should flock to the support of the insurgents and help destroy the rogues who were responsible for their misery. But some entertained grave doubts concerning the rumours of a planned revolt, and even, of Ōshio's involvement with the Manifesto. "People who knew Heihachirō knew that, more than anything else, he cherished a zeal for the promotion of the

soundness of the *Bakuhan* feudal system. No matter how serious the casualties of the famine, and no matter how unusual Atobe's policy, it was quite unthinkable to the people that a riot was caused under Ōshio's guidance." (ibid., 99) This was particularly the case with those who knew him best. Thus, at the beginning of the uprising, hardly anyone could believe it, thinking it was an incorrect report. But this Manifesto was distributed with the purpose of dispelling any doubts. Ōshio spells out in detail his state of mind in reaching the decision to raise an army of revolt.

vii) In launching his armed "rectification of injustice", Ōshio encouraged the poor farmers to break into the local government offices in order to burn and destroy all records of personal indebtedness, the registers of annual tribute, and all other documents which were deposited at local offices and village councils and on which the authorities depended for taxation assessment. Heihachirō had promised a sustained movement until justice was fully realised for the people, not a mere ephemeral peasant revolt even if it be destructive. "Yet clearly, it was not a belief in the strength of his strategy that made him speak of sustained revolt. Rather, it was the conviction that his revolt was based on principle and on heaven's will, as contrasted, he noted, to those of rebels in the past such as Taira no Masakado and Akechi Mitsuhide who wanted only power." (Najita, 1970:174) The examples of these two heroic figures are given because they failed, in Heihachirō's eyes, due to their motivation being political ambition. In order to clear his motives and remove any misunderstandings of his purpose, he had to emphasise that his revolt was not in the same category as those of these ancient warriors.

Ōshio stressed the moral basis of his revolt, pointing out that he and his followers had no ambition to seize the country and obtain political power. Like the Chinese heroes of the late Ming dynasty that he idealised, he was motivated solely by sincerity, a sincerity that obligated them to visit heaven's punishment on the wicked. To Heihachirō, the fact that Ming loyalists were supporting a hopeless cause that was bound to fail was confirmation of the sincerity of their motives. He threatened the literate men of the villages (priests, doctors, headmen, elders, etcetera) with ruthless punishment: "if they...conceal this within themselves, then later they will certainly be punished" for failing to reveal the contents of his summons to the illiterate.

viii) Ōshio's intention, as stated in the last sentence of the Manifesto, was "to act on behalf of God's will and to punish those who deserve punishment." Through his uprising he believed that heaven's just retribution would be heaped upon the actual feudal leaders and the great privileged merchants of Ōsaka city as their persons were attacked and their homes incinerated. The Manifesto was an appeal to the villagers throughout the four domains of Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima, and was addressed to village headmen, elders, independent farmers and tenant farmers. Heihachirō had outlined for them the purpose and strategy of his rebellion. Having distributed his Manifesto which appealed for peasant volunteers to join a "punitive expedition against the corrupt officials and covetous merchants", a clear incitement to revolt, there was no turning back. The aim of this sage-hero was to "save the people" and this slogan was emblazoned on banners when Ōshio took to the streets in open revolt. The time had come for all sincere people to rise up and "visit heaven's vengeance" on the corrupt officials and greedy merchants.

3. *Result*

Heihachirō, moved with extreme sympathy for the poor, decided that he must act directly as 1836 had been a terrible year and 1837 promised no improvement. He became desperate and resolved to take recourse in desperate means. "Having observed the oppressive methods of the authorities, he became so disgusted by conditions that he prepared an ambitious conspiracy." (Dower, 1975:385) Ōshio had exhausted all legal means and at last determined to heap well-deserved punishment on the culprits. After consultations with his police officer friends, some young samurai, and *rōnin* who were of the same mind among his disciples, as well as with over twenty wealthy farmers from neighbouring villages, he secretly mapped out a strategy for their overthrow.

VIII. *Ōshio's Revolt*

One of the earliest explanations of Ōshio's plans and his subsequent uprising can be found in "Ukiyo no Arisama VII".[1] Looking at the events in sequence we see:

1. *The Preparation for Raising an Army*

The callous behaviour of his superior officer, the city commissioner, in rejecting Ōshio's pleas to alleviate the suffering of the poor made him so indignant that he sold his property to relieve the destitute. This had little effect and so, becoming still more incensed, he gathered a band of his samurai friends and some others to attack the authorities, seize the castle, and confiscate the property of the wealthy to distribute among the needy. Ōshio also used some of the proceeds from the sale of his library to purchase a cannon and some rifles (probably more than a dozen), hired a specialist in gunnery to train his vanguard and collected several hundred swords to distribute along with money to the poor. During the winter Ōshio was preparing for revolt and "he practised shooting, took into his confidence a few horse- and foot-guards from whom he had obtained an oath of conspiracy, and lastly procured arms and ammunition." (Akamatsu, 1972:60) He then waited for the departure of the retiring West city commissioner whom he greatly respected and who had been friendly to him.

"The plan to raise an army to strike the corrupt officials and wicked merchants took more concrete shape on the 2nd February at the time when the arrival in Ōsaka of the newly appointed West city commissioner, Hori Iga no Kami Toshikata was announced." (Miyagi, 1984:50). Morris (1975:205) notes, "To prepare for the great day, Ōshio's followers had been meeting regularly in his house. With its rooms stripped bare since the sale of the library, it had been turned into a secret armoury for storing cannons and firearms and for manufacturing ammunition." Ōshio mobilised his disciples under his command and distributed the weapons and supply of gunpowder that had been prepared for the occasion. Early in the new year of 1837, it seems, he also required all his disciples at Senshindō to append their seal as joint participators in the revolt.

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[1]"Ukiyo no Arisama VII", *Nihon Shomin Seikatsu Shiryō Shūsei*, Vol.XI, Tōkyō: Sanichi Shobōhan, 1970:431-468.

It had been arranged that, on 19th February, the newly-appointed West city commissioner, Hori Iga no Kami, according to the established custom, was to be guided on a tour of inspection of Tenma by his senior, the East city commissioner, Atobe Yamashiro no Kami, and that at 4 p.m. they would take a rest at the home of Asaoka Sukenojō whose residence was opposite that of Ōshio Heihachirō. According to Heihachirō's original plan, that was the time to raise the rebellion. They would shell Asaoka's residence and thus would kill both city commissioners with one blow, seize the castle, and then progressively set fire to every block of the city. They would suddenly attack the homes of the wealthy merchants, scatter their wealth and grain, and divide it among the poor. Two police officers were to burn the city commissioner's office by way of diversion.

In planning and carrying out his insurrection Ōshio was assisted by a group of twenty associates. The most important of these was his adopted son, Kakunosuke, who was also one of the few people with whom Heihachirō ever maintained a warm relationship. His other main companions were his old colleagues from the East city commissioner's office whose respect for Ōshio was considerable and whose morale had deteriorated under Atobe's leadership. Several other idealistic samurai who had been attracted by his personality and had become his disciples also joined the core group central to the plot. Apart from these warriors, Heihachirō's popular support came from the surrounding villages. The main corps was mobilised from among the farmers in outlying districts on the left bank of the Yodo River. During the weeks preceding the revolt several of Ōshio's trusted farmer-disciples had gradually recruited to the cause able men irrespective of their social status. These were to instruct the peasants to flock to Tenma in support of the rebels once the uprising had started.

"From the correlation between areas in which alms had been distributed and the areas which provided the soldiers to participate in the revolt, it is said that the decision was made to give money in order to raise the army." (Inui, 1975:18) The scope of almsgiving was 33 villages in the domains of Settsu and Kawachi which today cover the area from Miyakojima and Asahi wards in Ōsaka city to Moriguchi city and Kadoma city, the area on the West bank of the Yodo River. Comparing the names of the villages and Ōshio's chief supporters, it can be fairly certainly said that the mobilisation of the participant soldiers was almost without exception through Heihachirō's disciple-farmers.

Ōshio was at pains to maintain secrecy and he even ordered the cold-blooded murder of Utsuki Yasushi, the younger brother of the *Karō* (principal retainer) of the Hikone domain and one of his own loyal followers lest he betray the plot because he disagreed with Heihachirō over the rebellion. Yet, in spite of this extreme precaution, there were traitors in the rebel camp.

2. *The Betrayal*

Before Ōshio could get his uprising under way, one of his comrades lost heart and thus Ōshio's plan was leaked in advance through the secret information that he gave to the authorities. The day preceding the planned outbreak, Hirayama Sukejirō, an East group policeman who had earlier pledged to participate in the faction, now doubted the success of the enterprise and suddenly had a change of heart. He defected and betrayed his associates, reporting the plan secretly to Atobe. When Atobe heard of the secret clique, it seems he did not believe what he heard, but as the matter was so serious he decided to dispose of the incident at its inception. Consequently, he called three of his trusted retainers, the police officials Ōgino Kanzaemon, father and son, and Isoya Tonomo, informed them of the secret report and ordered Ōshio's arrest. However, the three police officers unanimously stated that Heihachirō had become insane in recent days and his saying such inconceivable and unlawful things had become habitual. They stated that probably Sukejirō had only said what he did thinking it to be a fact. Thus, they advised Atobe against arresting Ōshio and said that he should not worry unnecessarily over such a trifling complaint. Atobe urged the three men to keep Heihachirō's subsequent actions under close surveillance but cancelled the order of arrest. Little did Atobe know that he was the prime target at which the attack was aimed!

It was fortunate for Ōshio that Atobe, the city commissioner, was sceptical about the leaked report. As with the Shimabara rebellion, the officials failed to take prompt action which could have stopped the revolt before its onset. It was not until dawn on the 19th when the second traitor, Yoshimi Kyūrōemon, sent a letter confirming the news of the impending outbreak that the authorities took the matter seriously. They began by ordering the arrest of the two police officials who were to

set fire to the commissioner's office. One was hacked to death in the guardhouse, but the other escaped to inform Ōshio that the plan had been betrayed.

Even after the flames had started in Tenma, Honda Tamesuke, a Tamatsukuri police officer, flatly denied the possibility of Ōshio's involvement, saying, "I do not know about others, but Ōshio was not a person who would do such a thing." Sakamoto Gennosuke, another police officer of Tamatsukuri, who also was previously on friendly terms with Heihachirō said, "I imagine in these times of high rice prices, scoundrels pressured by poverty have even gone as far as smashings and peasant riots and the rioters have started to smash Heihachirō's house. Because he had many private school students, Heihachirō defended himself." So they thought of Heihachirō as the suppressor of the riot, rather than as its instigator. Kawaji Toshiakira also, on hearing in Edo of the first news of the Ōsaka insurrection, said, "Heihachirō, being of the Ōyōmei sect, thoughts of rebellion were unthinkable." In this manner, many who knew well Ōshio's character and thought as a Yōmei scholar could not believe that he could act as the leader of such an insurrection. Still more, the city poor and the neighbouring peasants, who idolised him because a few days previously he had sold his personal resources and given alms, were, for the time being, in a daze.

3. *The Revolt*

Being warned of the betrayal of his plot, Heihachirō had to change his schedule and so decided to surprise the authorities by setting forward the time for the outbreak of the revolt. Shortly before 7 a.m. on the 19th February, Ōshio, wearing a black coat of mail and a samurai helmet, emerged from his Tenma residence and suddenly leapt into action against the authorities at the head of twenty disciples. He had first fired his own house and then taken to the streets, raising the banner "Save the People!" (*Kyūmin*) In the van of the faction there were also banners reading "Tenshō Taijingū" and on the flanks other banners on which "Tōbu Ryōseiō" and "Hachiman Daibosatsu" were written. As well there were banners with the Ōshio family crest of five pawlonia.[2] At seven o'clock,

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[2]Tenshō Taijingū = The Great Shrine of the Goddess Amaterasu;
Tōbu Ryōseiō = The two sacred Kings, Tō and Bu;
Hachiman Daibosatsu = "Hachiman" is the name of Shinto shrines dedicated to the god of war; "Daibosatsu" is a Buddhist term. The combination indicates the fact that the indigenous Japanese religion and Buddhism were mixed during and up to the end of the Tokugawa period and so it is difficult to analyse the meaning.

a group of policemen was sent to arrest Ōshio in his house, but they arrived too late; the insurrection was already underway. This violent riot, organised and stimulated by Ōshio, revealed a current of feeling against the *Bakufu* and its officials which was to overflow throughout the country. Jansen (1971:14), commenting on Ōshio's revolt, says:

> "Sometimes spectacular signs of discontent showed how little the Shogunate had solved its economic and social problems. One such occurred in 1837 when a model Confucian bureaucrat of the Samurai class led a demonstration of desperate townsmen against wealthy profiteers and the officials who supported them. The insurrection of Ōshio Heihachirō took place in Ōsaka, the Shogunate's commercial cross-roads, and its warnings were read in all parts of Japan."

The hastily-assembled rebel army was composed mainly of poor farmers from the surrounding districts and lower-class townspeople of Ōsaka city. Firing cannon and hurling fire-darts they quickly set about one-fifth of the city on fire and also set about punishing the Shogunal authorities who refused to allow the poor their share of rice. As they advanced down the city streets, they systematically set fire to the houses of police inspectors and other officials who were known for their unjust dealings. Ōshio and his men also fired large numbers of homes and storehouses owned by the wealthy merchants. Owing to their wooden construction, and fanned by the South-west winds, the flames spread rapidly. "As best as can be made out, Ōshio's overall plan, if it can be called that, was to have his vanguard of some twenty men set fire to Ōsaka as a signal to farmers in the countryside to rush to join his rebellion", according to Najita (1970:172-3) who also opines that, although Ōshio primarily appealed to farmers to provide him with the manpower, he planned to trigger the rebellion itself within the city where the money was.

With Heihachirō as ringleader, the revolt was raised with several police officers and subordinate warriors plus a dozen or so headmen and elders from neighbouring villages as the nucleus. Because large numbers of farmers had joined his Senshindō as disciples, Ōshio had high expectations that the main participants in his army would be farmers. Doubtless this was the reason why he had positively sought a peasant base for his revolt. Even though some city dwellers were caught up in the action once the riot occurred, it is thought that they followed blindly. Certainly

the citizens of Ōsaka who would have been the essential base of an *uchikowashi* were completely ignored in the address of the Manifesto. Consequently, it would be wrong to call the uprising an urban "smashing"; it was a rebel army.

According to details given in *Ōsaka no Chōmei* (1977:451) Ōshio first set fire to his own residence, then they shelled the house of Asaoka Sukenojō, a police officer of the East group, and Kawazaki's Tōshōgū; further they also set fire to neighbouring city blocks and the blaze reached as far as Tenma Tenjin. Farmers, seeing the flames in Tenma, rushed quickly to the scene. The rebels advanced through the city firing cannon at random, throwing fire-darts into the homes of the wealthy, and turning Tenma into a sea of flames. By now the party was composed of 300 people. From Tenma Tenjin they turned South and advanced to Tenjinbashi but, because the South end of the bridge had already been destroyed, they could not cross. So they followed the main river heading West, crossed Nanbabashi and came out at Kitahama 2 Chōme where they raided wealthy merchants' homes in Imabashi suji and Kōraibashi suji, etcetera. Their objectives were the estates of Kōnoike Shōhei of Imabashi 2 Chōme, Tennōjiya Gohei and Hiranoya Gohei of Imabashi 1 Chōme, Mitsui Hachirōemon of Kōraibashi 1 Chōme and Komeya Heiemon of Uchi Hirano chō 2 Chōme, etcetera. These they sacked and set ablaze with fire-arrows. The rebels scattered their money and grain on the roads, and, ordering the poor people to take it, they advanced. By this time, the two city commissioners and the castle authorities, reinforced by the Tamatsukuri officers, belatedly responded and set forth with their troops to quell the uprising. Knowledge that all was lost for Ōshio came a brief time later, for, apart from Heihachirō and a dozen or more determined samurai and *rōnin*, the rebel army consisted only of peasants and townsmen who were merely carried along without too much conviction by the ringleaders. Their only recourse now was to do as much damage as they could and die gallantly in the process. They put the torch to as many of the residences of unjust officials and the mansions of greedy merchants as they could as they passed through the city. So successful was this part of their strategy that a large part of the city was consumed by flames. The street fighting of the insurgents was finally suppressed by the late afternoon of the 19th but not before thousands of houses, stores, and whole districts were ablaze. Ōshio's party fled after he had sounded the drum for retreat.

On the day of the revolt, Fukao Saijirō rang the bell, gathered the villagers together, and announced that "there are people from West Japan attacking Ōsaka and they have smashed the house of Jihei. The police official, Ōshio, is resisting them and so let us run to support him." Because these farmers often borrowed money from Jihei, they felt an obligation to him. Also Saijirō claimed confidently that their tax would be reduced and other good things would happen to the farmers. Besides, Saijirō threatened the headmen and elders that, if they blocked the ordinary farmers from joining him to help Ōshio, then their houses would be burned down. Consequently, they could do nothing to stop them going to Ōsaka. In the social conditions of the times such occurrences were not unusual and so the announcement seemed credible to some. Even those who were dubious responded to such persuasion and, armed with rifles and bamboo spears, they rushed to Ōshio's support. Inui (1975:19) comments, "In the neighbouring Sugimura and Suitani villages, Riemon and others who prepared meals for Saijirō's party were partly afraid of their coercive tactics, but to some extent they positively welcomed them as they themselves were moved by avarice."

According to the confession of one of the participants in Ōshio's revolt, Shōji Gizaemon, Ōshio, and others signed a compact which is not extant. Doubtless it was carried away by Heihachirō and so the full contents are not known. From memory, Gizaemon[3] gave a list of the names contained in the compact. The detailed plans for the revolt itself are unclear as some of the evidence subsequently presented by the authorities is unreliable. Most of the information was obtained from defectors who hoped to receive leniency by implicating their former leader or from prisoners who were undergoing torture and would say anything to ameliorate their sufferings. For more details of the actual events of the revolt see Kōda Shigetomo's *Ōshio Heihachirō* (1942:181-213). Mori Ōgai's novel of the same name gives an interesting hour-by-hour description of the events of the 18th-19th February.

4. *The Difference from Peasant Riots*

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[3]Shōji Gizaemon's confession and the list of those who signed the compact (rempanjō) with Ōshio can be found in "Ukiyo no Arisama VII", as above, P.439.

The "smashing" on the occasion of Ōshio's revolt was different from the usual peasants riots and urban smashings in that it was directed by a former police official. Till now, they had been economically motivated; Ōshio's was regarded as politically and philosophically motivated, and thus, the first political rebellion since Shimabara in 1637. Ōshio's aim was to use the lower-grade Shogunate vassals and the wealthy farmers of the neighbouring villages who gathered at his private school as his comrades and as the core of the uprising. Then he would mobilise the tenant farmers under the wealthy farmers and to a lesser extent, the lower city classes, as the manpower to punish with death "the corrupt officials who afflict and cause hardship to the lower classes" and "the wealthy city merchants who lived in arrogance and luxury". The former were the main target of attack, the latter the secondary focus.

We cannot evaluate Ōshio's revolt solely on the ground of the disturbance within the city which was quelled within a day. Rather, the significance lies in its ideology and its repercussions. For the first time, political criticism was backed by Confucianist learning, albeit the Yōmei brand, and this was supported, also for the first time, by a combination of warriors, farmers and some townsmen. These classes developed separately within the Shogunate society and were completely distinct even in Ōshio's mind. Ōshio's revolt acted as a water-shed. Hereafter, as the lower-grade warrior movement against the Shogunate increased in momentum, they self-consciously incorporated peasant riots in their actions and, due to Oshio's Manifesto, justification for criticism of the *Bakuhan* system was found within the context of Confucianism. The Manifesto had called for a sustained revolt against a hopelessly corrupt *Bakufu*, but if it was not for the military force employed and the political implication it would not have been any more noteworthy than other peasant riots. A mere outbreak of mob violence as in the case of peasant uprisings and rice riots was not a very formidable matter because the authorities could always be relied on to deal effectively with such contingencies. They were easily suppressed even though there may be considerable damage done to property. But Ōshio's was different. It was organised by two-sworded men! There had been thousands of peasant riots during the Tokugawa Shogunate but this was led by samurai who set an example which was soon to be followed in other parts of the country.

The late nineteenth century *History of the Empire of Japan* (1893:346) says, "In the eighth year of the Tempō era (1837), that is to say, in the

latter days of Shōgun Ienari's administration, a police officer (*yoriki*) in Ōsaka, named Ōjyo Heihachirō, collected a force of men and attacked the castle in that city." It speaks of him as "a man of considerable erudition and energy" who had found himself "unable to gain any credit owing to his inferior position" and so he took advantage of the popular discontent caused by a famine and raised the standard of revolt. It says, "This was the first armed disturbance since the Amakusa rebellion two hundred years before. But the government was far too powerful to be shaken by such emeutes." Even though, as a show of strength, Ōshio's revolt was a pathetic failure, it exerted a considerable influence on the society of the day.

Reischauer and Fairbank (1958:633) describe the rioting in Ōsaka in 1837 as taking a "slightly revolutionary turn". Ōshio's revolt differs from all previous *ikki* for it was the first time since the siege of Shimabara exactly 200 years earlier that members of the military class actually made common cause with the afflicted and downtrodden masses. The result was a far more serious disturbance than any that had occurred since that time. The Tempō period was largely epoch-making in the collapse of the *Bakuhan* system and Ōshio's uprising was not just another regional riot; it sought to fulfil a role as a nation-wide rebellion.

5. *The Participants in the Revolt*

The Manifesto, which solicited the co-operation of its readers in the planned revolt, had as its main target the peasants and headmen of surrounding villages, not the townspeople of Ōsaka city. Thus, those who responded to the call and participated in the revolt by running to Ōshio's side when they saw flames in Tenma were almost all peasants. Inui (1979:14) gives the reason why the merchant class in Ōsaka city did not participate in the revolt as "the stable situation in the town community at this time". Because the big cities were rather stable, Ōshio Heihachirō's influence could not penetrate the merchant class. There was a heightening of town community consciousness which seemed to nullify the confrontation which was caused by the difference of their status or wealth. Ōshio saw this situation and so proceeded with his decision to mobilise the outlying farmers. "From the Kasei era to the Tempō period, an alliance developed among the store-owners of each region in order to monopolise business. Such alliances tended to move toward

the self-government of the merchants and, at the same time, they strengthened their self-defence system with the towns." (Inui, 1980:128)

The nucleus of the rebel faction was made up of Ōshio's colleagues, police officials and policemen who were his disciples, and wealthy farmers. Behind them some poor peasants and city poor co-operated in the revolt. The great majority were from nearby villages. Yasuda Zusho, a priest from another province, was an unusual participant. The five main constituent social classes of people who joined Ōshio's faction are enumerated and elaborated on by Okamoto (1975:112-145) but by far the most influential elements were the warriors and farmers. Certainly the ringleaders, who were joint signatorees of the Manifesto and Ōshio's compact and who later were punished for their participation, were twelve warriors, eleven farmers and two others, a priest and a doctor. Surprisingly, out of the twelve warriors, two betrayed and two defected whereas none of the farmers defected from the cause.

According to *Kikitori Fusetsu*, Ōshio had spoken quite widely of his opinions regarding the current political situation. Many in official positions even expressed admiration of his opinions. None of his disciples seemed to be surprised at his plans although Utsuki Yasushi, a samurai of Hikone domain, remonstrated with Heihachirō about them and as a safety measure, before embarking on his revolt, he had Utsuki killed. Obviously, not all of Ōshio's disciples were happy to support the uprising. As we have already seen, Kawai Gōzaemon and other of his best disciples left him at the end of January, while Hirayama Sukejirō betrayed the plan. Ōshio had anticipated that, when he started the revolt in Tenma, people would flock to join the revolt. He thought that once the flames were seen in the country villages, at least 2,000 would join him. "So he thought!" is the critical comment in *Kikitori Fusetsu*.

As preparation, Ōshio had mobilised five cannons of different calibre, of which four were pulled on a chassis. He had personally written the following fourteen names on the respective chassis:

1. Miyawaki Shima, Heihachirō's uncle, a priest of Nishimiya in Suita village, Shimashimo county, Settsu domain; Ōi Shōichirō; Shirai Kōemon, the pawnbroker Furuteya of Moriguchi town, Manda county, Kawachi domain; and Hashimoto Chūbei, the headman of Senjakuji village in Higashinari county, Settsu domain.

2. Seta Sainosuke, a police officer of the East group; Hirayama Sukejirō, a policeman of the East group; and Kashioka Genemon, an elder of Senjakuji village in Settsu.
3. Kondō Kajigorō, son of Nabegorō, a policeman of the East group; Takegami Mantarō, a policeman of the bow commissioner's group; and Takahashi Kyūemon, a farmer of Kadoma Sanban village in Manda county, Kawachi domain.
4. Ōshio Kakunosuke, a police officer of the East group and adopted son of Heihachirō; Shōji Gizaemon, a policeman of the East group; Matta Gunshi, a farmer of Kadoma Sanban village, Kawachi domain; and Nukata Zenemon, a horse-owner of Uematsu village in Itami town.

We can classify these above most trusted people into two groups with the warrior class of police officers and subordinate policemen in one and the farmer class in the other. Of the two, the farmer class was in the majority; they were wealthy farmers who were also village officials that helped in Heihachirō's domestic finances. Many of them also had connections by marriage with the warrior group. Among the names recorded, only Nukata Zenemon belonged to a different class as a horse-owner and freight transporter. Being one of Ōshio's faithful lieutenants and being entrusted with the firing of a cannon made the assertion of Zenemon's last written testimony, that he was unaware of Ōshio's intentions, less than credible.

In his survey of Ōshio's connections and faction in Itami machi, Sakai (1975:33-4) lists the following groups of participants:

1. A group which ought to be regarded as the bourgeois of Itami such as the paper-merchant, Kōgorō, who attended Ōshio's lectures. Strictly speaking, they did not join Ōshio's faction and they regarded themselves as having been cheated by Ōshio into unsuspecting involvement. In Kōgorō's case, it was in harbouring Ōshio's family.
2. The horse-owners as represented by Zenemon and Mohei. They were under guild control, but Sakai (ibid.,34) regarded them as the early stage of the proletariat along with those who were engaged in various kinds of commercial and production work.
3. Those who flowed into Itami and engaged in day-labouring and miscellaneous work whom Sakai regards as "semi-proletariat".

Thus the constituents of the faction which directly participated in Ōshio's uprising generally were police officers and policemen from places like the Ōsaka city commissioner's office, wealthy farmers of the village official class such as Hashimoto Chūbei, and the poor peasants and "semi-proletariat" classes. In their interpretation of history, Marxists expect the "semi-proletariat" to develop into the proletariat of the earliest stage, but there is a gap, which to them is explicable, in the history of Japan. This gap corresponds with Ōshio's time. Sakai sees the proletariat stage as still being far into the future.

Ōshio did not call for the poor peasants directly, but mobilised them through the wealthy farmers who were his disciples, although he did influence the ordinary people through his "samurai-style" almsgiving, that is, from superior to inferior classes. Sakai (ibid., 35) sees the village officials as using "the structure of village control" to mobilise the manpower for the revolt. This probably largely explains why Ōshio focussed his appeal on the peasant masses, rather than the poor townspeople. He did not have the same access to the network of control in the city as he did in the rural areas where he had contact with people like Kōtarō of Kasugae village who were able to recruit the poor peasants of their villages to distribute alms tickets and like Zenemon of Uematsu village who were able to distribute the Manifesto so widely and quickly. Heihachirō was able to do among the rural poor what he was not able to do among the urban poor. Looking at the five constituents in the revolt, we see, in order of involvement:

i) *Lower-Grade Samurai*

The nucleus of the rebel army was composed of warriors, the city police officers and the subordinate policemen who were Ōshio's colleagues. No other warrior joined the faction. But four of the initial conspirators defected. Although there were some small differences in the reasons for defecting, basically their change of heart was due to anxiety about their future, namely a desire for self-protection. This has been revealed in the statement made by Yoshimi Kyūrōemon, one of the two who betrayed their companions and secretly reported the plot to the city commissioner's office. In his statement he said, "Although my position is very low, from the time of my ancestors my family has served the government faithfully without lack and anxiety and I am very grateful to the admin-

istration. Joining the plot was not what I really wanted to do. How could I reciprocate their kindness to me unless I inform the authorities of the plot. It would be to throw away the prestige of the samurai and everything else." This was doubtless the general feeling of the samurai, both high and low, of that time. They were unable to extricate themselves from the inevitably weak position as a dependent class. Although there were some drop-outs by the way, the samurai constituted the executive of the rebel faction with Ōshio holding the various classes together only by his powerful personality and gifts of leadership. It was not a true alliance of warriors and farmers as some later commentators opine. Each class was inspired solely by Heihachirō's personality and gave personal loyalty to him -- they were not committed to each other.

ii) *Wealthy Farmers*

Besides the warrior-disciples of Ōshio's Senshindō, there was a large group of farmer-disciples who came from the neighbouring villages to enrol at Senshindō out of admiration for Heihachirō. The main participants were: Hashimoto Chūbei, the headman of Senjakuji village, Higashinari county in Settsu; Kashioka Genemon, an elder of the same village; Kashioka Denshichi, a farmer whose work was to check on the administration of the same village; Kimura Shimanosuke of the branch family of the headman of Ikaino village, Higashinari county, Settsu; Ueda Kōtarō, farmer of Kasugae village, Higashinari county, Settsu; Shirai Kōemon, pawnbroker and farmer of Moriguchi town, Manda county in Kawachi; Matta Gunshi, farmer of Kadoma Sanban village of the same county; Takahashi Kyūemon, farmer of the same village; Fukao Saijirō, farmer of Sonenji village, Katano county, Kawachi; and Nishimura Risaburō, farmer of Yuge village, Shiki county, Kawachi.

From the outset these were the core of Heihachirō's rebel army, although the actual number of farmer-disciples who participated was much larger. Without exception, they were influential people in their villages, being village officials or belonging to the wealthy farmer-class. For instance, according to careful government scrutiny, Hashimoto Chūbei had been Heihachirō's pupil since he was 14-15. He was an independent farmer who owned his own house and land and who had to pay the amount of 50 *koku* to the government. So he was an affluent farmer, nicknamed "*Hōzuki* Chūbei" because he had gained a great profit through planting *hōzuki* in a

large garden. Kashioka Genemon was also a wealthy farmer who operated a large money-lending market to outcastes who were engaged in the leather industry and also to the neighbouring farmers who grew cotton. Shirai Kōemon combined farming with pawn-brokering and running a second-hand shop and had a great mansion as his residence.

Kimura Shimanosuke at that time was a financial supporter of the Hayashi family. Together with the aforementioned Hashimoto Chūbei and Shirai Kōemon, he bore an enormous amount of the expenses. Besides these, Takahashi Kyūemon was said to act as a financial helper at all times and so he also had considerable financial resources. They were all masters in their villages and did not lack financially. Their study at Senshindō was by no means perfunctory, nor was it limited to a study of the administration of farming villages and agricultural management. They also submitted to Ōshio's severe curriculum at Senshindō. This can be seen from the fact that Hashimoto Chūbei and Kashioka Genemon's names are recorded along with the best warrior students in a list of thirteen graduating students who are listed in Heihachirō's publication of the first volume of *Zōho Kōkyō Ichū* in 1835. It was then quite rare for farmers to be intellectuals acquiring such deep education and culture.

Consequent upon this mingling of wealthy farmers and samurai at Senshindō, a network of intermarriages between the two groups was established as we have already noted. e.g. Chūbei's adopted sister was Heihachirō's wife and his daughter was given to Heihachirō's adopted son, Kakunosuke. Then Shirai Kōemon was a relation of Takegami Mantarō, a *dōshin* of the "bow" group. Shōji Giemon, a *dōshin* who participated in Heihachirō's rebel army, had his origins in a farming household in Uriwari village in Taihoku county in Kawachi and Watanabe Ryōzaemon's wife came from a farming family in Moriguchi town. Okamoto (1975:116) considers that there is a certain danger in judging these men as ordinary farmers. He believes that we can say that the wealthy farmers who were students at Senshindō had psychologically achieved advancement to warrior status and gave absolute trust and respect to their master, Heihachirō, and that they were ready to go through fire and water for his sake. They possessed the true samurai spirit.

As a result, not only Heihachirō, but also his warrior-disciples had a deep link in both the areas of study and kinship with the wealthy farmers

of the neighbouring villages. It is notable also that not one of the farmer-disciples defected from Ōshio. They provided the central strength of the revolt. They were successful farmers in the advanced zone where commercial production of things like cotton, rapeseed, and *hōzuki* was most developed. It was the wealthy farmers like the above who were the most active and influential leaders in the increasing number of protests to the government that occurred during the Bunsei period, 1818-1830. The harvesting, transportation, and sale of their cash crops were under the strict control of the wholesale merchants and guilds of the Tenma greengrocers' market which had the officially recognised monopoly. All green vegetables came under their jurisdiction as did twelve seasonal crops including grapes, black peppers, and *hōzuki*. All transactions were through the market brokers. Outside merchants, that is, those who were not members of the guild, bought from the brokers, free transactions being strictly prohibited. This monopoly pertained to cotton, rapeseed and other commercial crops and thus the farmer-producers were prohibited from buying and selling freely under conditions favourable to themselves.

Though Chūbei is said to have made a fortune through his pioneering the planting of *hōzuki*, he and others, still harboured indignation at the unreasonable privileges of the Tenma market. The producer-farmers were exploited by the intervention of the city merchants who had special rights and monopolies. Like the middle-class and poor tenant farmers, they too were the victims of exploitation at the hands of both the annual feudal taxes and the city merchants. Yet, besides being wealthy farmers holding positions of village headmen, they were often also businessmen and capitalists lending money at high interest. But, as disciples of Senshindō, they devoted themselves to Heihachirō, the "Fan of the Farmers" and imbibed his spirit and discipline.

According to Okamoto (ibid., 119), "From the Genroku period (1688-1704) there was a pedigree of headmen and elders who formed a sixman-clique in the villages. Below this level, there were those called 'masters'; below them again there were the ordinary farmers; still below these, there was the lowest class called 'people of humble rank' who were the pure tenant farmer class." There were sharp distinctions between these four social strata and these distinctions were clearly maintained in the shape of their houses, their form of participation in village government, and in all kinds of ceremonies and formalities. Even at the end of the Taishō

period, in the early 1920's, among the 240 households in Kadoma Yonban village, the composition was three households of the sixman-clique, nine masters, eight independent farmers, and the rest were all people of humble rank (tenant farmers and outcastes). Such severe distinctions of social standing which extended to the whole of life was not just limited to Kadoma, but existed generally in the farming villages on the banks of the Yodo River in the Tokugawa period. This was the area where Ōshio's disciples came from. Okamoto (ibid., 121) sees this social class differentiation as the origin of the riot and he saw it steadily progressing to the stage where these landowners and capitalists worried about the revolutionary uprising of the ordinary farmers. He believes that, as the desperate conditions of the Tempō famine became increasingly worse in the second half of 1836, so the wealthy farmers' fears of the poor farmers arising in their midst increased. As Ōshio's disciples, they had imbibed his zeal as well as his hatred of the corrupt administration and the greedy merchants who sheltered behind their special privileges. Being jostled from below, the wealthy farmers who joined the plot showed a tenacity and solidarity not seen in the samurai band.

iii) *Poor Farmers*

Although the warriors and wealthy farmers were the core of the rebel army, the main numerical strength lay in the masses of poor farmers from the neighbouring villages who ran to Tenma at the outbreak of the revolt. Even though there were less than had been planned beforehand, and far less than expected by Ōshio, about 300 followed their leaders' orders and gathered out of Moriguchi town, Senjakuji and Kaiwake villages. Besides these, there were ten farmers under the command of Fukao Saijirō who were late for the insurrection because of distance. They heard at Moriguchi of the defeat of the riot.

The performance of those who actively participated in the rebellion also fell far short of expectations. It is said that, when Ōshio's party was firing rifles and cannon, his followers felt comfortable, but, when the government side started to return the fire, most became fearful and fled. Some of his followers testified later at feeling uncomfortable carrying firearms and so they dropped their weapons and ran away. When the situation became hopeless, some even changed to the government side! In fact, they had the appearance of a disorderly mob. Maybe this is

understandable given their lack of training and discipline and given the various reasons for their participation, willing or enforced. Doubtless, many ran to join in the uprising in response to Ōshio's command to rush to Tenma to join his forces in fighting against the cruel and corrupt government officials; others joined in solely to spoil the wealth of the covetous merchants; still others came under the fear and threats of their village headmen, while some were cajoled by flattering words into participation and some came because they were deceived into thinking that rebels were attacking Ōsaka and that Ōshio was valiantly resisting the rebels and needed their assistance. For whatever reason, many did not participate voluntarily as being cognisant of the significance of the rebellion. Some came, hearing that Ōshio's residence had been accidentally destroyed in the fire, in order to express their sympathy and found themselves unexpectedly and forcefully being made to take up weapons. Till then they did not know what it was all about and who was fighting whom. They were unaccustomed to holding weapons, whether swords or rifles, and so naturally they were both inept and disorderly. It would have been unrealistic if Ōshio had really thought that, with little preparation and no training, he could have organised the peasant masses into a great fighting force.

Okamoto (ibid., 124) believes the reason why the masses were not permitted to have a voice in the planning before the event was "not because this uprising had to be started earlier than Heihachirō expected, nor was it because of his fearing a leak in secrecy. Rather it was because Heihachirō and his subordinate executives knew that when the peoples' power was concentrated and well-organised their great strength would be directed against the authorities and used in an anti-feudalistic struggle." But Heihachirō only wanted a limited action, not one so large that it would sweep away the whole system. Therefore Ōshio had to be satisfied with preparing just the manpower which could destroy to a limited degree at a given time. The manner of distribution of the Manifesto would not attract the real strength of the masses. He appealed only to certain farmers in certain villages. In actual fact, the call for the poor to participate was merely an appeal to their greed. Their lusts allured them to the city to fall upon the spoils of battle. Although the bulk of those thus gathered were ineffectual as a fighting force, against this there were some who displayed limitless courage and never flinched in the face of the government forces. One such was Ryōshi

Kinsuke from Shimotsuji village. He ran to the fire in Tenma and joined in the insurrection. In the final bombardment at Awajimachi he acted as a sniper for the Ōshio faction and he almost shot to death Sakamoto Gennosuke, the Tamatsukuri police officer who won the highest award of merit on the castle side.

Other than Kinsuke, there were those who fought bravely and were given long-swords, short swords, and lances. Jisaburō, a farmer of Segi village was dragged before the authorities and cross-examined after the uprising on the pretext that he had received alms from Heihachirō. The authorities interpreted Heihachirō's almsgiving as bribing the people into participation in the revolt but Jisaburō responded "Heihachirō was usually giving money to the people and so I did not think it was because he plotted to cause a riot." He felt it was pure charity and refused to yield to the Shogunate's strict questioning and attempts to entrap him. Jisaburō's attitude clearly showed his complete trust in Ōshio and his distrust and hatred towards the feudal authorities. Maybe, if Heihachirō had really concentrated on organising the bravery and sincerity of men like Kinsuke and Jisaburō, his rebel army, even if not ultimately successful, would certainly not have ended in such ignominious defeat. Among those receiving punishment after the revolt were quite a few homeless and day-labourers of the lowest stratum of society. Although Heihachirō mobilised them in his ranks, he was not able to utilise them to the full. This was a further unavoidable limitation that ultimately prevented the success of Ōshio's uprising.

A careful inquiry shows that all of those who did join in the revolt died in prison. Matta Gunshi also died in prison and was posthumously crucified while his wife was confined for thirty days and their ricefields were confiscated by the government and sold. But only three years later nearly half of the old Matta possessions had been retrieved, and the Matta family remained as masters in the village. Thus, of the confiscated land of Gunshi, more than twenty-eight *koku* of ancestral land was bought up by the village in 1840, probably by Heichi Yohei, a relative of the Matta family, and returned to its previous owners. This is evidence of the strong family bonds.

Naturally, with his high regard for peasants, Ōshio had more faith in the villagers than he did in the townsmen and, though his uprising was based

in the city, he looked mainly to the rural villages for backing. However, he fatally overestimated the support he might expect from the countryside. Nukata Zenemon, a horse-owner of Uematsu village in Itami town, participated in the revolt. He committed suicide to avoid being apprehended by the authorities but in his will he testified to being greatly influenced by Ōshio's personality and teaching. He claims that he was asked to distribute the Manifesto without understanding its contents. He really did not realise what he was doing, agreeing only out of respect for, and trust, in Heihachirō.

iv) *Poor City People*

Though Ōshio did not seek to mobilise them, some of Ōsaka's poor townspeople also joined in the revolt. As with some of the poor peasants, participation was forced on them. As casual passers-by, they came across the uprising and were forcibly implicated. Among such there were those who took advantage of the riot to loot like thieves at the scene of a fire. Such had no intention of being of help to the rebels. Eying the opportunity, they deserted in large numbers. But this too was unavoidable given the nature and objective of the uprising. From the beginning, it seems, Heihachirō did not expect anything from the poor masses of the city. He regarded them basically as hooligans who were impossible to save. Maybe their disgusting behaviour on such occasions as *okagemairi* and *okagedōri* in 1830 and at festivities associated with the periodical great river dredging in 1831 was fresh in his mind. Their disorderly carousals and hysterical emotions nauseated Ōshio. Was this the reason why his Manifesto made no appeal to the townspeople to join in the uprising? On top of that, the main objects of his almsgiving were not the city destitute who suffered before his very eyes but were the poor peasants of the surrounding villages. Even if it was impossible to target a wide range of city poor with his almsgiving, we would have to concede that his obvious neglect of the townspeople was discriminatory.

Actually, a considerable number of these poor townspeople in Ōsaka city had their origins in the farming villages and had drifted into the city because of the economic squeeze which made life intolerable for the rural poor, as Heihachirō would be the first to admit. From the Bunka period, 1804-1818, many peasants had left their beloved native places and migrated to the big cities of Edo and Ōsaka in order to eke out a

livelihood. Matsudaira Sadanobu had said, "Because of this (migration), census-taking in rural districts now showed a great decrease in the villages in Kantō. Many areas have become wasteland, and ultimately, in many villages only the village head has remained; the rest have gone to Edo." Maybe to a lesser extent the same was true in Ōsaka. During the Tempō period (1830-1843), it was announced that in Edo a little less than one third of the population of townspeople were those who had their birthplace outside of Edo, and that the ratio of tradesmen's families and servants (employees) in the Minami district of Ōsaka was 30.8% in Kikuya chō and 29.5% in Komeya chō.[4] Even if all employees were not born in other districts it would be fair to say that the vast majority of the day-labourers and servants in Ōsaka city had drifted in from outlying rural areas. Many of these had just disappeared from the official records when they left their native regions. According to *Uge no Hitokoto*,[5] "From 1780 on, the population decreased in all provinces by 1,400,000 people. The reason for this decrease was not death, but just that they left their native places in the country and wandered from place to place, either becoming mountain monks, homeless, or migrating to the cities without being recorded in official registers." The more fortunate among them in Ōsaka settled in the slums of Tamatsukuri and Nagamachi and found menial employment in small manual industries such as oil-extracting and *sake* manufacturing. In this way a large number of rural people unofficially lived in Ōsaka city. They were not hooligans as Ōshio claimed, but honest-working, poor, rural people who were driven to the cities by the economic stringency of life in the farming villages. This was not their fault, rather it was the responsibility of the feudal ruling class. The impossibility of a viable livelihood on tenant farms under the penal tax system of the Shogunate had made their lot intolerable.

Irrespective of whether the poor townspeople were city or country-born, life was harsh for them. The small merchants with no special privileges and the craftsmen worked hard and without respite from dawn till past dusk. Apprentices, shop boys, and maids were driven hard day and night while day-labourers sweated for a mere pittance and, because there were many days when there was no work, they lived below subsistence level. Consequently their vitality was sadly eroded. The city-born poor had no

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[4]Figures quoted by Okamoto, 1975:131.
[5]*Uge no Hitokoto* quoted by Okamoto, ibid., 132.

advantages, inheriting only ancestral poverty. In all, their circumstances were pitiful, and there was absolutely no hope of bettering their situations.

Okamoto (1975:134) gives the example of Sakubei, a carpenter of Tenma's Kita chō who was coerced into joining the rebel army. He was grieved by Ōshio's classifying all townspeople as "hooligans". Sakubei had been summoned to Ōshio's residence in January to do some work manufacturing rods and fire darts to shoot into houses. According to his testimony, regardless of whether he agreed or not, he was drawn into the ranks of the rebel faction even though he had no personal interest in Heihachirō's scheme. It was the night before that he heard for the first time of the almsgiving and early on the morning of the 19th, from the sound of the uproarious clamour at Ōshio's house, he learned of the plan to revolt. But, forgetting his resentment at being included as a faction member, he decided to throw in his lot with Heihachirō, whether in life or death, and stayed with him until the defeat at Awajimachi. He showed to Heihachirō that townspeople could be stubborn and loyal and so underlined Ōshio's error in despising them and not trying to mobilise their strengths in his cause. Not being called to arms was doubtless the reason why they were no more than "a mob of spectators" and "thieves at a fire". Heihachirō's estimate of them as "hooligans" thus became a self-fulfilling prophecy. His doubts concerning worthwhile support from the urban masses turned out to be entirely justified but, with their history of *uchikowashi*, the townspeople of Ōsaka could have proved a powerful ally to Ōshio. In the city itself Ōshio's supporters consisted mainly of the paupers and outcastes who belonged to the very bottom of the socio-economic scale. They probably felt they had little to lose and something to gain by joining the revolt.

v) *Outcastes* (*Burakumin*)

The genealogical origin of the outcastes can be traced back to the subordinate people and the serfs in the middle ages, and even to ancient times. With the establishment of feudal authority, the villages were constituted with a system of strict social divisions in order to control the masses. In Tokugawa times, the *Bakuhan* system was organised on the basis of the fixed social distinction of warriors, farmers, artisans and merchants. It was a system of despotic control which was a powerful weapon in controlling the masses.

Even though there had been a large scale mobilisation of outcastes planned, it seems that only a section of the outcastes of Senjakuji and Nagiu villages actually participated in the revolt. It goes without saying that outcastes were at the very base of the strict social system. Simply because Heihachirō attempted to mobilise them in his plot is no real reason for regarding him as a great pioneer of liberation as some have done. Even though Heihachirō may have spoken often of the liberation of the outcastes, his detractors would say that it was nothing more than a cunning strategem on the part of a member of the feudal ruling class taking advantage of their fierce desire for liberation and using their stout fighting spirit in his own cause. All he really looked for was their limitless self-sacrifice. Okamoto (1975:137) interprets Ōshio's plan as the exact opposite of liberation for he was "the faithful defender of the feudal order".

The outcastes were chained at the very bottom of the feudal system and were the lowest on the social scale that the ruling class had unmercifully created. Among the outcastes some were so ranked because they were beggars (*hinin*) and others because they were criminals. They are usually lumped together with *eta* and *hinin*, but in reality there is a definite difference in social standing between the two groups. Although the way back from this low social status to that of an ordinary citizen is narrow, it is possible for a *hinin* whose feet were regarded as dirty to be washed clean as *ashiarai* (feet-washing). But, to outcastes proper, the path was completely closed. There could be an ebb and flow in the population of *hinin* from age to age and so it was impossible to calculate the exact number. On the other hand, outcastes could gradually increase and, under inferior conditions, they were forced more and more into a deeper degree of impoverishment and restrictions. Thus, through the possibility of *ashiarai* and *ashinuki*, from the social status point of view, *hinin* had a slight feeling of superiority over the outcastes.

The ruling class made a distinction between the outcastes in order to make them mutually jealous of each other and so devised a strategy of "divide and rule". If even the lowest-ranking peasants and poorest serfs (*senmin*) had no human rights, we can imagine what treatment the outcastes received. But the more the poor peasants were exploited, the more they were treated like outcastes. The Shogunate continued its policy of vigorously enforcing the exploitation of the peasants. A regulation had

been issued in 1699 that in Shogunate domains the clothing and other items for *eta* should be similar to those for the farmers except somewhat simpler and cheaper. Thus the only pride and comfort the poor peasants had vis-a-vis the *burakumin* was in being able to call themselves "honourable farmers". In all other respects they were treated similarly. The "divide and rule" policy of the Tokugawa rulers was truly detestable.

Outcastes were coerced into a life of extreme hardship and poverty. Even the majority of those living in country hamlets had no land at all. The great majority of those who did, only had a thin strip of extremely poor land. However poor their standard of living, there was no way in which their land could sustain their livelihood. Increasingly, even the average farmers could not make a living from the land and finally they had to resort to the illegal recourse of absconding from their native land and become *chōhazure* (lost to the record). The numbers of such increased in spite of a law which forbad farmers from leaving their land. The law proved ineffectual in restraining farmers for there was a mere thirty day period of investigation and if their whereabouts was not found during that period the search was discontinued, they were excluded from the census register and listed as *chōhazure*.

But the case of outcaste absconders was different. The thirty day search was repeated six times, the so-called *rokujinhō* being invoked, and if they still were not found they were known as *eitazune* (eternally wanted). They were regarded as felons and if apprehended, they were heavily penalised. A system of "*eta* hunting" was repeatedly carried out to search for outcastes who had managed to abscond and mingle with ordinary people. The Tokugawa system bound them inexorably to their *buraku* (outcaste hamlets). In spite of the fact that the nation's total population in the second half of the Tokugawa period stagnated between 30-32 million, outcastes were the only social grouping that showed an exceptionally steady rise in numbers.

They were completely hindered from escaping into the free society, being limited solely to their *buraku*, and even there they were packed so tightly that, with their limited resources, they became increasingly impoverished. They were despised by all and, of necessity, were restricted to such work as hides, sandal and wick manufacture, and serving as executioners. Their very poverty incurred still greater

discrimination against them. But even those outcastes who managed to become wealthy could not escape discrimination. There were instances of wealthy outcastes in Chōshū who were given the status of carrying lances through raising money for the domain. Then there was Taikoya Matabei of Watanabe village in Ōsaka of whom it was probably correctly said that he had the social standing of about 700,000 *ryō*, that his storehouse was full of rare Japanese and Chinese articles, and that he also had seven or eight beautiful concubines. Even so, he could not escape from the discrimination against outcastes. Popular opinion still criticised the Chōshū domain for "illegal affairs" and Taiko Mata's luxury was disdained as "the presumption of the *eta*".

In 1831 there was a great riot in Bōchō, the two provinces of Suō and Chōshū, in which peasant rioters attacked *burakumin* (outcastes) because of the envy that the ordinary farmers felt against them on account of their economic power equalling and even surpassing their own. They complained that "the farmers who produced the rice, can eat rice only several times a year, but *eta-hinin* eat plenty of the better quality rice all through the year." So under the "divide and rule" policy both poverty and wealth were causes of discrimination and resentment. Such was the extreme sense of superiority that the other classes had against outcastes.

Naturally, outcastes did their utmost and continued their desperate endeavours to extricate themselves from their hopeless circumstances. Watanabe village on the Southern outskirts of Ōsaka was contiguous with Nanba and Kizu villages and was regarded as the *buraku* connected to Ōsaka's three districts. In the latter part of the Tokugawa period it had a population of between four and five thousand. It was nicknamed the "official *buraku*" because, in spite of being of the lowest rank under the city administration, they still performed government-related work such as re-covering the drums belonging to Ōsaka castle, pulling out the dead bodies floating in the castle's outer moat, the disposal of dead bodies from city streets, punishment in prisons, the disposal of arsonists, public crucifixions to deter crimes, as well as acting as coolies for the fire-brigade to fight fires within the city. Even outcastes of other villages were sent to Watanabe village for execution when they had committed crimes. These above services were carried out through the sponsorship of two *buraku* elders. These elders were "rewarded" by the

Shogunate for their official services. Okamoto (1975:143) notes, "After 1733, they placed urine tubs in the streets, under the eaves of houses, and in other places throughout the three districts of Ōsaka. The money gained from selling this urine as fertiliser to the neighbouring farmers was their reward." Certainly a rather piddling tribute! Naturally the outcastes who performed these essential services could not exist by this means. Their principal work was in the leather industry. The leather merchants of Watanabe village yearly received about 100,000 cow and horse hides from Gokinai (the five provinces around Kyōto), Saigoku, Chūgoku and San'in. Taiko Mata and other merchants became wealthy through the manufacture and sale of leather goods. Undoubtedly Taiko Mata was the kingpin, but for people like him to amass such great riches many other outcastes were exploited and were ground down in poverty and despair.

Heihachirō doubtless had had cause to appreciate the value of the outcaste fire-fighter coolies on the occasion of a big fire which spread towards his house in July 1834. His residence barely missed being burnt down because he took one hundred such workers to protect his house. It is said that the foreman of the coolies in Watanabe village was tardy in response to Ōshio's summons and, because he was not in time for the uprising, he was roundly reprimanded by Heihachirō for his lateness and was abusively scolded for his ingratitude. Heihachirō was obviously angry that his expectations of their co-operation were not fulfilled. This incident is quoted by Okamoto (ibid., 144-5) as further evidence of the exposure of his true intentions regarding the liberation of the outcaste villages. But his evaluation of Ōshio's motives seems to be rather severe as certainly Ōshio was going to bat for them as well as for the poor in general. But, whatever Heihachirō's intentions towards the outcastes were, the *burakumin* undoubtedly trusted him deeply and respected him as a most helpful friend who openly spoke of their liberation. So, seeing flames of fire leaping above Tenma, some of their number ran to Heihachirō's residence. However, the reason for their not joining the rebel army or being directly mobilised and organised beforehand was the same as the case of the poor peasants and urban poor.

Outcastes fighting bravely on both sides showed that they had neither strong leadership nor a set strategy but it alarmed the warriors to see them excelling their own employees in courage and dedication. This shows that they were fighting with the same goal of liberation in mind.

Kitajima Masamoto (1966:425) quotes Ōshio as saying that "by treating the despised and oppressed *burakumin* like human beings he could make them into staunch allies who would gladly give up their lives for the cause."

6. *The Failure of the Revolt*

In *The Nobility of Failure*, Ivan Morris (1975:186) writes:

> "In the life of the Japanese failed hero, there usually arrives a moment when he suddenly realises that his early upward course of success has reached its limit and that from this point forward the emotional logic which determined his career -- the sincerity, the courage, the refusal to compromise with the evil forces of reality -- will ineluctably plummet him to defeat and disaster."

Staring this moment of truth in the eye, Ōshio drew on his inner resources of will that enabled him to hold firm till the end. Surrounded by a handful of his associates, Ōshio sat at the end of Naniwa bridge eating a riceball while surveying the flaming city across the bridge and hearing the roar of government cannon. As the situation became more hopeless he withdrew to a new position, and, though by now the outcome was beyond doubt, the battle continued even after the great drum sounded retreat. But before long they were dispersed by troops from the garrison.

Ōshio's large peasant army did not materialise. According to Kōda (1942:258), the volume of silver that they confiscated at Kōnoike alone was 40,000 *ryō* or 160 *kamme*, a prohibitive amount for the vanguard to bear away. The hundreds of swords that had been distributed to the townsfolk were used to sack silk and *sake* shops rather than to support the battle against *Bakufu* troops. Without his huge spontaneous army, Ōshio's party was no match for the government forces. In spite of all the gunfire and vehement activity, no casualties were inflicted on the government side. If Ōshio expected his efforts to be successful, it would certainly not be through rational strategy, but through the persuasive powers of a purely moral act.

The leader of the revolt perished in the flames; the men who had betrayed him were promoted; the corrupt officers and greedy merchants continued to flourish. Meanwhile thousands of the inhabitants of Ōsaka suffered harshly as the result of the fire and of the epidemic that shortly ensued. Though the famine came to an end, the condition of the poorer townsmen remained precarious. A contemporary chronicler wrote, "Last

year those who were hunted down by famine have fallen to the status of beggars, good-for-nothings. They came and went, not being able to tell night from day, plaintively calling out with tears in their eyes. Most of them have disappeared through death, it seems, because the number of beggars has greatly diminished." Thus Ōshio's rebellion ended as an unmitigated fiasco. The main participants were hunted down by the Tokugawa law and order forces and their lives were terminated in various painful ways and the misery of the populace was not alleviated one iota by the sacrifices of Ōshio and his followers.

i) *Ill-Planned*

Ōshio's rebellion was fated to end in failure. It lacked meticulous planning and adequate support. It was a manifestation of Ōshio's own conviction that "action is its own reward". It was intuitive action which, at the most, could only expect others to be propelled into similar action. It gave expression to his frustrations but did not accomplish his political objectives. "Clearly, Ōshio's structure of ethical ideas could permit him to relate thought to action, but not action to strategic organisation. This was fatal to his cause." (Najita, 1970:174) Heihachirō despised religious organisations and so made no attempt to seek their support. He also did not try to seek the patronage of any daimyō as this was contrary to his code of ethics. Nor did he consider establishing a coalition of farmers and merchants.

Although Ōshio regarded himself as a man of action and an efficient organiser, he was unable to conceive a unified strategy and neglected practical details. Owing to poor organisation even his simple plan to destroy records in village offices was not effected. Besides, he seems to have had only vague ideas about how to proceed if the insurrection should succeed. Ōshio certainly had not prepared any contingency plans in case of failure. He just concentrated on what he considered to be right philosophical principles and neglected the practical, mundane details necessary to accomplish his purpose. Pertinently, Abe Makoto (1951:276) points out that "Yōmeigaku is not so much a philosophy of action as a philosophy of failure in action". Followers of the Wang Yang-ming doctrines, he feels, were more eager to assert their own wills than to follow things through to a conclusion. Sincerity of purpose took precedence over realistic planning. Heihachirō scorned any practical

compromise of his principles that may have ensured the support of powerful anti-*Bakufu* elements.

Ōshio's inadequate planning is nowhere seen more clearly than in his over-optimistic assessment of his rank-and-file supporters. A basic part of the strategy was to seize the warehouses of the rich merchants and release the hoarded grain and wealth to the poor. But the rabble that broke into the Mitsui, Kōnoike, and other warehouses made no attempt at organised distribution of the loot; each grabbed what he could carry and fled. Many of the mob broke into wine stores and drank themselves silly, thus rendering themselves even less effective as a fighting force. This was not the standard of conduct that the upright Ōshio had expected from his followers. It must have been a bitter blow to him when he realised that these were the very people that he was attempting to save by his action. Though the initial vacillation of the authorities gave Ōshio a few hours of unchallenged success, the weakness and disorganisation of his forces and the failure of the expected peasant support to materialise doomed his revolt to defeat.

ii) *Defeat*

When it came to the actual fighting, Ōshio's men proved remarkably inept in the use of firearms and cannons. It was inconceivable to Heihachirō that the fighting ability of the poor farmers would be so disappointing. But how could it have been otherwise seeing they had never previously been allowed to carry weapons, let alone have any experience in their use? With a unit of several hundred, comprising warriors, farmers, and lower-class townsmen, they crossed swords with the military strength of the commissioner's office and Ōsaka castle. They were defeated after occupying the city for several hours. Ultimately they were overpowered by sheer weight of numbers rather than by the fighting prowess of the authorities. Sansom (1931:527) calls it a "pitiful uprising". But in the process both city commissioners suffered the ignominy of being thrown from their horses in the middle of Tenma as their mounts shied and bolted at the sound of cannon and rifle-fire. This caused great consternation among their men and evinced great ridicule from the bystanders, providing the material for many malicious jibes among Ōsaka's townsmen. It also proved one of the few delights in a disastrous day for the Ōshio faction. But once the Shogunate forces rallied, Ōshio's party, which was nothing

more than a disorderly mob, could only mount two small-scale gun battles at Uchi Hiranomachi and Awajimachi. The peasants and townspeople who followed Ōshio began to scatter and the faction collapsed once the cannon on which they had relied were sniped at. The morale was further greatly shaken by the death of their chief cannoneer who was shot down by *Bakufu* gunfire. On Atobe's orders, his head was severed, fixed on the end of a spear, and paraded through the streets of the city as a grisly warning of the fate awaiting rebels.

The massive support that Ōshio expected from the nearby villagers did not eventuate and the townspeople to whom he distributed weapons had been more inclined to use them for pillaging coins and looting *sake* warehouses and silk shops than for confronting government troops. By evening they had been completely routed and dispersed in all directions leaving their weapons scattered on the roadside. The rebel army could not hold out even for one whole day! The turning point in the battle occurred at about 4 p.m. when Ōshio, realising that his strategy had gone astray, ordered his men to escape while there was still time. The day was lost!

Details concerning the supreme commander of the Ōsaka castle and of the forces at his command can be found in *Ukiyo no Arisama VII* (1970:432).

At the beginning of 1837, Ōshio would have been regarded as a success; scholar, police official, and gentleman-samurai, he epitomised in his career all that was most respected by contemporary society. "Ōshio Heihachirō had a record as an official of the Ōsaka Shogunate commissioner's office and a name as a Yōmei scholar but raised a rebellion in order to rescue the people who were suffering from successive years of famine." (Ienaga, 1973:170) In a brief day he experienced a sudden and complete change of fortune. The ideal official had fallen from grace, certainly in the eyes of officialdom if not before the people. Twenty-three of the rioters were captured or found dead by Shogunal forces. Those who set out to "save the people" were systematically hunted down and killed. Only one lived through the torture to hear his verdict at the trial in Edo.

iii) *Fire*

After setting fire to his own residence Heihachirō had advanced into Ōsaka with his comrades, setting up banners invoking the gods, firing

shots and distributing leaflets. They attacked Tōshōgū and Tenma shrines with guns. The great merchant houses, Kōnoikeya, Tennōjiya, Hiranoya and Masuya were set aflame with guns shooting flaming arrows and primitive hand grenades. Some 300 men of modest status joined the conspirators, setting fire to several whole districts and ultimately destroying 18,000 houses, 1,100 godowns and five bridges before the flames were quenched the following evening. The fires that raged for two days incinerated at least one fifth of the huge city, particularly the section occupied by the large merchant houses. Gold and silver coins were looted from the merchants' shops for distribution among the poor. Fires were set in many places throughout Ōsaka as the rebel troops advanced on the Ōsaka castle.

At first the citizens of Ōsaka were nonplussed about the whole affair. With the passing of hours, the flames, fanned by the South-westerly, spread in all directions and showed no signs of diminishing. As the insurgents crossed the main river and moved towards the harbour, they burned everything on the way. Great confusion enveloped the city and the rumour circulated that the perpetrator of the disturbance was the same Ōshio who had so recently given alms to 10,000 poor people. The fire which burnt such a large area of Ōsaka city was, in later generations, called "Ōshio's fire". The fierce conflagration burnt the whole of Tenma and Senba as well as part of other districts. This had been an integral part of Ōshio's tactics. But, in this, the poor suffered along with the wealthy who were the targets of the attack. The whole city was in confusion as people sought refuge. The damage is shown in this chart of Kawai Kenji (1982:58):

Houses	3,389
Households	12,578
Empty houses	1,306
Warehouses	411
Cellars	103
Sheds	230
Buddhist Seminaries	22
Temples	14
Shrines	3
Other	191
	18,247

In addition, it is estimated that casualties (dead and wounded) numbered more than 270 persons and that 4,000-5,000 *koku* of rice and other grains were destroyed by fire. Consequently, it could be said that Ōshio's revolt, temporarily, further aggravated the state of affairs existing during the Tempō famine.

iv) *Ōshio Heihachirō's Flight*

As hundreds of dazed townsmen wandered through the streets trying to salvage a few remaining possessions from their blazing houses, Ōshio and his companions hurried along the banks of the Yodo River, stopping on occasions only to set fire to the granaries they passed along the way. On reaching the ferry crossing he consigned his scroll of the Manifesto and a copy of his marching orders to the flames before commandeering a boat and escaping downstream to a deserted spot on the other side of the river. The revolt had been crushed after only a half day's actual fighting. Of their flight, Sakai (1975:8) says:

> "After the incident of the 19th February, being mistaken for refugees, fourteen people in Ōshio's faction fled from Ōsaka's Higashi Yokobori to Hachikenya in Ōkawasuji. There were Ōshio, father and son, Seta Sainosuke, Watanabe Ryōzaemon, Sugiyama Sanbei, and then Chūbei, Sakubei, a carpenter of Tenma's Kita Kobata chō, and others. While threatening the boatman, they rode a small boat up and down the river. Heihachirō spoke his last request and ordered that Chūbei and Sakubei land before the rest of the party and convey the order that Yū and the others commit suicide."

Amid the disorder, the two ran to Itami to pass on the message. They arrived at Kōgorō's residence at about 11 p.m. and, in the deep of night, secretly explained Ōshio's verbal request and recommended suicide. Yū and the others at first made the decision to commit suicide, but on pondering the future of the young Yumitarō, she entreated Chūbei, saying, "I'd like to live a little longer", and so being overcome with emotion for his daughter and grandson, he concurred. As a result they decided to flee. Early the next morning, 20th, Chūbei told Kōgorō to pay homage at Nakayama temple and then to return to Senjakuji village. Kōgorō still did not know that Ōshio and Chūbei were connected with the previous day's disaster in Ōsaka. Kōgorō claimed that Ōshio had cheated him by evacuating his wife and family to his place. However, Sakai feels that Kōgorō's claim of having no direct connection with Heihachirō is not true

for there had been quite a good relationship between them. Chūbei's group moved through Nose county and entered Kyōto. "On the 25th they stayed at a cheap lodging house in Yanagi no Bamba, Sanjō Sagaru machi, under the name of Yamada Shichisuke's party from Hara village in Settsu, but on being checked by the Kyōto city commissioner's official responsible for the investigation of travellers' lodgings, they were all arrested on the 27th." (ibid., 9)

Ōshio fled the city with his companions, a band of fourteen whose names are listed by Kōda (1972:203). They headed towards the mountainous regions of the Kii peninsula. In order to give his followers a better chance to make their escape, he ordered them to throw their swords and other weapons into the river and to set off on their own in different directions. Soon he was left with only three companions, his son, Kakunosuke, and two devoted police officers from the East city commissioner's office. There are no historical records of the route followed by the four fugitives as they made their way down the peninsula in freezing weather. One of the police officers who was lagging behind committed *harakiri* rather than slow down the progress of the others. Ōshio acted as his second and chopped off his head. Shortly afterwards, the second officer, who was the young man who had originally warned Heihachirō of the betrayal of the plot, became so exhausted that he sought shelter in a farm house. On waking, he realised that his dagger had been stolen and so the farmer had probably gone to alert the authorities. Consequently, he went out and hanged himself from a tree rather than risk being captured. Yonetani Osamu (1977:38) gives the detail, "On the 21st, Ōshio, father and son, separated from Watanabe Ryōzaemon at Tainaka village in Shiki county, Kawachi, and walked Eastwards to Shingigoe in Anchi village, Takayasu county." This was one way of crossing Ikoma mountain from Ōsaka into Nara.

"Heihachirō scolded and also encouraged Kakunosuke to walk faster as he had a tendency to lag behind." (Mori, 1940:55) In the afternoon of the 22nd they entered Yamato province and around sunset Heihachirō let Kakunosuke buy various things at Minamihata. With dishevelled clothes, they entered a temple just outside the station. Kakunosuke was not surprised when Heihachirō told him to shave his head. About 6 a.m. on the following morning they emerged from the temple wearing hemp clothes in the guise of priests. Thus they made good their escape to Yoshino.

Throughout the strict official investigation that followed the uprising, one by one the conspirators and Ōshio's followers were hunted down by the authorities. Some committed suicide, and others were either arrested or surrendered to the police. Only the whereabouts of father and son could not be ascertained and unease continued throughout the city. Even those who had only been indirectly involved were arrested, although the main purpose of the hunt was to capture Ōshio himself. As a result, the net was spread wider. Many rumours and false reports of sightings only confused the authorities and hindered the search. Futile searches were made in the area around Kyōto and in other regions. Undoubtedly Ōshio could have hidden in the mountainous countryside of Yoshino or Yamato for a considerable time but, after five days, he suddenly decided to return to the city, whether out of curiosity concerning developments in the city since the revolt or, as someone has said, because the sage-hero, with a sense of the dramatic, wanted to die in Ōsaka, the centre of his crusade against injustice. Morris (1975:210) suggests, "perhaps with his apocalyptic sense of mission he sensed it was in Ōsaka that he must meet his fate." According to *Ōsaka no Chōmei* (1977:452), "they finally concealed themselves in the home of a towel merchant, Miyoshiya Gorōbei, of Aburakake machi, Utsubo Shimadōri 2 Chōme, Kii no Kunibashi suji, Higashiire."

So it was that, at dawn one day at the end of February, an aged towel-merchant, Gorōbei, who had for years enjoyed Ōshio's patronage, was awakened by frantic knocking at his gate. Recognising the two mountain monks who were demanding urgent admittance, Gorōbei was in a frightful dilemma. To harbour these most wanted and hunted fugitives invited death upon his whole family, but to refuse would be to violate his obligation to Ōshio which was unthinkable to a Japanese. Heihachirō and Kakunosuke unceremoniously forced their way in. Gorōbei hid them in the detached building which was separated by a garden from the main house and concealed their presence from the whole household except his wife. He and his wife surrepticiously smuggled the essentials to the outlaws for some weeks until a chance comment by their maid concerning the amount of rice that was recently being consumed in the household reached the ears of the authorities. They summoned the fearful Gorōbei and his wife for interrogation and under close questioning they confessed the identity of their guests. Consequently, at dawn on the 27th March, forty days after the insurrection, Uchiyama Hikojirō, a West city police officer, together

with fourteen policemen surrounded the building with a view to capturing father and son alive. However, Heihachirō caught a glimpse of a police officer outside the gate and sensed imminent danger. Being surrounded by Shogunate troops, they resigned themselves to being unable to escape and when challenged to come out and fight, Ōshio set fire to the straw he had laid round the house for such an exigency. As the police force tried to break in, Heihachirō committed suicide, cutting his throat with a short blade. The fierce heat kept the police at bay until the flames subsided and the charred remains of the two outlaws were discovered in the ruins. One opinion is that Kakunosuke hesitated to kill himself and that Heihachirō had first to despatch his son to avoid his being captured alive before ending his own life. (Kōsai Hiki:208) Another account suggests that Ōshio had shouted, "Coward! Coward!" to his son as the police prepared to attack and had to respond by stabbing him to death. If that report is true, it was a sad leave-taking from the son for whom he had felt such affection.

Yonetani Osamu's articles[6] can be consulted for further details for he traces the outline of the course of the battle, the participants, the suppression of the revolt and the course followed by Heihachirō and others in their flight until father and son were ultimately discovered in the home of Gorōbei in Ōsaka's Utsubo Aburakake chō.

v) *Death*

As soon as the fighting was over, the vast power of government repression moved inexorably into action. News about the revolt took a week to reach the *Bakufu* headquarters in Edo but, when it did, Mizuno Tadakuni, the Shogunal councillor, issued instructions that the guilty be hunted down promptly and brought to justice. The commander of the Ōsaka castle ordered that all participants be seized immediately. A close watch was put on all roads and rivers while rewards were offered for the capture of Ōshio and the other main conspirators as the authorities feared further trouble if they were not quickly apprehended. Many of Ōshio's followers, anticipating capture and torture, committed suicide. For instance, when

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[6]Yonetani Osamu, "Ōshio Heihachirōra no Tōsō Keiro -- Ran Saigo no Sentō Kara Miyoshiya Gorōbei taku made" (Parts I and II), *Ōshio Kenkyū*, No.2, October 1976:34-44, and No.3, March 1977:29-41.

Ōshio's uncle, Miyawaki Shima, a Shinto priest who had been deeply implicated in the plot, heard of the approach of the police he tried to disembowel himself. However, the wound was only superficial and so when the police party arrived, he desperately forced his way out of the house and succeeded in drowning himself in a nearby pond.

Ōshio defied the two city commissioners for over a month, concealing himself in the home of the friendly merchant, Gorōbei. Their hideaway being discovered and surrounded, father and son took their own lives by sword and by flame, the former to prevent being captured alive and the latter to prevent subsequent mutilation. Heihachirō died in the manner of time-honoured samurai orthodoxy. As is usual in such circumstances, Heihachirō left a memorial condemning the corruption and neglect of officialdom and their indifference to the welfare of the nation.

The trial of the rebels took place in Autumn 1838. Naturally, the Shogunate condemned Ōshio as a rebel and they sentenced seventeen conspirators, including Ōshio, to the capital punishment of crucifixion. Their corpses had been preserved in salt for the trial and Heihachirō's charred remains were executed posthumously. Applied to warriors, crucifixion was particularly ignominious.

Rai Sanyō,[7] the historian, understood Ōshio's character and discerned what he believed was a belligerence in his ideology when he wrote a poem in praise of Ōshio as a "true child of Yōmei" and then added the thought "I fear only that you will bring misfortune on your extraordinary talent; I pray you sheath your sword after polishing it." Like many another tragic hero, Heihachirō staked his life on a just cause and went down in defeat at the hands of a corrupt bureaucracy and ambitious politicians. Ōshio's violent end was consistent with the ethics he taught and, as Najita (1970:175) says, "In the final sacrifice to the cause of justice for the people he became one with the loyalist sages of the late Ming and with all sages in the Chinese tradition since time immemorial." Why did an able Shogunate official who was extolled as a loyal vassal and who did his utmost to repay the great blessings which had been bestowed on his family for successive generations dare to raise a military insurrection which could only be regarded as treason? The direct cause of the upris-

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[7]Rai Sanyō in *Ōshio Senshin*:469.

ing was without doubt the famine which even the prosperous commercial centre and nation's "kitchen" suffered remorselessly. It had caused immense hardships to the poor, and with his convictions Ōshio could not sit idly by.

The graves of Heihachirō and Kakunosuke are in Jōshōji in Suehiro chō, Kita ku, Ōsaka city which was close by Ōshio's Senshindō. At the time of their deaths Heihachirō was 45 and Kakunosuke 27 years of age.

vi) *Damage and Reconstruction*

The primary direct influence of Ōshio's revolt on Ōsaka city was fire damage. The fire that was lit by the rebels continued burning for two days and spread to 112 blocks in the three districts of central Ōsaka, namely North, South, and Tenma districts. Over 3300 tradesmen's houses were burnt down. The Shogunate encouraged reconstruction by those who could afford it whereas previously in such cases they had restricted public work construction and that had resulted in financial stagnation and hardship for day-labourers.

In May 1837, the authorities issued a notification to the districts which had been burnt: "If you start construction work at this time, it will relax the tension among the mobile seasonal workers and this is a very important strategy." (Ōguchi, 1976:336) In this way they encouraged reconstruction in order to stimulate the restoration of business prosperity. At first there was a lack of day-labourers to help carpenters in construction and so, the month after the revolt, the commissioner's office issued an announcement that there would be no objection against hiring carpenters' and sawyers' day-labourer helpers from outside Ōsaka city. Labourers were brought in even from distant places but, in May, they limited carpenters, etcetera, to those born within the five provinces of Kinai and Ōmi. Building materials also were in limited supply after the great conflagration, with the result that the price of timber and bamboo rose. To combat this, the commissioner's office made it possible for materials to be bought directly from wholesalers whereas formerly they could only be bought from brokers. Because of the sudden increase in demand due to the construction boom, the average market price rose more than 30%. (*Ōsaka Shishi*, Vol.V:663)

Construction not only flourished in Ōsaka, but in Edo also reconstruction began on the *Nishimaru* of Edo Castle which had recently been destroyed by fire. The Shogunate had collected more than 1,300,000 *ryō* from all over the country and invested this in the project. With the concentration of construction workers and materials, Edo became the centre of vigorous reconstruction and public works. As the result of the Shogunate's encouragement of building in these two large cities, the wages of craftsmen and day-labourers also suddenly jumped. Just at this time, the price of rice, which had steadily increased since 1833, fell for the first time and so the artisans' purchasing power increased. But, inevitably, increased consumer demands led to the trend of increased consumer prices in the cities. So, in spite of the stability in the rice price after 1838, there was a sudden rise in all prices.

According to Ōshio's foremost modern admirer, Mishima Yukio (1970:51), "Ōshio Heihachirō's enterprise ended in total failure", for not only did "the injustices that Ōshio had intended to abolish continue unabated, such results as his action produced were the opposite of those intended." It was true that the critical shortage of food in the cities was somewhat alleviated, but this was due more to improved harvests than to any efforts of Ōshio.

vii) *The Punishment of Participants*

Naturally, all those who had participated in the rebellion were punished, and that severely, as also were those who assisted the deserters, such as the couple who gave refuge to Heihachirō and Kakunosuke, even though they themselves were not participants. "Those punished throughout Ōsaka city were those...who supplied gunpowder and the various other weapons and those who cut the woodblocks for the Manifesto. Many suffered capital punishment including some who indicated themselves as "homeless in Ōsaka city". (Inui, 1975:18)

The deaths of Ōshio and his son were followed by an intense investigation into the circumstances of the revolt. An official hearing by the *Bakufu* began in Edo in September 1837, but judgment was not pronounced due to delays in the law. In August 1838, more than a year after the revolt and following a year of close examination, the Shogunate gave the verdict of "The Act of Rebels", handing down the ruling that the dead bodies of the

ringleaders which had been preserved with salt, be carried through the streets of Ōsaka and then crucified. Thus Ōshio was branded a rebel.

The court's verdict reflected the ferocity of the Tokugawa law and those who challenged the establishment were the subjects of gruesome punishment. The supreme penalty of crucifixion was meted out to the twenty who were adjudged as the main conspirators in the uprising. Other participants were sentenced to decapitation, imprisonment, or exile to distant islands. Details are given by Abe Makoto (1951:292f). Gorōbei, the towel-merchant who gave refuge to Heihachirō and Kakunosuke, was condemned to imprisonment which was equivalent to the death sentence for a man of his age. As a mark of special leniency the court decreed that Kakunosuke's infant son, who would normally have been condemned to execution for his father's crime, should simply receive life imprisonment. The court condemned Ōshio for having criticised the government and for having used his position as a teacher to brainwash his followers into staging a revolt. The order concluded, "In view of these nefarious deeds let it be known that the pickled corpses of Ōshio Heihachirō and his son, Kakunosuke, shall be led round for public exposure and shall be crucified in the city of Ōsaka."[8]

As a final disgrace, it was ordered that no tombstone be allowed to mark his burial site lest it become a place of pilgrimage for his admirers. Of the 29 other conspirators sentenced to the heaviest penalties, only five survived to hear the pronouncement of their verdict. Most of the others had died in Ōsaka jail because conditions there were so terrible that prisoners rarely survived more than a few months. "Seventeen of the main offenders had succumbed to ill-treatment in prison and six had managed to commit *harakiri*..." (Mori Ōgai, 1940:83) Only one of the twenty sentenced to crucifixion was still alive when affixed to the cross. The salt-pickled bodies of the rest were paraded through the streets and duly attached to crosses at the Ōsaka execution ground.

The farmers who participated in the revolt were punished as minor offenders with correctional fines as they were regarded as being used without knowledge of the circumstances. After all, there had not been much positive will to participate on the part of the general farmers and

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[8]Kōda, *Ōshio Heihachirō*, 1942:268-270 for a full text of the decree.

the verdict seems to be cognisant of the fact that they scattered and fled before the real battle was engaged. In January 1838, when policemen of the Ōsaka city commissioner's office came to Itami on official business, the townspeople were fearful that Kōgorō would either be re-investigated or have his property confiscated, but they were relieved when nothing happened. The ultimate verdict did not put him into jail but under the town's supervision.

A list of the participants in the revolt and their subsequent fortunes such as arrest, suicide, surrender, and death, etcetera can be found in *Ukiyo no Arisama VII* (1970:433f)

viii) *Rewards*

Besides deciding the punishments of the offenders, the court also rewarded the virtuous. Payments were made to turncoats and informers while a special emolument was given to the hero of the government side, the conscientious police officer, Sakamoto Gennosuke, who had distinguished himself by destroying the rebel cannon. As well, the legal officials were generously rewarded with monetary grants for their arduous investigations and vicious sentences. Many of the records of Ōshio's revolt were recorded by the government officials who tortured suspects and those arrested for their participation in the uprising. The extracted confessions were often misleading as in order to gain a reprieve some falsified details of their testimonies. Consequently, we cannot accept all the findings.

7. *Ōshio's Letters*

In March 1837, the month after the revolt, a broken, plain wooden box was found in the woods beside the milestone in Tsukahara Shindenchi, Nirayama, at the foot of Mt. Hakone, Izu province. Around about were scattered several letters which Heihachirō had written to Okubo Kaga no Kami and Wakisaka Chūmu Taisuke who was the Councillor between 1837-1841, Lord Mito, and Hayashi, the head of the official college. They were wet with dew and rain. Immediately before his revolt, Heihachirō had sent three packets to Edo by courier, but the courier sent by the head of the Ōsaka castle informing the *Bakufu* of Ōshio's uprising had arrived in Edo before him. On the official courier's way back to Ōsaka he had met

Ōshio's courier at Yamanishi. So consequently, it seems that Ōshio's courier abandoned the letters at Nirayama. On their discovery, the official at Nirayama enquired of the *Bakufu* what should be done with them. The reply was that they should be submitted to Edo, as they were, and this was done.

An article by Aoki Michio[9] gives some interesting details of a written report submitted by Egawa Tarōzaemon, an official of Nirayama. Kōda's book also gives a list of Heihachirō's letters that were discovered and the book *Kasshi Yawa*[10] introduces the contents of the letters as evidence of the friendly relations actually existing between Heihachirō and Hayashi Jussai. Aoki (1984:137) critically states, "Although Kōda guessed the contents of these letters based on a study of *Kasshi Yawa* and paid attention to the fact that these letters were addressed to the *Bakufu* cabinet ministers and to the officials of the Mito Tokugawa family, he did not analyse them any more." If letters discussing current politics were addressed to people in the *Bakufu* cabinet who had great influence in Shogunate politics at that time were included in their documents, we can understand the interest in their contents. When rumours about these secret messages and the contents leaked to the daimyō and to the public, it was a matter of great concern. As a result it seemed to people that there was some kind of relationship between Ōshio and several prominent personalities such as Lord Mito, all the more so because just at that time rice had reached Mito from Ōsaka. There had even been a suspicion that the Mito Tokugawa family might have been sheltering Heihachirō although this rumour obviously subsided when his whereabouts was discovered in Ōsaka. The daimyō to whom Heihachirō's letters were addressed were especially surrounded with suspicion concerning their links with the perpetrator of the uprising. Thus, it was natural for them to want to know the contents of the documents. These rumours were probably the reason why Lord Mito indicated such strong interest in the contents of the secret letter and expressed to Egawa Tarōzaemon his desire to see them as soon as possible.

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[9]Aoki Michio, "Hakone Sanroku Zūshū Tsukahara Shinden de hakken sareta Ōshio Heihachirō Kankei Shojōrui", *Kenkyū Kiyō No. 59*, 1984:135-227.
[10]*Kasshi Yawa* was written by Daimyō Matsuura Seizan in 1821 after 20 years in writing.

IX. *Ōshio's Influence on History*

Although Ōshio's revolt was suppressed within a day, it attracted nation-wide attention because of the fact that it occurred in Ōsaka, the directly controlled *Bakufu* commercial centre and also because of Heihachirō's scholarly reputation and fame in his former position as an official of the Shogunate. Its influence was thus very considerable. Even after Ōshio's death, repercussions were felt throughout the country. His Manifesto which was the most advanced political document of the period was distributed widely. Concerning the Manifesto, Norman[1] notes:

> "After reviewing the widely detested abuses of the Tokugawa rule it shows a real understanding and sympathy for the position of the common people with a simple programme for the remedy of wrongs. The humanity of this document is such that it embraces within its appeal even the *eta*, the outcastes, the most despised community of the country with whom good citizens avoided all social contact."

In 1837, Ōsaka was the commercial centre, seaport, and the money mart which enjoyed considerable economic significance in Tokugawa Japan. Though the centre of economic and cultural activity had steadily shifted to Edo, Ōsaka retained its prestige as the Western market city. There, Mitsui, Kōnoike, and other huge merchant houses grew steadily in wealth and power. If conditions in Ōsaka became disrupted there certainly would be national repercussions. Reports of the incident had immediately spread throughout the whole country and, as all the people had long been suffering under an oppressive government, eyes were turned still more critically towards the *bakuhan* system. This led to further anti-Shogunate actions by those who claimed to be "Disciples of Ōshio" or "The Remnants of Ōshio's Faction". This shows how widespread and serious his influence was. Speaking of the impact, Lehmann (1982:75) says, "Ōshio Heihachirō remained a legendary figure in the popular Japanese pantheon."

Ōshio was a complex, controversial figure, an idealist who sympathised with the distressed of society, and yet was cruel to his own family and followers. Nevertheless, on the failure of his plot and his dramatic suicide, he was instantly elevated to the status of hero. And like most heroes, his virtues have been idealised and his shortcomings forgotten by

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[1]E.H.Norman, quoted in Dower (Ed.), 1975:386.

his admirers. Though his life and career ended in disaster, Heihachirō was not allowed to die; he has continued on as a legendary hero. One legend even credits him with escaping to China and being "transmogrified into Hung Hsiu-chu'an" (Morris, 1975:183) and leading the disastrous Taiping Rebellion.

Mishima Yukio pointed out that Ōshio's continued fame and prestige in Japan are due, not to his official career or even to his scholarly achievements as these would have been quickly forgotten, but to the action he took in pursuance of his ideals, even though it was an action that was totally unsuccessful. Although easily suppressed, Ōshio's revolt inflicted immense damage and further agitated the people as well as exerting various influences on Ōsaka after that. Ōshio sincerely believed that the structural crisis of the *Bakufu* could have been avoided simply by providing benevolent feudalistic government. Let us look now at some of the effects of Ōshio's revolt.

1. *On the Economy of the Times*

Due to the fires burning for two days, rice transactions ceased for the 19th-20th February at the Central Rice Market in Dōjima. Although details on the effect of this closure are at best sketchy, it is thought that its influence throughout the whole country was considerable. The fire, naturally, destroyed large amounts of rice and other commodities that were already in short supply because of the famine. They became even more scarce now. For that reason when the Dōjima rice market opened again on the 21st February, the price of rice which was 170 *momme* in January and 188 *momme* at the beginning of February jumped immediately to 224 *momme* and it kept on increasing until it peaked in June at 396 *momme*. As well, the prices of general commodities suddenly leaped to a frightening degree. The pathetic condition of the poor throughout the city had been aggravated rather than alleviated by the insurrection.

The following table[2] indicates the movement in rice prices per one *shō* of polished rice from 1834-1838.

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[2]Table of rice prices during the Tempō period as cited in Kawai Kenji, "Ōshio no Rango no Ōsaka Shisei ni tsuite", *Hisutoria No.94*, 1982: 59, taken from *Ōsaka Shōgyōshi Shiryō* Vol.II.

Date	*Price*	*Date*	*Price*
January 1834	154 *mon*	January 1837	170
February	158	February (beginning)	188
March	164	21st (a.m.)	218
April	170	21st (p.m.)	224
May	180	22nd	232
July	132	23rd-24th	240
September	110	25th	250
December	100	March 9th	256
January 1835	84	12th	258
September	140	end	260
April 1836	124	April (beginning)	264
August	164	(end)	270
September	178	May	284
November (mid)	150	June	396
November (end)	180	July (end)	260
		January 1838	130

The upward movement in rice prices after the revolt is obvious from this table. Ōshio's Manifesto appealed for the relief of the destitute but in reality, the revolt, initially at least, had the opposite effect, bringing about a sudden leap in the price of rice, as temporarily it hindered commercial activity. But, in the long run, it gave greater impetus to the commercial function of Ōsaka which had been stagnant for some time. During the long Tempō famine, economic activity was sluggish and that had agitated the poor and increased their anxiety. But, after the revolt, the economy was stimulated in two main ways. First, whether it was direct or indirect, through the government or merchants, various relief measures were implemented. Secondly, through the policy to rebuild the city, work was provided and materials were required in a greater amount than for many years.

Popular feeling was agitated after the revolt with many young people joining gangs and breaking into wealthy merchants' residences. Such movements demanded almsgiving and tended to develop into "smashings". The crisis conditions called for relief schemes and relief huts were established as a famine countermeasure. Recognising that many were now not only poor and unemployed, but also homeless, the authorities invited

the poor who had no relatives or anyone upon whom to rely to come to the Dōtonbori theatre where some assistance would be given. (Kawai 1982:59) Naturally, many destitute frequented it and it is reported that in one day more than 2,000 people alone came to Dōtonbori seeking relief. But such small-scale relief was far from adequate. Doubtless Dōtonbori was chosen as an emergency expedient because it was a suitable facility that could accommodate a large number. However, in order to be more effective, the strategy was changed and other relief huts were established in various parts of Ōsaka that were more accessible to the destitute such as Tenmabashi Minamizumi Higashimoto Sakaimachi, Tennōji, and Tenmabashi Kitazumi. The management of these was committed to the three districts of North, South, and Tenma respectively. The significance of this strategy is that not only were the sheds convenient for the poor, but also each district could participate in the relief of those suffering hardship and the financial burden of their management was shifted to the townspeople thus reducing management expenses.

A grant of 2,000 *koku* of relief rice was also released from Dōi Osu no Kami, the warden of Ōsaka castle. It had previously been granted in order to cope with the Tempō Famine but its implementation had been delayed. Now Ōshio's revolt had spurred its speedy enactment! The response of the authorities to the relief of the destitute was seen by townsmen, who were dissatisfied with the Shogunate administration, as being clearly the result of Ōshio's revolt. Before the revolt there had been a very negative response by the Shogunate to the famine. Now, even if countermeasures were devised after the revolt, their scale was far too small. The people could discern in this an alarming lack of spontaneity and thus, a lack of concern for the distressed. Social unrest increased after the revolt as, on top of the famine and fire damage, there was a sudden jump in commodity prices and increased unemployment. Consequently the number of people whose livelihood was precarious had increased.

Because the list of donors and the amounts of their donations were printed and circulated throughout the city, it exerted considerable moral pressure on the affluent to give alms. Even though they may not feel any personal compunction to give alms, the situation was created whereby they could not refuse to offer a suitable amount! In this way the ruling authorities levied a series of relief measures on the wealthy merchants.

The second stimulation to the economy, as mentioned above, was the reconstruction of the city. This was not a relief strategy, but was part of the financial policy to encourage building and thus provide employment. After the 1834 fire in Ōsaka no concerted attempt at reconstruction was made with the result that carpenters, labourers and others had little work, and, as the famine increased the people were further impoverished. But now, after Ōshio's fire of 1837, the city commissioner's office gave positive encouragement for rebuilding and, through the active programme of home reconstruction throughout the city, it exerted an influence on the economy. Whereas the commercial function of Ōsaka had recently stagnated, particularly after the 1834 fire, now it began to regain its commercial viability and importance. The rebuilding programme was important from this standpoint alone. But it also acted as an effective countermeasure to unemployment. It provided a livelihood for many workers and thus obviated the necessity of relief for them.

Another effect was seen in that the demand for labour raised the position of labourers on the labour-market which, in turn, led to an increase in wages for labourers. Before the revolt there were little or no opportunities for actual work. Now impoverished people could find work at higher wages. Again, the heightening of the demand for labour not only made the position of labourers more advantageous, it also brought a radical change into the labour world. Labour movements by carpenters and other artisans began to aim at an improvement in labour conditions.

Seeing the commissioner's office also made strenuous efforts to restrain prices after the revolt, together with a better autumn harvest in 1837 and the renewal of the economy through the policy of reconstruction, the price of rice quickly reverted to a more normal amount. Supplies of materials which had stagnated previously were stimulated by construction and a positive countermeasure was taken to check price increases. In order to continue reconstruction there had to be a steady supply of materials and labour. One strategy that was later included in the Tempō Reform was the abolition of monopolies, but in the meantime, after Ōshio's revolt, stock companies were restricted in number.

2. *On the Society of the Day*

The poor inhabitants of Ōsaka certainly derived no immediate material benefit from Ōshio's insurrection, the main result of which had been the

incineration of their dwellings and meagre belongings. In spite of this, they regarded him as their champion. Though his plans failed, he became a cultural hero. According to Kitajima, (1966:426) "they would secretly copy his Manifesto and use it for practising calligraphy." This was a very popular pastime at this time in Ōsaka. Those who search for historical data in old houses in the Ōsaka area often still find copies of the Manifesto that have been diligently used as a model of calligraphy. Nor was this duplication and distribution performed solely by the farmers. Shinozaki Shōchiku's case shows that the citizens of Ōsaka also had a great interest in the contents of the Manifesto. Although Shōchiku's and Heihachirō's ways of thinking were poles apart, Heihachirō frowning on Shōchiku as "a Confucianist who loved money" and Shōchiku dubbing Heihachirō's learning as "egoistic Tenma-style scholarship", Shōchiku possessed a wood-block print of the Manifesto. On being sternly questioned about this by the commissioner's office, Shōchiku said it was borrowed from someone called Matabei. On interrogation, Matabei claimed he had borrowed it from Shōzaemon and, one after another, no one claimed ownership. Without doubt all these connected to Shōchiku were wealthy upper-class citizens who, although they enjoyed reading the Manifesto, probably did not agree a hundred percent with its contents. At least it opened their eyes to the criticism of the Shogunate administration. Thus Heihachirō's admirers were not restricted to the downtrodden members of society. He was also much respected by the late Tokugawa loyalist thinkers who, actually quite mistakenly, regarded him as being a dedicated anti-Shogunate revolutionary intent on demolishing the existing political system and restoring the emperor. Najita (1974:55) saw Ōshio's conception of action becoming nationalised and as perhaps of greater importance when he wrote:

> "Ethical 'ideal' meshed with concrete national history and especially with the rhetoric, metaphors, and political imagery that make up a belief in a continuing cultural history. Ōshio's slogan of 'saving the people', with slight rewording, became 'protecting the country'. Ōshio's idealism, then, took on its fullest significance as it was generalised into a concept of action for national survival."

At least one fifth of the people of Ōsaka had their houses burned down and so they had to sleep out in the open air under the winter sky. Unfortunately, their discomfort was aggravated by heavy rain the day following the insurrection. Thus the sufferings of the victims were doubled and because smallpox was prevalent at that time, the sufferings

of the homeless beggars description. Okamoto (1975:153) describes the anguished and groaning voices of the many victims who gathered together in the open space in front of the castle as being so great that they could be heard as far away as Tamatsukuriguchi. Suddenly the commissioner's office had to provide relief.

Once the dead bodies of Ōshio, father and son, had been dragged out of their incinerated hiding-place, the Shogunate, for the time being, could heave a sigh of relief, but the popular feeling in Ōsaka and Kyōto was nervous. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the masses lived in mortal fear. The commissioner's office immediately issued an official notice informing the citizens that Heihachirō and Kakunosuke had burned themselves to death and admonishing the people to be at rest and to work assiduously at their tasks. But the general public feeling was one of unrest which was not likely to settle down so readily in spite of such official notices and admonitions.

Many plausible rumours (ibid., 157) were circulating, such as: the person who died in Aburakake chō was Heihachirō's stand-in and that Heihachirō had escaped to Kyūshū, or again, that he had crossed the sea and was in exile on the continent. So the masses did not propose trusting any notice from the commissioner's office. Moreover, such rumours that Ōshio was still alive were continually on the lips of the wretched masses. For instance, even Watanabe Kazan, who from early on had had considerable admiration for Heihachirō, nine months after his suicidal end wrote in a personal letter to Egawa Tarōzaemon, "A disciple of mine named Watanabe Kōhei in Bōshū (Chiba ken) heard a rumour that Heihachirō was found on an American ship off Bōshū. The local fishermen had heard about it when they were out fishing and Kōhei heard it when he visited that area. This seems to be an extraordinary rumour, but it is too important to ignore, and so I have tried to obtain more information about it. So far I know no more. I wonder if you have heard this story? If you know any facts, please inform me." This shows that many were still very dubious about the theory of Ōshio's death. It is general knowledge that such rumours were fairly universal from the government down to the lowest ranks of people. They had not completely died down even into the next year because, on the 10th March 1838, when a fire broke out in the *Nishinomaru* of Edo castle and reduced many buildings within the castle to ashes, it was also rumoured that Heihachirō was involved. At that time he was

likened to a criminal for causing such an outbreak.

In such an atmosphere, the rumour that "Ōshio is not dead" was continually heard from the mouths of the masses. It probably arose from the fact that the current feeling of the people was that they did not want to believe that Heihachirō had burned himself to death. He represented a spokesman of the deep-seated resentment of the oppressed masses and he had sacrificed himself while publicly dealing a body-blow to the authority of the Shogunate. Because Heihachirō was trusted and revered by the people, their admiration of him after the rebellion increased. His sponsorship of the poor before the city commissioners and wealthy merchants had not gone unnoticed. Nor had his going to bat for them once these appeals had been unceremoniously rejected. In fact, as the people's trust and sympathy towards Heihachirō increased, their distrust and indignation towards the authorities increased. Even Takami Senseki, the commander responsible for Ōshio's arrest, wrote in his diary[3], "About eighty percent of the masses in the Kyōto and Ōsaka areas say they are grateful for a person like Ōshio who was so concerned about society." In fact, surprisingly, even those in Ōsaka who were rendered homeless due to Ōshio's conflagration held no grudges against him. On the contrary, immediately after the event, when the Shogunate offered a reward of 100 silver coins to the person who apprehended Heihachirō, the people of Ōsaka, according to Fujita Tōko[4], are reputed to have said, "Even if the 100 silver coins were 1,000 would anyone accuse Ōshio?"

Doubtless, it was this popular respect for Heihachirō which led to him being made the hero in plays, stories, and musical parodies on sutras immediately after his rebellion. Although the people had to be circumspect in Ōsaka because of the tenseness of the situation, as early as April and May 1837, in Kyūshū, story-tellers weaved Heihachirō into their plots and this became the current rage. From 1838 the entertainment industry used similar plays with Heihachirō as the obvious hero, although out of deference towards the Shogunate, following the *Kabuki* custom, the time of the play was made the Ashikaga Period, and Heihachirō became the faithful retainer Oshio Teihachi; Atobe became Asobe Yamashiro, the evil character who devised the misappropriation of

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[3]Takami Senseki's diary, as quoted by Okamoto, 1975:159.
[4]From Fujita Tōko's *Naniwa Sōjō Kiji* as quoted by Okamoto,ibid.

his employer's house; Kōnoikeya was given his real name of Yamanakaya Zenemon; the wealthy tycoons were lewd and foolish merchants; Uchiyama Hikojirō was Ujiyama Tōsaburō, a Shogunate official, Tōsaburō being Hikojirō's father's name. They were all aliases which everybody would understand. The contents were improvisations without altruism, but they were planned to jolt the sympathy of the masses to the maximum degree. Naturally the play drew huge crowds. Whereas if a normal play ran for twenty days it would be a good performance, when this play began in Shimonoseki, it had record-breaking full-houses for more than 100 days in succession. Such was the popularity of Heihachirō! Spectators came from as far away as ten or twenty miles and more, and it was said that they set out "to see the Ōsaka rebellion."

These same farmers in the Shimonoseki region had engaged in the violent peasant revolt of 1831. The masses exalted Heihachirō as their hero and the popularity of the play clearly indicated the feeling of the times. Little wonder that the pattern of the Ōsaka rebellion was soon known throughout Japan. People made fun of the authorities with such sayings[5] as "I hear that Ōshio fired a cannon in the middle of Senba; the commissioners saw it but did not go out!" Punning on Ōshio's name they ridiculed Atobe, "All of a sudden the 'big tidal wave' came in and just as suddenly went out but Atobe is still frightened that it may come again." In this way, the masses sneered at the city commissioners who performed so shamefully and ineptly and gave vent to their indignation towards the maladministration of the ruling class. In spite of the aggravation of their situation following Ōshio's revolt, there was only praise, not slander, for Heihachirō. Maybe it was on this account that the official annoucement was made to the citizens that they were not to admire Ōshio.

The circulation of the Manifesto was not limited to the vicinity of Ōsaka. And even eminent people, such as the contemporary agriculturist Satō Nobuhiro and others, often adopted the opening phrase of the Manifesto, "If the whole world is destitute...", and in Nobuhiro's case, he was not only deeply influenced by Heihachirō's words, but also by his way of thinking in believing that the relief of the nation's destitute could be realised through good administration by the feudal lords.

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[5]Kōsai Hiki as quoted by Okamoto, 1975:160.

Ōshio's incident keenly impacted on the upper ruling classes also, Tokugawa Nariaki being a notable example of this. He was a wise ruler who believed that, "because the warriors maintained their livelihood through the pains of the peasants, there should be compassionate administration which did not squeeze the blood of the farmers, and that if the control of the farmers was lax, the warrior class could not survive." Therefore, he believed they should levy taxes according to the regulations. "Seeing the farmers are stupid, once we are generous to them they will become accustomed to that and later such generosity will become harmful", he opined.

But this trend of the masses in daring to make the rebel Ōshio a hero was not something that the ruling class could condone. They did not shun even the most base means of discrediting him before the people. Such a step was the written sanction against Ōshio, father and son, which was announced almost two years after the rebellion. It should have been a written judgment which stayed within the scope of the crime and ought not to have touched on any private conduct which was unrelated to the incident. Instead, in the written sanction against Heihachirō, in order to save himself, Yoshimi Kyūrōemon, the betrayer of the plot, made a secret accusation regarding an incident in Heihachirō's private life. He wrote, "On the surface Heihachirō exhibited an austere deportment, and, while lecturing on the literary and martial arts, filial piety, and loyalty, he actually went as far as committing adultery with Mine, the daughter of Hashimoto Chūbei, who was promised in marriage to his adopted son Kakunosuke." This kind of malicious slander stirred up the antipathy of fair-minded thinkers and Yabe Suruga no Kami who knew Heihachirō intimately said, "Denouncing crime is natural, but making such a criminal charge against Heihachirō who has already been burnt black and is dead, cannot be said to be fair justice."

But, even the lowest ranked among the people were worshipping "Heihachirō Sama" which suggests that the ordinary people admired his virtues and repudiated this unfair written sanction by the authorities. Sakamoto Gennosuke wonders why this kind of attack on Ōshio's chastity was made in a criminal charge unless it was to diminish Heihachirō's popularity in view of the fact that many people in Ōsaka and elsewhere were extremely thankful for his actions. In such a way, the people candidly attacked the disgraceful strategem of the Shogunate to discredit Ōshio. The

stubborn persistence of the anti-Shogunate feeling of the masses can be inferred from their thinking that such a desperate and slanderous attack on Ōshio was still necessary two years after the incident. It was further evidence of the bankruptcy of the *Bakufu* that they could only treat as a traitor one who had been a most faithful servant, loyal supporter and defender of the Shogunate feudal system instead of engaging in some healthy self-reflection concerning the charges Ōshio was making against the administration of the system.

Yet, it is fair to say that quite a few Confucianists and others, in an endeavour to ingratiate themselves with the Shogunate, publicly denounced Heihachirō as a treacherous rebel. Not unnaturally, the wealthy and specially privileged merchants who sustained such great damage during the uprising circulated rumours maligning Heihachirō. Thus there were completely opposite evaluations of Ōshio. The small folk of the city, far from regretting the damage caused by the fire, blessed Ōshio who had revolted on their behalf, despite their own distress and the inconvenience of being rendered homeless during the winter. Actually, thanks to Ōshio, even though they themselves had suffered disaster, craftsmen and labourers found work in rebuilding the burnt city. Nevertheless, poverty remained and the famine had levelled the poor to the state of beggars. Many died as the result of the famine and it took till 1852 for Ōsaka to recover the pre-famine population that it had in 1828.

People of his day regarded Ōshio as a sage, whereas later generations have made him "a hero, an idealised personality with a set of ethical precepts enticing even to men in the modern era." (Najita, 1970:156) Of Ōshio's popularity, Najita (1974:55) says, "Like his less volatile predecessors, Nakae and Kumazawa, Ōshio became a cultural hero. Farmers in the Ōsaka area revered him, and activists in the 1850's saw him as a crucial spiritual 'model' for total and active rejection of the *Bakufu*." The symbolic significance of Ōshio is clear. Peasants in West Japan refused to believe that he had died and so continued to revere him as if he was a deity. Rebellions were launched in his spirit to "save the people" and, consequently, Shogunate leaders sought to minimise the importance of his revolt.

What was the popular feeling after Ōshio's revolt? The people of Ōsaka who had encountered the two large-scale calamities of the Tempō Famine

and Ōshio's Fire reacted in a variety of ways in the state of emergency that ensued. Although, as the result of the uprising, the scale of relief was expanded and the methods were diverse, nevertheless not all were rescued through the various relief measures. Some were relieved and reassured, but others still suffered severely and their distress was increased. As far as the people's reaction to Ōshio and his associates is concerned, their evaluation of Heihachirō as a police officer and as an able official had been generally high. But after the revolt, naturally, their estimate of him was divided. On the one hand, absolute praise was given him, and on the other, many criticised him with satirical poems and various graffiti in public places. Genuine praise of Ōshio is seen in such opinions as that of Yamada Sanzen[6]: "Concerning Ōshio's revolt in Ōsaka...people rumoured that if a person like Ōshio was engaged in politics, society would be peaceful." The majority in Ōsaka shared such a positive estimate of Heihachirō. Such a reputation that Ōshio enjoyed is often discussed and queried today but, in those days, "people would probably not have evaluated him on the basis of the real significance of his revolt, but in a much simpler way." (Kawai, 1982:67) He was regarded merely as the rescuer of the poor, not for the social impact of his revolt. The people whose houses were burnt down as a result of his violence and who were later helped by the relief huts, were all in an extreme state of distress.

These people thought that it was because of Ōshio burning down their houses that they were rescued. Besides, many carpenters, their assistants, and day-labourers were happy as they were then able to work because of Ōshio's revolt. (Ukiyo no Arisama VI, 1970:351) Even though the society that Ōshio advocated in his Manifesto was not created, it was obvious that his uprising jolted the commissioner's office and wealthy merchants to carry out more relief measures. The larger relief, and the consequent possibility of people being able to maintain life, naturally added to Ōshio's reputation. Thus, rather than criticising Ōshio for the damage caused by the revolt, the majority felt kindly towards him.

Obviously, all the destitute could not enjoy the benefits of the relief and, for these, the extent of their poverty deepened. Even though relief was carried out on a large scale, it was not sufficient to cover everyone

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[6]Yamada Sanzen's *Sanzen Zakki*:234.

in need. The sudden jump in the price of rice and other commodities aggravated the condition of such people. *Ukiyo no Arisama VII* (1970:437) confirms this: "Among the minor people, difficulties were enormous and there was no way that they could survive. Many of them became outcastes or threw their children into the river. Other couples threw themselves into the water and drowned or hung themselves. They did this because they thought that there was no hope in the world because of the famine." As the famine situation worsened many also stooped to crime and begging for food to sustain life as they were being crushed by extreme poverty.

On the other hand, some poems were satirical. Because composing such satirical poems is a mental exercise, it is thought that these were written by those who financially had a certain degree of margin and not by those who were completely impoverished. Many of them employed the pun which makes them difficult of translation, for example, "Ōshio sold up every book; this was a true revolt" (*muhon*)[7]; "If you chop Heihachirō's head[8] off, that will create 'rice' which everyone wants." There was no doubt that the authors of these lampoons resented Ōshio's action in burning the city. One way or other, Ōshio's name was often on people's lips. But, seeing the mention of his name further agitated public sentiment, the government thought it better that the people forget about him and return to normality. Fujita Tōko (1968:541) wrote of this affair: "Probably in order to suppress the popularity of Ōshio, the city commissioner posted a statement at public bathhouses, barber shops, etcetera, that people were not to talk of Ōshio's matters, either favourably or unfavourably. For this reason, it appears that people in Ōsaka could not even speak of Ōshio." But, however much the Shogunate prohibited mention of Ōshio's rebellion, it was a major event and made a big impact on the society of the time as well as on the *bakufu* itself. Books about the uprising flooded the streets.

Consequently, to assure that popular feelings be restored to normal, not only economic countermeasures, but also social measures were carried out. By thus distancing people from Ōshio and his revolt, the emotions of the people slowly subsided to greater calmness. This meant there was a

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[7]*muhon*, meaning "revolt", is also a pun on "no books".
[8]Another pun, for, if you erase the top stroke from "Heihachi", it leaves the character for "rice".

strong tendency for the meaning of Ōshio's Manifesto, his political position, and his ideology as a scholar to die out as simply the "Ōshio Heihachirō affair". In evaluating Ōshio's revolt, we need also to emphasise the great turn-around in the economy which had been extremely sluggish in the first half of the Tempō period. There is little doubt that the special countermeasures would not have been so readily or amply devised if it had not been for Ōshio's uprising acting as a catalyst. The restoration of an active economy was an important effect of the revolt. In this sense alone, Ōshio's revolt has great significance, not only on the society of his day, but on subsequent events.

3. *On Other Ensuing Riots*

Ōshio's riot set off a series of urban disturbances in many other parts of the country, and it is no exaggeration to say that the extent of these riots in Edo, Ōsaka, and many other cities helped to hasten the collapse of the Tokugawa Shogunate. News of the Ōshio affair provoked outbreaks as far afield as Hiroshima in one direction and Niigata in the other. Although the attempted coup was treacherously betrayed, it caused such a sensation up and down Japan that other revolts of both urban poor and rural peasants led by *rōnin* claiming to be "disciples of Ōshio" or wishing to "strike down the robbers of the country" broke out in distant parts of the country. (Borton, 1938:95) Responding to Ōshio's revolt, others stood up seemingly in a chain reaction throughout the country and openly linked themselves to Ōshio. Thus the feudal rulers branded it "The Revolt of the Bandit Ōshio".

One village head in Kinai[9] wrote, "Although Ōshio was facing a new revolution, it was a desperate uprising of a solitary moralist. But throughout Japan at the end of the *Bakufu* period, the attitude of the Kinai masses as aroused spectators had become a conspicuous characteristic in the midst of the heightening of the public's anti-feudal struggle." Without doubt, Ōshio's insurrection influenced such others as Ikuta Yorozu's revolt in Echigo in July 1837, and the Nose revolt, influencing not only their peculiar actions but also their daily lifestyle. The collapse of centralised authority made the suppression of the increased number of riots exceedingly difficult and encouraged bolder spirits to challenge

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[9]As quoted by Miyagi Kimiko, 1970:285.

the authority of the *Bakufu*. Besides, a large number of people now dared to denounce the exclusion policy of the *Bakufu*, urged opening the country to Western trade, and stimulated the desire for foreign learning.

The general public, emboldened by Ōshio's action, became increasingly combative and raised other riots and public protests. It was significant that imitators of Ōshio were not slow to appear. Shortly afterwards, all over the country, one after another they raised riots as if to carry on Ōshio's uprising. Among them, some of the most notable were the riot of Onomichi in Bingo which occurred in the next month, March, the riots in Mihara (Bingo) in April, in Kashiwagaki in Echigo in June, and in Nose in Settsu in July. In each of these, the rioters clearly declared that they were "the remnants of the Ōshio faction" or were "Ōshio's disciples" and so obviously, they were directly influenced by Ōshio's revolt. Although Ōshio's uprising had been a relatively minor flare-up that was speedily suppressed, it was symptomatic of the popular inclination to criticise and attack authority. In domains least susceptible to *Bakufu* censorship, scholars were producing literature which questioned the Shogun's position. Reinterpretation of the Confucian classics and of Japan's political history produced a picture of the Shogunate as a usurper of the emperor's legitimate function, and as a government that did not deserve loyal obedience.

Unrest continued after the suppression of the revolt; in fact, the tense state of affairs surrounding the distressed people was undiminished, being added to by the sufferings that followed. On the 6th March, the poor smashed two rice shops in Awaza Sanukiya machi.[10] *Ōsaka Shishi*[11] gives details of the situation among the polished rice merchants in Ōsaka following the revolt, such as the attempt to stabilise rice prices, the illegal practices of some, and the general lack of supplies.

When Ōshio's whereabouts were still not clear smouldering embers of the revolt were seen in the crisis regarding the polished rice merchants and these were spreading out still further. Particularly was this the case until the second crop of wheat arrived on the market in May and June. It was a season of more dangerous smashings. "To find *samurai* and *rōnin*

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[10]Ukiyo no Arisama VI:342.
[11]*Ōsaka Shishi*, Vol.4(b):1278-1281.

heading revolts against the Tokugawa authorities was extremely ominous in the light of subsequent events". (Murdoch, 1964:456) Shortly after Ōshio's revolt others claimed the direct inspiration of Ōshio for their own action although as Scheiner (1973:586) says, "More accurately, perhaps, the actions of an Ōshio merely gave the peasants the occasion for rebellion. In no cases did these 'Redeemers' provide the peasants with either a programme or an ideology." In fact, though these uprisings differed greatly in scale and objectives, they shared one common affinity to Ōshio, most were headed by men who had no direct connection with him, yet regarded themselves as his spiritual successors, and in their declarations, they proudly proclaimed the name of "Lord Heihachirō".

Over 800 people in Bingo Mihara raised banners inscribed with "Ōshio Heihachirō's disciples" but a large number of police officers and men were speedily despatched from Hiroshima. They arrested more than 200 rioters and the riot gradually subsided.

The ringleader in the next great riot, that in Kashiwazaki, was Ikuta Yorozu, a *rōnin* of Tatebayashi in Jōshū who was also a senior disciple of the famous scholar of Japanese classics, Hirata Atsutane, and so, not unnaturally, he was strongly anti-*bakufu*. As the motive and form of this riot was so similar, it can certainly be said that it was patterned after the Ōsaka disturbance. Yorozu retired in Tatebayashi and, in September 1836, he moved to Kashiwazaki to pursue learning. It was the time of the great famine but even Echigo which boasted being a rice-producing district could not escape that disaster. The destitution of the masses even here equalled that of the worst areas of the country. And again here, there were officials and merchants who were only interested in feathering their own nests and were engaged in wicked scheming to that end, completely impervious to the sufferings of the majority. The price of rice jumped suddenly to a ridiculously high level and it kept on rising. The situation naturally worsened and tension was at breaking point.

Rumours of the Ōsaka disturbance, often exaggerated with the telling, came flooding in. As a result, here and there on streets, letters were purposely dropped which inflamed the passions of the people as they exposed the graft of bureaucrats and merchants alike. These letters followed the pattern of Heihachirō's Manifesto, and called for the unity of the people and the punishment of the gods on the covetous merchants

and corrupt officials. Later on, these purposely dropped letters were labelled "Ikuta's Otoshibumi" but it is uncertain whether or not they were from his own hand. Yorozu believed: "Even if the rulers were suffering, if the farmers were rich, something could be done for the rulers." Apart from his anti-Shogunate and pro-Emperor thinking, he had much in common with Heihachirō, especially in his ideas of ruling the people and pressing the authorities for reformation of their administration as well as in his desire to alleviate suffering. He also had a similar temperament to Heihachirō, easily becoming ardent and just as easily becoming vehement.

With the pitiful reality of the conditions in Kashiwazaki before his eyes, and with the news of Ōshio's uprising in his ears, Yorozu, not unexpectedly was stirred to plan his riot. His colleagues were even fewer than Ōshio's, numbering only five, of whom two were *rōnin* and three were well-to-do farmers who were proficient in learning and the martial arts as well as in farming. Again, as with Ōshio, the poor farmers and urban poor were not involved. This mere faction of six, with Yorozu as leader, suddenly attacked four residences of the wealthy in Arahama, Kariba county on the night of 30th May, setting fire to their houses and plundering their gold, silver, rice and other grain, and giving the loot to the surprised and excited villagers. At the same time Yorozu declared that, as Ōshio's faction had concentrated on the Shogunate officials and saved the poor people, those who wanted to participate in the relief should follow him. The faction planned to charge toward the Kashiwazaki barracks under cover of darkness. First, they chastised the greedy merchants and succeeded in helping the poor. They were then joined by eight Arahama villagers and one boatman. Now fifteen, the party arrived at Kashiwazaki and, in the early morning of the 1st June, Yorozu led an attack on the barracks.

The governor, taken by surprise, was in dismay and so several casualties resulted, but in the end he recovered his composure and, with a considerable show of force, gradually overcame the rioters. Yorozu and four of his fellow-conspirators died in the skirmish. Only one escaped, but he later surrendered in Edo. With the riot being suppressed without much difficulty, this punitive expedition against the corrupt officials, like that of Ōshio, did not succeed. It was a small disturbance with a mere fifteen participants, but because Ikuta Yorozu, the ringleader, was known

as a *Kokugakusha* and as a disciple of the great scholar, Hirata Atsutane, and also, because he had attacked the Shogunate barracks, the disturbance was published abroad. A rumour spread to Ōsaka that the total strength of the insurrection was about 800 persons.

While this rumour was still circulating in early July, a riot broke out in Nose, Settsu county, Ōsaka, under such banners as "Tokusei Ōshio Mikata" ("We are going to rule the people benevolently as Ōshio did.") Nose was made up of 64% mountains and forests and so was not included in the advanced zone, known as the "Settsu-type". The ringleader of the Nose riot, Yamadaya Taisuke, was a retainer of the Tadain in Settsu. At this time he was engaged as a druggist in Saitō machi in Ōsaka and on the side he worked as a master of *judō* and Japanese fencing. He was joined in the plot by Imai Tōzō, a teacher of calligraphy, and Satō Shirōemon who was reputed to be a *rōnin* of Inshū who was engaged as a sword sharpener in Goryō suji, Kawaramachi. These three men were not strictly *rōnin*, but they lived in Ōsaka city and were known as half merchants and half craftsmen.

The riot broke out on the evening of the 2nd July and about two thousand farmers from a total of nineteen villages were mobilised at its height. Taisuke and the other leaders were finally surrounded by soldiers from various neighbouring domains and officers who were despatched from the Ōsaka governor's office to suppress the riot. They were sniped at and were finally overthrown after five days but, before that, they had ordered the wealthy farmers and merchants to distribute money, rice, and other grain to the poor. Those who refused had their homes broken into as the rioters rampaged around the North Settsu area. In planning this insurrection, Taisuke and his companions wrote a circular letter appealing to the Imperial Court to relieve the destitution of the people. In summary it said: 1) On account of the famine, twenty per cent of the people have become beggars or have died from starvation since Spring. There are still ninety days till the harvest in Autumn but, if things continue as they are, fifty per cent of the people will probably die. We want the Imperial Court to order each daimyō to prevent this starvation by investigating the total amount of rice in his domain and then to apportion it out equally to the whole population. 2) For the past several years the destitute in both city and country have been at their

wit's end due to the high prices. We want the Tokugawa administration to cancel their debts. If they do not, the destitute will not be able to recover for many years to come. Thus, we appeal to the Emperor to command all feudal lords to enforce this benevolent policy. From this circular it is clear that the aims of Taisuke et al. were different from those of Heihachirō as here they were obviously anti-Shogunate and pro-Emperor while Ōshio was staunchly pro-Shogunate. But the common ground was that neither could see any alternative way of the poor escaping from the distressing circumstances other than through rioting and reform, although unlike the wretched *rōnin* of Nose, Heihachirō, though retired, through Kakunosuke, still enjoyed the favour of the Shogunate feudal system.

Unlike Heihachirō, Taisuke and his companions did not try to enlist the aid of the farmers. Although Taisuke was born in Nose and had been a retainer of Tadain, he and the other two ringleaders resided in Ōsaka city and had almost no current links with the farmers of the Nose area. More than Heihachirō and Yorozu, Taisuke raised a riot in which he used the farmers for his own purposes. But, because they had been coerced to join the company by threats, they took the first opportunity to flee and so more than six hundred retired to their homes. Undoubtedly, this riot was stimulated by the recent Ōsaka disturbance because the leaders realised the people's unlimited admiration of Heihachirō. They were driven by their ambition and love of heroics. Because Nose was near Ōsaka and Taisuke raised the banner "Tokusei Ōshio Mikata", people probably thought that this riot was somehow connected with Ōshio. The form of their hero, Heihachirō, had been clearly burnt into the minds of the people. This was probably the reason why the authorities slandered him and the reason why the farmers joined in Taisuke's riot. The rash of rebellions died down only with the end of the famine in 1838.

As a direct result of the Tempō famine which lasted for six years, hundreds of thousands died and certainly the practice of infanticide, euphemistically called *mabiki*, was fairly common in villages at this time in spite of both the *bakufu* and feudal lords launching campaigns against its practice.

Many of the more politically sophisticated who were to direct the restoration movement against the Shogunate in the 1860's studied the

event of 1837 for its political meaning and lessons. Despite its spectacular failure, the Ōsaka uprising inspired numerous other *ikki* throughout the country. During the brief remaining years of Tokugawa rule there were no fewer than three hundred uprisings in the towns and cities and well over one thousand in the villages. Without fail they were suppressed and the participants punished. Even though they were symptomatic of important defects in the *Bakufu*'s economic policy, they were by no means the sole cause of its downfall.

Ōshio's influence can also be seen on the peasant rebellions in the early Meiji period. For instance, in the Nose "world renewal" rebellion, the peasant leaders proclaimed that Ōshio had provided direct inspiration for their own acts and referred to him as *Yonaoshi Daimyōjin* (The Great World-Renewal Deity). In particular, they were attracted by his idea of the restoration of the age of the gods in which they would be freed from the exploitation of local officials, money-lenders, monopoly merchants, and any others who took advantage of their weakness. Scheiner (ibid., 587) points out, "It is especially significant for an understanding of the Japanese heroic tradition that the leaders of these rebellions did not expect victory and accepted their martyrdom, destroying themselves for society to let the world know our anger."

One prominent feature of the last decades of the Tokugawa period is the appearance of distinctive, usually charismatic, personalities whose teachings were described as *yonaoshi* (literally "rectification of the world"). The term first appeared during the 1780's and it became "increasingly popular until the Meiji Restoration as a word to indicate recurrent popular movements to redress the social and political wrongs of society." (Ooms, 1975:49) Such movements seem to have arisen as a result of anxiety that the harmony and the stability of the Tokugawa feudal order might be threatened. Consequently, numerous figures in the late Tokugawa were pursuing the renewal of that order.

4. *A Shock to the Bakufu*

Ōshio's Revolt gave the ruling class a feeling of extreme dread as they were very sensitive to any political movements. For instance, the following day Tokugawa Nariaki of Mito, "unexpectedly entered the castle, assembled all the councillors and fully discussed the nation's affairs,

assaying to return to the basics of frugal and simple lifestyle and declaring the theory of restoration and reform." (Okamoto, 1967:218) This shows the utter seriousness that he attached to this revolt as also does the fact that he used this important crisis to emphasise to the ruling class the pressing need for reform and reconstruction. The feudal rulers could not look on idly with folded arms. Both the *Bakufu* and the various *han* planned the so-called "Tempō Reform", but the domains varied greatly in their implementation of reform.

As the result of Ōshio's uprising, the tour of inspection by the East and West city commissioners, planned for the 19th February, was naturally cancelled. The tour was re-scheduled but, "A long time before the newly-decided date of the 7th May approached, to the North and South of Horie Tonyabashi, Tatsumiya Kyūbei Yokochō, Kōraibashi, Saigokubashi, Shin Naniwabashi, Nakabashi, Toya(sic) machi, Tenma Hinokami chō, etcetera, with Sangō as centre, bills mentioning Ōshio's name appeared." (Sakai, 1981:227) They read: "The government did not accept the policy which Ōshio insisted on and also it sent rice to Edo when it was in short supply in Ōsaka. On that account, rice prices in Ōsaka were very high and everyone was suffering through starvation. For that reason South-west from Nambabashi suji, all the places that were not previously burnt in Ōshio's fire will be turned into scorched ground from now on. If the commissioners came, they would not go home safely and if they were fearful, they had better retreat speedily to Edo. If anyone tore down these posters, their district would be burned down first. All of us intend to proceed to the castle and those of the same mind will meet at Imamiya no Mori." (Ukiyo no Arisama VI, 1970:357) They quoted Ōshio's name and, as usual, fiercely criticised the lack of policy of the city commissioners. Again, the planned tour was cancelled and the commissioners immediately ordered merchants to give 50,000 *mon* of alms to the poor in Sangō.

On the 3rd June, the members of the Shogunate in Edo met and discussed the report of the head of Ōsaka castle regarding the punishment of those who posted these insolent bills throughout Ōsaka. They discussed the unstable situation in Ōsaka city and the unrest among the ordinary people due to high rice prices and what could possibly happen in the city in the aftermath of Ōshio's uprising as threatened in the posters. A reply dated the 14th June was addressed to the head of the Ōsaka castle. It ordered the arrest of those responsible for the posters, an investigation

by the city commissioners as to whether they had any connection with Ōshio, and appropriate punishment for the offenders. According to the findings of the above conference, the perpetrators of these posters were taking an unfair advantage of the disturbed situation, thus imitating what Heihachirō had done. The prompt decision indicated a decisive move to deal with the unrest. Even after all of Ōshio's faction had been arrested, it recognised that the uncertain state of affairs was continuing in the city.

Also at this time, lower-ranking workers gathered together in Western areas and caused disturbances by threatening rice merchants. For instance, they threatened a rice merchant named Horie Banya by saying that, if he did not feed them, they would destroy his house, and so saying, they beat on his door with sticks. They also threatened merchants with claims that they had already destroyed this and that merchant and would now destroy them if they did not accede to their requests. In such a way they spread rumours to intimidate rice speculators. The result was that the wealthy merchants started almsgiving in the city.[12]

Although Ōshio's uprising was a pathetic affair, its implications and influences were so great that many written judgments, reports and instructions, enquiries and circularised official announcements were made by the Shogunate about the disturbance. Thus, many official documents and historical materials from the public and private sector in Ōsaka, as well as observations, private messages, and commentaries have been transmitted so that modern researchers can piece most parts of the jigsaw together.

Because of the lack of communication, the Edo castle did not know the sure details of the insurrection in Ōsaka but rumours abounded to the effect that Ōsaka castle had fallen, that Hori Iga no Kami had fled to Kyōto, and that Atobe Yamashiro no Kami had his neck smashed to pieces in a confrontation with a long-barrelled cannon. Certainly, at the least sound of a disturbance, the price of a suit of armour and other military supplies suddenly jumped. The rumour of an incipient uprising in Tanba caused Matsudaira Izu no Kami of the Kyōto Shogunate's headquarters to panic and order troops despatched from the three domains of Kameyama,

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[12] *Ōsaka Shishi Shiryō*, Vol.I, 1980:17.

Yodo, and Kōriyama and also to order the Kyōto city commissioner's office to despatch their armies to Tanba. Again, from Edo, there was such a panic measure as ordering the despatch of troops to Ōsaka from the five domains of Kōriyama, Himeji, Amagasaki, Susa, and Kishiwada. The ruling class placed great importance on the Ōsaka insurrection as it showed up the increasing weakness and inefficiency of the Shogunate system. They found themselves in a serious dilemma. They had to treat Heihachirō as an enemy although, in so doing, they risked the further estrangement of popular opinion. The authorities realised that some concessions of relief had to be made as unrest was welling up throughout the nation. Certainly the anti-Shogunate feeling of the people had been stimulated by Ōshio's uprising.

After March, there were forty-five peasant riots and city disturbances, although not all these were directly influenced by Ōshio's revolt. But, among those riots that were, there were those in Bingo Mihara in April, Echigo Kashiwazaki in June, and Settsu Nose in July. In these, the rioters had either called themselves "the remnants of the Ōshio faction" or else "the disciples of Ōshio". These successive riots merely increased the apprehension of the *Bakufu*. "The fact alone that the scene was the *Bakufu*'s most important direct-controlled city hurt the prestige of the *Bakufu*." (Inagaki, 1964:171) While the rebellion was quickly put down, "it shocked the *Bakufu* and the country into a realisation that crisis conditions were at hand." (Hall, 1970:195) Ōshio's revolt obviously made a deep impression upon the country, both on the *Bakufu* whose authority had been challenged and on the peasantry.

The revolt itself had been of small significance, outside the fact that it had been instigated by officials of the Shogunate. Even the fire was only comparable to other disasters which occasionally ravaged whole districts of Edo and Ōsaka. Besides, peasant revolts often reached far greater size in the number of participants. The gravity of the event lay solely in the fact that the Shōgun's authority had been flouted and that Ōshio's example had long-lasting repercussions in the Western domains. The Shōgun's dignity had taken a dent because of the inefficiency of his representatives. Although warned, the two commissioners had taken no measures in time to prevent the revolt. Even worse, they had suffered the indignity of being thrown from their horses before the jeering local Ōsaka bystanders, and as the result, had become the butt of many jokes by

the local populace. The attempted revolt lasted only for a day but it pin-pointed accurately the injustices of the administration and the greedy extravagance of the wealthy. It also dealt a heavy blow to the *Bakufu* by demonstrating the weakness of the government for all to see in the major commercial city of the age. Although the *Bakufu* was shocked and concerned by Ōshio's rebellion, it certainly was not shaken to its foundation as is suggested by those who are searching for a Japanese dialectical process leading to political change. The *Bakufu*'s concern was clearly seen during the trial following the revolt. It made sure of condemning Ōshio and his followers as common criminals and of erasing all political significance from the uprising. Nevertheless, the Shogunate structure was sound enough to withstand this challenge.

What was remarkable about Ōshio's uprising was the incompetence of the officials and soldiers. They had had ample notice of the plot and yet they allowed the rioters a free hand for several hours, during which time a great part of the city was rased to the ground. The garrison commander had no plan, the commissioners at the head of the troops fell off their horses, and some of the soldiers ran away when they were confronted by the miserable rabble. These were representations of a military and civil power which traditionally never brooked any challenge to its authority. The prestige and the power of the Shogunate had fallen to a low ebb. The failure of the wardens of one of the greatest Tokugawa castles to prevent such an outbreak made them appear inept to the citizens who then proceeded to circulate malicious jokes about them, particularly drawing attention gleefully to the two city commissioners who fell off their mounts at the head of the Shogunate army.

Although the *Bakufu* easily squashed the uprisings of Ōshio and others because of their lack of nation-wide planning, it was not before both the *Bakufu*'s incapacity had been exposed to the many eager patriots who were calling for reform and the townspeople had become cognisant of the diminishing efficacy of the ruling class. Launched in the name of the downtrodden, Ōshio's rebellion shook the political world and intensified the growing sense of decline and moral crisis in the latter part of the Edo period. Its significance lay in exposing the defects of the administrative system of the Tokugawa *Bakufu* and its only success was its discrediting of the competence of the Tokugawa administration. The collective effects of the riots throughout the country impressed upon the warrior class a sense of crisis with respect to the feudal system for which they

were responsible. This consciousness of serious defects in their system was one of the underlying causes of the Tempō Reform which could be seen as the last attempt to secure the feudal order in military hands.

5. *On Other Iconoclasts*

Aspects of Ōshio's philosophy made a great impression upon his later followers. Despite official disapproval, the Wang Yang-ming school of thought remained strong throughout the Tokugawa period, and it is significant that not only Ōshio Heihachirō but also several of the openly revolutionary thinkers of the last years of Tokugawa rule as well as some of the young men of action who eventually overthrew the Shogunate and formed a new government were influenced by Yōmei theories. Certainly this was no accident, given Yōmei belief in the unity of thought and action. It was not without reason that some of the late Tokugawa reformers such as Sakuma Shōzan, Yoshida Shōin, Hashimoto Sanai, Yamada Hōkoku and Saigō Takamori came out of the Yōmei tradition in Japan. More often than not, modern nationalists also have tended to follow this intuitionist philosophy. Narabayashi (1970:4) says, "From the viewpoint of the stream of this Yōmei cult, when we see the faces of Yanagawa Seigan, Yokoi Shōnan, Maki Izumi, Yoshida Shōin, Saigō Takamori of the later Shogunate period as thinkers who had reform sketched in their faces, we could say that they are close-ups of Ōshio Heihachirō." Wang Yang-ming's followers "both in China and Japan were men who were forever mindful of their own deaths, knowing that their sincerity and refusal to compromise with the world's injustice would almost certainly lead them to a violent end; but, far from fearing this outcome, they welcomed it as the supreme token of their rejection of worldly selfishness." (Morris, 1975:181)

Yōmeigaku, with its insistence on moral intuition and the need for ensuing action, significantly influenced both the motivation and, indeed, the designation of Japan's activist patriotic zealots of the mid-nineteenth century. Although Ōshio was viewed with mixed feelings by advocates of the status quo, he was admired by such late Tokugawa loyalists as Fujita Tōko of Mito and Yoshida Shōin of Chōshū as well as by men of varying shades of thought in the modern era, nationalists and Marxists alike, who were disenchanted with the injustice spawned by increasing industrial organisation. It seems that Ōshio's fame underwent

a temporary eclipse at the beginning of the Meiji period but, as dissatisfaction with the central government began to grow in the 1870's, he became the hero for many elements who opposed the new regime. Particularly was he admired by the members of the League of the Divine Wind, a society of nationalistic zealots of Kyūshū who violently opposed the government policy of abolishing old customs and encouraging Western ways. In 1876, members of the League, relying on traditional swords, attacked the Imperial garrison but were totally exterminated by defenders equipped with modern weapons.

Ueki Emori[13] (1857-92) argues that, "Action was conceptualised as a sagely activity to 'save' the people from misery, as in the archetypical case of Ōshio Heihachirō. Noble action consisted of the enlightened few responding to the external evils in history. A viable theory of action, however, should be valid without regard to empirical perceptions of specific conditions." Ōshio's significance lies in the intellectual process he went through in advocating participation in actual society on a basis of certain abstract, humanitarian ideals contrary to historical tradition. He disengaged himself from historical values regarding status and loyalty to land and kin. In the light of moral values which clearly contradicted the traditional *Bakufu* system of social stratification, he was impelled into public action. Following Ōshio, there emerged from within the samurai class a mode of iconoclastic political action. Yōmei thought was acquiring a language of political criticism which gave it a force of its own. This was gradually refined and used repeatedly by subsequent generations against the authorities. In the last decades of the Tokugawa rule, the injustices seen in the oppression of the people and the farmers and in the rejection of the emperor required rectifying. The plea of justice for the people was couched in the language of Confucian egalitarianism, or the ideal of the innate goodness of all men which Ōshio constantly reiterated. This egalitarianism was the theoretical base on which to level society and judge men in a way other than by genealogy and social function. For Ōshio it had meant a rectifying of evil in a moment and the creating of a timeless order of justice. Through the notion of total restoration he had begun to formulate a framework within which to present the case for humane treatment of the people. In his mind, it was primarily the farmers,

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[13]As quoted by Najita, 1974:94.

whereas for later advocates of restoration, it was to be other classes of people. Perhaps, more than others, Ōshio provided a clear insight into the intellectual connection between the Ōyōmei mode of thought and the samurai psychology of protest. To him, engagement in social reality followed from timeless ethical premises, particularly those held in Ming loyalism. Commitment to those ideas and public action in history were not contradictory to Ōshio.

Najita (1970:178) offers a general observation in considering the relationship between Ōyōmei thought and loyalism as seen in Ōshio: "The absence of a conscious strategy to forge an alliance between farmers and merchants precludes assessing him primarily in terms of his impact on the immediate political and social environment." Farmers and townsfolk alike idolised Ōshio for many years, referring to him reverently as "Heihachirō Sama". Although the leaders of successive uprisings in Bingo, Echigo, and Settsu regarded themselves as "disciples" and "supporters" of Ōshio, Najita (ibid.) argues that "these data, however intriguing, cannot obscure the fact that Ōshio's radicalism did not provide a basis for co-ordinating his potential followers into a unified structure of protest", a position also argued by Okamoto Ryōichi (1975:111-145).

Not only did the news of Ōshio's uprising stimulate immediate uprisings in other areas, he had raised issues that were to be of increasing importance in later years. Beasley discerned this when he wrote:

> "Himself married into a rich farmer family, he had gathered the sons of such families into a school he had founded where he lectured with zeal about the moral evils of *Bakufu* rule, appealing against them to Confucian ethics and the Emperor's justice, much as the 'men of spirit' of the 1860's were to do. In other words his acts set a new pattern, affording evidence that rural wealth might well become linked with political subversion in a context in which both *Bakufu* officials and urban merchants would be objects of distrust."

Many in this century including novelists and critics such as Mori Ōgai, Kōda Rohan and Mishima Yukio have written about Ōshio, and politicians such as Nakano Seigō have sought to incorporate his ideas into modern Japanese culture and politics.

i) Yoshida Shōin (1830-1859)

Many of the loyalists of the late Tokugawa period went to Edo to study Ōyōmei idealism. Rising above them all was Yoshida Shōin of Chōshū, perhaps the greatest single inspiration to activists in this period. In search for a true theory of action he also travelled to Edo to study such idealism. The Yōmei emphasis on "deeds not words" was a major influence in the life of this most influential leader of the movement to establish the modern state of Japan and this outstanding tutor of those who were later to become leaders in the early Meiji period. "For Yoshida", Najita (1974:61) suggests, "Ōshio Heihachirō represented the outer limit of protest, and he pondered what lay beyond it in strategy." Like Heihachirō, he considered the significance of the late Ming loyalists who fought the Manchus in the early seventeenth century and imbibed deeply of their political idealism. "He was full of high ideals, grand visions, and ambitious projects, yet he failed in almost all his undertakings, large and small, for want of common sense." (Sansom, 1950:284) The thing about Shōin that appealed to the emotions of his countrymen was *makoto*. Along with many sincere heroes of Japan, his most famous precept was "It is unworthy of a samurai to be much concerned with the consequences when the action itself is virtuous." Naramoto Tatsuya wrote, "After a hectic, failure-studded career, Yoshida Shōin committed his final blunder in an abortive plot against the Shogunate in 1859 and was executed for treason at the age of 29."[14]

In spite of his many failures and dismal end, Yoshida Shōin has been posthumously established as a brave, self-sacrificing success, a precursor of the successful Meiji Restoration. For Shōin, doing was far more important than being, action was more necessary than meditation. He believed Japanese leadership should break out of the lock-step of Neo-Confucian abstraction and worthless argument for the real world of concrete affairs and practical action. Naturally, the Confucian concept of state was based on the needs of society in China and, consequently, embodied many aspects that were not applicable to the situation in Japan. "The state conceived by Chinese philosophers was an ideal or model state; on the other hand the state that the Japanese nationalists had in mind was the actual Japanese state. This was the reason why Japanese nationalism, nurtured by Confucianism, had ultimately to deny the authority of Confucianism." (Nakamura, 1964:436)

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[14]Naramoto Tatsuya, "Rekishi to Jimbutsu" (No.5), *Mainichi Shimbun*, 19.2.1971.

Thus Yoshida, the thorough-going nationalist, criticised Confucius and Mencius for leaving their native states and serving in other states. He believed a sovereign and a father to be essentially the same and he could not conceive of how either a sovereign or a father could forsake one's native state or family and serve in another. In lecturing on Confucianism, Yoshida "attacked the statements in Mencius which had any democratic nuances. In considering the passage in Mencius that 'The people are most valuable, the altars of the land and grain come next, and the ruler is least', he interpreted it as meaning that the people are most valuable from the point of view of the ruler. In this way he attacked Western democracy and aimed at a complete overturn of Chinese thought." (ibid.,473)

ii) *Saigō Takamori (1827-1877)*

The image of Saigō Takamori shows that Ōyōmei became a living tradition among the samurai, most noticeably among those in the outlying domains (*tozama*). Undoubtedly the main intellectual influence in Saigō Takamori's life had been Yōmeigaku which he had admired from an early age. Ōshio Heihachirō was the hero of this leader of Japan's last important national insurrection, the Satsuma Rebellion. Saigō, whose disastrous uprising occurred in 1877, exactly forty years after the Ōsaka revolt, was greatly influenced by Ōshio's form of Neo-Confucianism. The image of Takamori shows that Ōyōmei had become a living tradition among the samurai, particularly among those in the outlying domains. "Members of the burgeoning 'people's rights' movement, whose campaign for democratic reform led them to oppose the Imperial absolutism of the Meiji oligarchy, referred to Ōshio as a precursor in this struggle", although not because they shared any specific objectives seeing Ōshio did not believe in democracy, "but because they defied established injustice with the same fierce, self-sacrificial approach." (Morris, 1975:185)

Especially relevant to Saigō was "Ōshio Heihachirō, the sage-hero of Ōsaka and, until the end of his life, Saigō invigorated himself by re-reading Ōshio's philosophical lectures." (Sakamoto, 1971:4) It is said that he frequently re-read and quoted *Senshindō Sakki*. So naturally, the influence of Wang Yang-ming and of Ōshio pervades Saigō's own writings. Like Ōshio, he vigorously indoctrinated his young disciples with the

notion that deeds were more important than any amount of knowledge acquired by study or observation. The word "sincerity" (*shisei, makoto*) recurs regularly in his writings.

Saigō's armed defiance was on a vastly greater scale than Ōshio's attempt but, like the Ōsaka Revolt, it ended in disaster and the hero took his own life in acknowledgement of defeat. Like Ōshio, Saigō was a "revolutionary son" of modern Japan. As a dedicated student of Ōyōmei, he had read intensively the major writings in that tradition, beginning with those of Nakae Tōju in the seventeenth century. Like Nakae and Kumazawa, Saigō felt intimately attached to the rural countryside and forsook bureaucracy to return to it. Like them, he gave up power, official status, and wealth because he was convinced that his position was right. But unlike them, he transformed the union of thought and action into a principle of political protest. In this respect, like Ōshio, he embodied uncompromising dissent as a supreme moral dictate against arbitrary government and this internalised imperative transcended formal political structures for both of them. Being detached from formal human restraints, Saigō felt "free" and, therefore, "revolutionary". (Najita, 1971:391)

Takamori's love of the people extended beyond the samurai class to the entire populace and, thus, became the major link between the Ōyōmei-inspired attack on the *Bakufu* and the subsequent movements for popular rights. His uncompromising protests against tyranny symbolised the liberating thrust of the Meiji Restoration and became a distinctive ingredient in Japan's quest for modern popular government. Jansen (1961:188) says, "Takamori's approach to any problem was direct and intuitive. Careful analysis and tactical planning did not interest him for he believed that 'sincerity' would succeed, if only by stirring men who witnessed a noble failure, while 'trickery' and artifice would accomplish nothing." He was a true descendant of the Ōshio spirit.

iii) *On Literature*

Ōshio has inspired a variety of literature, many books and popular plays having been written either about him or with him as the hero. Hardly had the *Bakufu* suppressed his revolt before playwrights and professional story-tellers pounced on it as grist for their literary mills. Thus, his

fame rapidly spread throughout the country. Later, Meiji writers presented Heihachirō as a model of idealism and self-sacrifice. "By far the most eminent Japanese author to use Ōshio as a hero was the novelist, Mori Ōgai." (Morris, 1975:185) His *Ōshio Heihachirō*, originally published in 1914, was a short, exciting novel and a fascinating study focussing on the last two days of the hero's life. A very successful play in the 1920's represented Ōshio as a great humanitarian leader while post-war he has been the hero of several stage and television dramas which cast him as a brave idealist who undertook the hopeless task of pitting himself against the callous authorities.

iv) *In the Twentieth Century*

During this century a diversity of men have admired Ōshio Heihachirō. For instance, he was recognised as the inspiration behind the participants in the 1918 rice riots which swept through Ōsaka and other large cities. In the 1920's, the dialectical materialists picture Ōshio as a pioneer whose heroic rebellion represented the first act of conscious resistance in the class struggle against the old feudal order, forgetting of course that Heihachirō never opposed feudalism per se. In the 1930's, during the period of ultra-nationalism, Ōshio was revered by the right-wing intellectuals. Some, like Mishima Yukio, see Ōshio's influence on the young officers in the "February 26 Incident". Then they add that the same Yōmei ethos which animated Ōshio and the young military officers in their 1936 rebellion was latent in the student radicals of the 1960's. But, although one participant in the 1936 incident was quoted as saying, "The uprising was spontaneous and so we had no need for planning..." (Koschmann, 1978:24), there is no evidence that they claimed Ōshio as their inspiring genius. They, at least, shared Ōshio's belief that the very rationality of the planning would corrupt the purity and sincerity of the protest and deprive it of meaning. But, expressive and symbolical protest always fails in the face of authority. Post-World War II, he again became the hero of left and right, of Marxists and of such ultra-rightists as Mishima Yukio.

v) *Nakano Seigō (1886-1943)*

Nakano was an important figure in the development of twentieth century Japanese nationalism. He was an influential writer who was widely read,

and as a Member of Parliament, he was a vigorous politician between 1911-1943. Both Nakano Seigō and Miyake Setsurei (1860-1945) identified explicitly with the earlier Tokugawa moral idealism as formulated in the Yōmei tradition of Nakae Tōju and Kumazawa Banzan and as exemplified in the rebellious personality of Ōshio Heihachirō. Nakano saw that the seemingly apolitical tradition of Yōmei developed logically into active and heroic defiance of political authority and that Ōshio Heihachirō was the key person in this development. Najita (1974:115) says:

> "As articulated by Nakano, the crucial significance of Ōshio and others in that tradition was their resistance to the imposition of corrupt politics and bureaucratic criteria on the people. Reminiscent of Ueki Emori, moreover, Nakano insisted that moral resistance was a popular 'right', a quality that all persons in Japan possessed and could be reminded of by recalling great historical figures such as Ōshio, Saigō, and Itagaki."

Like these activists, Nakano believed that all ought to participate vigorously in the politics of resistance to the spread of bureaucratism. This journalist-politician consistently advocated the importance of "popular nationalism" and thus criticised the political domination by the elite. He also often referred to the spirit of individualism as exemplified in the philosophy of Wang Yang-ming and as embodied in such as Ōshio Heihachirō and Saigō Takamori. He believed these men to be totally dedicated to the radical popular ideal that made opposition to conservative politics possible. He identified closely with the intuitionist tradition of Yōmeigaku, pointing to its intuitionism as the central characteristic of the Japanese spirit. The extreme activism implicit in the Yōmei tradition appealed to Nakano and he frequently uttered such famous phrases as "the union of knowledge and action". He quite succinctly observed that Ōyōmei was "the school of rebellion" and he saw the history of Ōyōmei intuitionism revealing a steady development towards a radical method of political protest.

Nakano saw in Ōshio more than a rebellious attitude, he detected a logical sequence of thought which, in his mind, was tantamount to a principle for political change. He believed that laws which were contrary to the welfare of the people ought to be changed. If reform (*kaikaku*) was impossible because of bureaucratic inertia, then the only recourse consistent with one's moral conviction was revolution (*kakumei*). Nakano (1936:343) viewed Ōshio's legacy as the right of the moral person to defy national laws, or as he put it, to "transcend" them. Because

Ōshio was the first to conceptualise explicitly moral individuality as a mode of direct political protest unto death against the legal structure, to Nakano, therefore, he was "revolutionary". He was utterly responsible both to himself and to the masses, and he embodied the fundamental principle of Japanese individualism.

Nakano connected Ōshio with other rebellious loyalists, such as Yoshida Shōin, Takasugi Shinsaku, and Saigō Takamori. By combining Ōyōmei intuitionism and natural right, Nakano was able to attack conservative bureaucratism as a force detrimental to modern Japan, although his uncompromising belief that intuitionism could be politicised into a modern national movement was an impossibility. Nakano's emphasis on a traditional Ōyōmei type of individualism merely served as a moral justification for violent action and enforced conformity. (Reischauer, 1971:498)

vi) *Mishima Yukio (1925-1970)*

The aspect of Ōshio's teaching which made the greatest impact on Mishima was: "The way of the sage is in the public realm alone...Knowledge must be unified with action...Even the superior man, if he knows the good but fails to act upon it is transformed into a pygmy." (Mishima, 1970:29-30) Ivan Morris, possibly the Westerner who best understood Mishima, writes:

> "The hero of the second volume of Mishima's final tetralogy is Isao, a dedicated youth who risks his life in a harebrained rightist coup during the 1930's and who, after the plot had been betrayed and wrecked, slashes himself to death with a dagger. Isao is deeply affected by Ōshio Heihachirō's philosophy and by the story of his revolt." (1975:182)

In a previous courtroom scene, Isao had fervently explained his philosophy to the judge, quoting the famous Wang Yang-ming dictum, "To know and not to act is the same as not knowing at all." He equates his own motives with those of Ōshio a hundred years earlier and strove to put this philosophy into practice as Heihachirō did. He knew of the impoverished state of the farmers and of the despair of the poor, and further, that it was due to political corruption and to the callous contempt for the people shown by the "Zaibatsu" (financial combines) who turned this corruption to their own profit as did the merchants of Ōshio's day. Mishima believed that such knowledge automatically makes it incumbent upon one to take action. (Mishima, 1969:373f). Najita (1974:146-7) asserts that:

> "It was out of the general sense of the failure of postwar politics that the celebrated novelist Mishima Yukio presented his passionate plea for the revival of traditional radicalism. Referring back to the rebel Ōshio Heihachirō, Mishima reminded the Japanese of the vital spirit of revolutionary commitment and protest that is intrinsic to the Japanese cultural personality."

Mishima saw it as a commitment that must be uncompromising in face of certain defeat. Therefore, it was ultimately symbolic and prophetic rather than strategic. It was a commitment that defied the hierarchy and identified totally with a just cause and principle. But, despite Mishima's heroic and sacrificial suicide to dramatise this viewpoint, there has not been the sustained resurgence of the radicalism that he idealised. "Mishima, in effect, purported to commit suicide to castigate the Japanese 'Self-Defence Forces' for their lack of patriotism, and his suicide was vaguely intended to bring about a military coup by inducing in others a sense of rededication to Japan." (de Vos, 1973:472)

Koschmann (1978:22) quotes the novelist as writing, "And, in those political actions of the Japanese there can be seen many striking examples completely contrary to reason and intellect, of unaccountable explosions and behaviour resorted to with full acknowledgement of its ineffectiveness." Mishima, obviously accepted this philosophy for on the 25th November 1970, he harangued members of the Japan Self-Defence Forces from the balcony of their headquarters in Tokyo and then committed ritual suicide with another member of his private army, "*Tate no Kai*" (The Shield Society). According to de Vos (1973:472), "The suicidal act is often seen self-consciously as some form of expressive retribution as well as the ultimate attempt to compel action on the part of others... Implicit in such suicidal behaviour among Japanese is the notion that one's own suffering can cause guilt in others and therefore can induce action." Mishima, the ardent admirer of Ōshio Heihachirō, found in his philosophy of action an intense and irrational awareness and a hatred of hypocrisy and falsehood which he felt could be effective antidotes to the ills of Westernisation and political expediency. Elaboration can be found in Mishima's "Yang-ming Thought as Revolutionary Philosophy".[15]

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[15]Mishima Yukio, "Yang-ming Thought as Revolutionary Philosophy"; excerpts from his "Kōdōgaku Nyūmon", *The Japan Interpreter*, Vol.VII, No.1, Tōkyō:1970.

There is little doubt that the final act of Mishima's life was influenced by Ōshio's philosophy for, in a letter written to Ivan Morris just before his death, he wrote, "Influenced by Yōmei philosophy, I have believed that knowing without acting is not sufficiently knowing and the action itself does not require any effectiveness." (Morris, 1975:183) In the end, expressive and symbolic protest falls in the face of authority. As Koschmann (1978:25) says:

> "This may be because the motivation for protest is basically internal rather than external, and therefore is difficult to communicate fully to others. It may also be because, in extreme cases, the protester believes his own death to be necessary as proof of the sincerity of his commitment and to shock others into action. Perhaps the very intensity of the protest limits its duration."

It grieved Mishima that since the end of the Pacific War, the Japanese people had been content to "play it safe", attaching more importance to security and material comfort than to the most precious and unique characteristics of their nation's heritage. The result, he believed, was that, although their bodies have greater longevity, their spirits die an early death. (1970:36) He complained that since General Nogi's noble suicide in 1912, Yōmei philosophy had been largely ignored in Japan whose intellectuals had ostracised it as a form of "dangerous thought". Mishima (ibid., 23-4) further notes that the eminent intellectual historian, Professor Maruyama Masao, gave only a single page of his monumental work on Japanese thought, *Nihon Seiji Shisō Kenkyūshi*, to Yōmeigaku and that, after the Meiji era, Marxism took the place of Yōmeigaku among intellectuals in much the same way that humanism took the place of Shushigaku. This was beyond Mishima's understanding in view of the fact that Yōmei philosophy had been the central inspiration of most of the eminent heroes in modern Japanese history.

In spite of his own worldly success, Mishima's most admired heroes were such ignominious failures as Ōshio Heihachirō who stabbed himself to death after the collapse of his uprising in 1837, the members of the League of the Divine Wind (*Shimpūren*), a group of rebellious Kumamoto samurai who were slaughtered in the suicidal 1876 rebellion against the Meiji government because they had opened the country to the West, and the young *Kamikaze* (suicide) pilots who died in the Pacific War. (1974:180)

Mishima composed an essay examining the revolutionary implications of Wang Yang-ming and also the lessons that present day Japanese could learn

of the essence of the Japanese spirit from Ōshio Heihachirō, the fierce type of hero who organised the 1837 revolt. It is significant that Mishima committed *harakiri* at the precise age, 45, at which his hero Ōshio Heihachirō, having failed in his rebellion, stabbed himself to death. Yōmeigaku's stress on action made it a philosophy, or an approach to life, that accorded with revolution and with unquestioning commitment to a right cause, even though it may seem visionary to common-sense.

Mishima's philosophy which led to his suicide can be seen in the *Sea of Fertility* which he finished after frenetic writing the night before his confrontation at the Self-Defence Force Headquarters on November 25, 1970. Seidensticker (1979:132) tells us that, towards the end of the second volume, the hero Isao, (seemingly a picture of Yoshida Shōin) is on trial for having participated in an abortive attempt at righteous violence. He explains his motives under the examination of the presiding judge: "Yes, I wanted to carry out the principle of the unity of knowledge and action. To know and not to act is not yet to know!" Knowing of the corruption around him, the poverty of farm villages, the sufferings of the poor, and knowing that the origins of all this disorder was in the corrupt government and among the irresponsible moneyed-classes, he found it necessary to act.

6. *On the Tempō Reform (1841-3)*

The Tempō era witnessed yet another round of reforms by the *Bakufu* and many of the *han* but still within the confines of the existing political system. Fearing the chain reaction kindled by Ōshio's revolt, the feudal lords started their individual Tempō reforms in order to cope with the troubles both inside and outside the country. They used Ōshio's revolt as the catalyst for local action. The *Bakufu* also undertook the Tempō Reform to deal with inner anxiety and outward disease.

Undoubtedly the Meiji Restoration was the dawn of modern Japan. Post-war, the generally accepted point of view has been that the Meiji Restoration commenced with either Ōshio's revolt in 1837 or with the Shogunate's Tempō Reform which was carried out by Mizuno Tadakuni in 1841. Whichever alternative was accepted, it was certainly regarded as being in the Tempō period for all the various social and political forces which appeared in the Meiji Restoration were present at that time. But

another early theory claimed the external pressure, beginning with Perry's arrival in 1853, as marking its decisive starting point.

Actually, the Tempō Reforms began in the various South-West *han* long before the *Bakufu* reforms were carried out and it was these domains which were central in the movement to overthrow the Shogunate in the latter stages of its history. "The Tempō Reform of the *Bakufu* was a feudalistic, reactionary reform which was carried out on a nation-wide scale to deal with the complicated national political and economic aspects." (Hatanaka,1970:255) The *Bakufu*'s reforms which included a law to disband guilds and a strict law of frugality were promulgated with calculated thoroughness throughout the country, but their effect on the various domains who had promoted their own economic policies was superficial.

The Tempō Reform which was carried out by Mizuno Tadakuni (1793-1857) under the twelfth Shōgun, Ieyoshi, was the Tokugawa Shogunate's last response and was aimed at the removal of the political and economic defects which were clearly exposed by the Ōshio incident. Tadakuni sought to manipulate the financial affairs in order to reinforce the feudal structure but the strategy was futile and only made further enemies in all directions. It began with Shōgun Ieyoshi's "*Jōi*" (the Shōgun's will) which was promulgated on the 15th May, 1841. He stated clearly that his policy was the same in content as the Kyōhō and Kansei reforms. The Tempō reform centred on the order to dissolve the guilds and the order of *agechirei*. This latter was the reform's major policy. Land that was directly administered by the *Bakufu* was difficult to manage seeing it was scattered around the country and so, through this order, they tried to gather their land within a ten *ri* (40 kilometres) radius of Edo and a five *ri* (20 kilometres) radius of Ōsaka. But the plan failed through the opposition of the *daimyō* and *hatamoto* concerned.

These reforms again tried to use the traditional remedies which had never been able to cure the problems in the past. The only thing new in the attempted reforms was a new sense of desperation as well as an increased determination by the Shogunal officials to maintain their authority. Obviously, there was a deep sense of crisis behind Tadakuni's reform attempts. He maintained constant contact with Tokugawa Nariaki (1800-1860), head of the Mito domain who had been increasingly alarmed at the aimless policies of the *Bakufu* and who had memorialised the Shōgun on the

need for reform in 1838, following the Ōshio rebellion. (Hall, 1970:238) He advocated a return to the martial spirit of the past, restrictions on foreign trade and contact with foreigners, the suppression of Dutch studies, and the elimination of "luxury" from both the government and the personal lives of the samurai. He stated that there must be a reformation of the Shogunate government as soon as possible.

Ienaga (1973:170) notes that, through this rebellion, "the *bakufu*'s honour was noticeably hurt" and, when Tadakuni was overthrown in 1843 "the hope of reviving the authority of the *bakufu* had already faded away." The Tempō reform was abruptly terminated with the removal from office of its chief instigator, Mizuno Tadakuni. These reforms encouraged the samurai to return to the pursuit of learning and military arts and decreed general austerity for all classes of people. Farmers were ordered to remain in the villages, and those who went to the cities were forced to return. Trade associations (*kabu nakama*) were disbanded, and the prices of certain merchandise were forcibly reduced.

The administrators of the various Shogunal domains were aware of the general malaise and they had embarked upon local reforms even from 1832 in some cases and after 1838 in others. However, their intention was to restore order to society as it was, rather than to change its structure. Akamatsu (1972:64) suggests that there were three tendencies identifiable in all the fiefs where reforms were carried out:

> 1. The agrarian tendency was a move towards equalising the portions of land the peasants cultivated, but it was always as a function of the payment of dues.
> 2. The strengthening of the seigniorial monopolies with a view to minimising the autonomy of the merchants who were intermediaries and were indispensable to the economic development.
> 3. The strengthening of the domain armies which underlined the logic of the former two measures.

Actually, while a number of domains had embarked on reforms in the 1830's before the bad harvests came along to jeopardise their effectiveness, the Shogunal government waited the return of calm to the whole population before it officially proclaimed reform. In the Shogunate context, reform must always be understood in the sense of an ethical revival by applying traditional methods -- normally financial stringency.

> "The *Bakufu* failed to exercise direct control over the merchants' commercial activities because it could not cope with their

> concerted power. Nor did they succeed in consolidating private domains and lands around Ōsaka and Edo and incorporating them into directly held *Bakufu* territory due to the objections of the Tokugawa retainers and peasants who would be the losers in such a case." (Lu, 1974(ii):1)

The failure of the Tempō reforms further underscored the inherent weakness of the ruling power. But, in spite of the *Bakufu*'s dismal failure, some of the Western *han* had better success in their attempted reforms and this ultimately paved the way for their entry into national politics. Although the need for reform had been perceived by sensible men in high places, it was not until 1841 that Mizuno Tadakuni, the Shōgun's chief minister (Councillor), attempted to restore feudal discipline. But these Shogunate measures had already been preceded by certain changes made in in the administration of some of the most important fiefs. Ōshio's uprising brought home to all the severity of the economic problems in the Shōgun's realm as well as the urgent need of reform on the national level. Even though the *Bakufu* was initially shocked by the revolt, it did not try to alleviate the conditions that had caused it. The Shogunal reforms that were finally initiated in 1841-3 were aimed mainly at reinforcing order and increasing the government's military power rather than at creating the type of changes that Ōshio had demanded. Tadakuni may well have been galvanised into action by Ōshio's revolt, but he hardly seems to have been inspired by his principles. The Tempō Reform was an unmitigated failure and there were no further attempted reforms during the Tokugawa period. Government economic policy failed to mitigate the plight of the masses. On the contrary, its harsh new programme of national austerity often made conditions worse for them. Traditional restrictions were imposed while taxation and other burdens increased. Even the aim of limiting inflation completely failed and, after a few years, the upward spiral of rice and other staple prices resumed with the usual cruel consequences for the working classes.

"In recent years the thesis has been advanced among Japanese historians of the Marxist school that the reforms of the Tempō period mark the starting-point of Restoration history." (Craig, 1961:51) This post-World War II development arose from articles by Naramoto Tatsuya.[16] Others

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[16]Naramoto Tatsuya's articles, "Kinsei Hoken Shakai ni okeru Shōgyō Shihon no Mondai", *Nihonshi Kenkyū V* (Sept., 1947) and "Bakumatsu ni okeru Gōshi: Chūnōsō no sekkyokuteki Igi", *Rekishi Hyōron X* (Aug., 1947) were later incorporated in his *Kinsei Hoken Shakai Shiron*, (Tōkyō, 1952).

such as Tōyama Shigeki[17] and Horie Hideichi[18] later developed this theme still further. They all posit the view that the particular class alliance which accomplished the Meiji Restoration was first apparent in Tempō times. For most historians of this school, the Restoration signified the establishment of "Absolutism" in Japan which, to Marxists, did not mean a theory of government so much as a particular type of class structure. It was a compromise stage between feudalism and capitalism in which an alliance is formed between certain strata of each class. Craig (1961:52) says, "As applied to the Meiji Restoration, the absolutist alliance is seen as having formed between lower samurai and an emerging class of local producers who represent the first stage of industrial capitalism." Thus, the emergent local production or early industrial capitalism was challenging the commercial capitalism of the monopolistic merchants, and low-ranking samurai were challenging their high-ranking counterparts. To Marxist interpretation, the Tempō Reforms were fundamentally different from those of the earlier Kyōhō and Kansei periods because this new absolutist alliance of classes which reflected a fundamental evolutionary development in the productive process itself first appeared in the Tempō period. The earlier reforms were feudal and reactionary; to them the Tempō Reform was progressive and, in its class basis, it represented the wave of the future. Against this, it must be acknowledged that the progressive forces at that stage were weak and so were easily crushed. Only in a very few domains, for example, Chōshū and Satsuma, were the progressive forces able to implement their reforms. The success of the reforms in these domains enabled them to play a positive role in the Restoration movement.

How were the rural producers and lower samurai in the Tempō period supposed to have united in this "absolutist alliance"? A union of interests was supposedly formed. The lower samurai were represented by a bureaucratic reform clique which implemented a reform which benefited local producers at the expense of the wealthy merchants. Examples cited are such things as the decrees repudiating samurai debts and the abolition of monopolistic control of special products. According to this interpretation, such measures had led the rich gentry farmer-class to

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[17]Tōyama Shigeki in *Meijin Ishin* (Tōkyō, 1951).
[18]Horie Hideichi in *Meiji Ishin no Shakai Kōzō* (Tōkyō, 1954) and in *Hansei Kaikoku no Kenkyū* (Tōkyō, 1955).

support the lower samurai class and, after passing through several other stages, ultimately formed the samurai-peasant militia which overthrew the Shogunate. Though interesting, such a theory is oversimplified. Rather than a shift in the basic class structure of society, the Restoration appears to have been due to a shift in the superstructure of society.

Very complex arguments have been proposed by Marxists at different times regarding the various stages and their significance in the late *Bakufu* period, namely, that of handicraft production, the domestic system, and the manufacture stage preceding mechanised industry. Craig (ibid., 53-4) believes that "far more important than the relation between the samurai reformers and the rich peasants, a relation that was tenuous at best, were certain definite consequences of the reforms of certain areas of *han* life -- their effect on samurai morale and on the clique structure of the *han* government." Only in these areas did they contribute positively to Chōshū's role in the events at the end of the *Bakufu* period.

Others, such as Tanaka Akira, in looking at the reforms in the *Bakufu* and Western domains, cannot find any policy which aimed at the concentration of power in the form of absolutism. They believe, rather, that the political power which pushed the Tempō Reform and that which pushed the anti-Tokugawa movement were different types, the latter type resulting in the concentration of absolutist-style power.

At this stage it may be a help to look at the Reform Movement of the South-West Daimyō. The complete failure of the *Bakufu*'s Tempō Reform was probably the starting-point of the Shogunate's final decline. In contrast, the South-West domains were showing great activity at the end of the Shogunate period and their force formed the nucleus in overthrowing the Shogunate. On the whole, the South-West domains were more progressive, or at least, more flexible, than the Shogunate and were better able to adapt to the changing social and economic conditions of the times. A common point in the reforms of the various domains is that they were started as direct financial reforms and that had the negative, restorational character of financial retrenchment. For instance, in Chōshū, they attacked the colossal debt which Murata called "the powerful enemy of 80,000 *kan* (Ikeda, 1970:302) as the main target of the reform. In the reform, beginning in 1840, they attempted to make the annual tax from the independent farmers which was the traditional income of the feudal lords, as standard. Similarly, in Tosa, in the law of frugality which was

promulgated in 1841, it was asserted that the Tenmei Reform was to be the model of the Tempō Reform and that expenditure should be within income.

Marxists see, in the midst of the intensification of the feudal crisis, the feudal authority beginning to show the direction of absolutism as the result of the growth of various bourgeois relationships. Naramoto Tatsuya's analysis of the Chōshū domain was the basis of this commonly accepted theory. Concerning the transformation which occurred during the Meiji Restoration, he theorised that, if we trace the origin of the flow of the anti-Shogunate faction in the large South-West domains which played the central role in the Meiji Restoration, then we find the reformist *han* samurai of the Tempō reform. On the basis of this analysis, Tōyama Shigeki theorised that the domains which had achieved an average degree of bourgeois development were able to take the lead in the struggle with the Shogunate and, when a strong army had to be created in face of the international situation, the feudalistic powers changed to absolutism. Inoue Kiyoshi similarly evaluated the Tempō Reform in the Chōshū domain, asserting that it was the clear pattern for the course of reformatory national unity. However, Horie Hideichi criticises this theory of "Leaning towards Absolutism" which said that the class basis for the Tempō Reform is a combination of the feudal lords, wealthy farmers, and landlord class. To Horie, this theory is merely looking at the Meiji Reformation from the viewpoint of the feudal lords. He regarded the fundamental character of the Tempō Reform as a restoration policy from the samurai point of view and the intensification policy of the *Bakuhan* land ownership. He prescribed that reform as a head-on collision with the peasant mercantile economy which was gradually changing into manufacturing and parasitic land ownership.

The land policy in the Chōshū domain in the Tempō period had the direction of the reorganisation and strengthening of the feudalistic serf and independent farmer system which had long-tenured people of the land and wealthy independent farmers as its basis. In order to do this, the commercial economy was restrained. But, on the other hand, through political power, they were not able to repress the development of the economy. A series of commercial and industrial policies centring on the paper monopoly system had the aim of strengthening the feudal lord's control of commercial production. It was also designed to prevent the farmers' entry into the distribution process. But, on the other hand, as seen in

the case of the cotton and dyeing monopoly, the situation existed which unavoidably caused the actual dissolution of the feudal lord's control. This does not mean, however, that within the domain there was bourgeois development but it indicates the regression of the lord's control. Let us now look at the reform movement in the various South-West domains:

(i) *Chōshū Domain*

Chōshū was neither an advanced region like Kinai, nor a backward region like the Tōhoku area (North-East of Honshū), but was an in-between region where commercial agriculture was only developed to a certain degree. Through its defeat at Sekigahara, the former great feudal estate of ten provinces had been greatly reduced to the mere two provinces of Bōchō (Suwo and Nagato). As a result, there had been a painful shortage in domain finances. The people were severely taxed, or more correctly, robbed, to such an extent that in 1830 it was said that the various kinds of duties that farmers had to pay amounted to 80-90% of their total product. Such merciless robbery, naturally, aroused the antagonism of the people of the domain and, consequently, there had already been more than forty riots, large and small incidents, occurring successively in the district up till that time.

The violent suppression of these peasant riots was the direct cause of the Tempō Reform in this domain. The 1831 and 1837 riots were such with Murata Seifu who displayed enormous energy as the leader of the reform. He resented that "a house with such a long 600 year history from the Kamakura period should be kicked by the farmers". He forced reform on the domain authorities who could not resist the gigantic pressure from below. Thus, in August 1838, the reform began with Murata Seifu's appointment. (Okamoto, 1967:246) It first embraced the financial situation of the daimyō's private business and opened the budget to all the retainers and population of the domain. It began with the unusual procedure of seeking their frank opinions regarding the restructuring of the administration and in the appointment of people of ability, thus opening the way for capable men of lower rank to forge ahead in the *han* administration. Tax exemptions, such as the exoneration of farmers from paying land tax on waste fields, were enacted and they planned the reduction of a number of other land taxes which led to a more flexible method of estimating the harvest. While welcoming the opinions of the peasants, at

the same time they had to preserve the security of the independent farmer administration. Also, to relieve the large lower samurai class who were suffering under heavy debts, they resolutely carried out a method of loan repayments which meant debts could be paid within thirty-seven years which was tantamount to remission of payment. This effectively enforced a policy of restraint on the undisguised commercial loan sharks and their high-interest loan capital within the domain. At Shimonoseki, and at each Inland Sea port of the domain, they actively encouraged the warehouse business and metal industry. They also positively encouraged merchant ships from outside the domain so as to attract some of the fruits of the mercantile economy which was growing throughout the country. As well, they levied tax on these ships from outside ports.

The outcome of such a reform was that the *han* debt which had been more than 90,000 *kan* in 1838 and about 24 times the current amount of annual revenue, in just four years, had quickly been reduced by 30,000 *kan*, and another four years later, in 1846, more than half of the debt had been liquidated. This reform was an unqualified success financially. One indication of that success is that peasant riots which had occurred so frequently until 1837 were completely eliminated. Chōshū's tax reform was independent of that of the *Bakufu*. It began in 1838 whereas that of the Shogunate did not start until several years later. The Chōshū reform occurred when it did as it was merely one step in a series of financial retrenchments designed to keep the domain debt under control. Besides budgetary troubles, a further background to the reform were the peasant uprisings which took place in Chōshū in 1831 and 1836. Doubtless these drew the reformers' attention to both the financial and social afflictions of the domain. Some accounts estimated that as many as 50,000 peasants, 10% of the peasant population of the *han*, participated in the *ikki* although Seki Junya (1956:91) says "the true figure seems to have been closer to 2,000." Though the demands of the peasants varied considerably from area to area, their resentment, frustrations, and antipathy can be seen by the following three categories of demands: i) Remission of some taxes, ii) Abolition of *han* monopolies to which peasants were forced to sell all their commercial crops at a low fixed price which was tantamount to an added tax to the peasants, iii)Reformation of local government. After the supression of the urpising and the punishment of the instigators, the domain government made few concessions to the peasants. The two *ikki* of 1831 and 1836 may

have influenced the *han* leaders in their reform plans although the placation of the peasants was not considered of cardinal importance in the items of reform. Those who stress the importance of the Tempō *ikki* in Chōshū argue that, while *ikki* continued to increase in number throughout the country as a whole up to the time of the Restoration, there were no further disturbances, and this they attributed to the virtues of the reform.

Some historians who emphasise the peasant role in the Restoration Movement describe the Tempō Reform as a response to a crisis which threatened the very social order in Japan. The Marxist approach has been to see the *ikki* as revolutionary in character, and as producing tremors in the basic structure of Tokugawa feudalism, and thus revealing the weakened condition of the samurai class. Certainly in Chōshū, as in some other domains, the disintegration of the peasant villages had not changed enough to explain the *ikki* solely in terms of a changed social structure. It is also doubtful whether these riots were revolutionary in character; like Ōshio's revolt they were rather protests against certain abuses in the administration, and not revolutionary attacks on the system itself.

(ii) *Satsuma Domain*

Satsuma was another of the great Western domains which was the nucleus of the anti-Shogunate power. Unlike Chōshū, it was not the peasant riots which pushed Satsuma into reform, but the extreme poverty of its financial situation. In spite of being defeated in the Battle of Sekigahara, it had been confirmed in its former territory at the most Southerly end of Japan, in itself, a unique event. The characteristic institution with warring lords, as bequeathed from the past, was left strongly entrenched. In 1826, 39.6% of the population of this domain was of the warrior class which was the highest ratio in the whole country. The majority of these warriors lived outside the castle towns as country samurai and so they were indigenous to the farming villages and were under the domain control structure. Land tax was vigorously assessed on the basis of "70% to the government, 30% to the people". On top of this was the harsh forced labour or exacted service tax which was called "35 days in the month" for obvious reasons. In spite of these severe levies on farmers, there were almost no occurrences of uprisings. Under the above stringent circumstances there was naturally no noteworthy

development of a commercial agricultural economy in the domain, but the domain made the Ryūkyū Islands into a type of feudalistic semi-colony and besides carrying on secret foreign trade there in Chinese goods, it implemented a monopolistic system of unrefined sugar, camphor, etcetera, from the South Satsuma archipelago. Thus, in spite of Satsuma being one of the most under-developed areas of feudalism, it was developing the most wide-scale commercial activity. However, despite such outrageous robbery of agriculture commodities and the *han* administration monopoly system, the domain financial administration was desperately impoverished. This was what eventually spurred the domain towards reform.

The leader of the Satsuma reform was Zusho Hirosato, a former tea-server to the Shōgun. Zusho's reform began in about 1831 and the basic reform policy was the enforcement of the monopolistic system. This had as its main points the method of repayment of the annual instalment of the domain debt and the buying of Mishima sugar. The actual annual instalment of 1,000 *ryō* in capital for a 250 year debt repayment was virtually an evasion of payment and Mishima sugar was purchased on a monopolistic basis in the Ōshima archipelago where the system of slavery remained. Secret sales were proscribed under the threat of death and clear profit to the *han* exceeded 300%. This monopoly was the greatest contribution to the financial recovery of the *han*. The monopoly system extended to a wide range of products besides sugar, namely, rice, rapeseed, sesame seed, miscellaneous kinds of paper, various kinds of forest products, sulphur, alum, ox and horse skins, etcetera.

In this *han*, the feudal lord's economic policy, based as it was on his strong military power, completely stifled the peasants' commercial economy. As a result, by about 1840, besides two million *ryō* that were used for upkeep, it was said that there were 500,000 *ryō* in reserve funds and emergency rice resources in the *han* storehouse. Thus the Satsuma domain had succeeded in its Tempō reform with a completely feudalistic, reactionary, not progressive, method. Besides, the reform in Satsuma occurred more than ten years before that of the *Bakufu* and, like that of Chōshū, was independent in programme as well as in time. The nature of the reform policy in Satsuma differed from that of the other three South-West domains at one point. These latter were reactionary, repressive responses towards bourgeois development whereas, in the case of the Satsuma domain, it participated in the national market centred in Ōsaka.

But basically, it was the same as in other domains. There was a strong control of the monetary economy, particularly its monopoly of the sugar trade and also in the strong authority exercised in the case of the repayment of the loan (to the merchants) in 250 years' time.

(iii) *Tosa Domain*

The reform in this *han* was promulgated on the 1st May, 1841, the purpose being to carry out the national administration policy following the aims of the Tenmei Reform. Its direct cause was the poverty of the retainers and the domain financial deficit which was increasing year by year. From 1834-1838 there had been an annual deficit of over 989 *kamme* of silver and so the distress in the domain was severe according to information given by Hirao Michio. (1959:121) Reform in the Tosa domain, as in Satsuma, was not forced on the authorities by peasant riots as was the case in Chôshû. It began with a policy of retrenchment in financial affairs. Based on the Tenmei law of 1788, they tried to reduce expenditure by 25% for the coming five-year period. To accomplish that, an order was given to reduce commodity prices before the official announcement of reform was made. Before long, imitating the *Bakufu's* reform, prices were lowered more than 20% and, in some cases, were discounted by 50%. Also, to inhibit price rises, they ordered the dissolution of the guilds which covered thirteen different types. It was exactly the same reactionary policy of suppressing commercial activity as employed by the *Bakufu*. The reactionary nature of the reform is seen again in the promulgation of the 1842 law which prohibited farmers becoming merchants and merchants becoming landlords. It bound farmers tightly to the land and declared that for farmers, cultivation was their main work and so, therefore, they must not engage in business, and merchants were prohibited from buying ricefields, whether old or new. The new ricefields that they already owned were exempted but any old ricefields had to be sold. If they did not sell them, the regulation stipulated that they were to quit business and become farmers. Here we see the revival of the policy of the separation of merchant and farmer.

From 1843, a five-year stringency programme was embarked upon under which all banquets were cancelled and all bills were paid to Ôsaka. Although severe, the policy bore fruit and, as promised, was rescinded in 1848. Though it was nothing more than a restoration and strengthening of the

old feudal system, such a policy was successful at that time and was the means of restructuring the financial affairs of the domain. Even though these latter reforms were not carried out until after 1843, they were still called by the generic term "Tempō Reform". In 1853 Yoshida Tōyō supported by Daimyō Yamanouchi started reform measures within the Tosa domain, but he was opposed by conservatives and loyalists and was finally assassinated in 1862.

(iv) *Hizen Domain*

The reform here began on the 17th February, 1830, when Nabeshima Naomasa became lord of the domain. Okamoto (1967:240) summarises the policy under three main points:

> (i) The widespread appointment of men of ability,
> (ii) The encouragement of diligence in the continuation of simple frugality and the pursuit of letters and military arts,
> (iii) The restriction of the distribution of merchandise and, particularly, the prohibition of the distribution of merchandise from other domains.

This last point, at least, indicates that the parlous financial state of the domain was the direct cause of the reform. It was a countermeasure to manage the huge debt of the domain. The standard of financial reconstruction, Nabeshima[19] asserted, was that "Nobody should use more money than they have in the storehouse" (implying tax) and "Expenditure should be within income." In 1830, the domain debt was 10,000-20,000 *kan*. In such a bankrupt condition the domain could not support itself and was in the depth of anxiety and confusion. Thus, it was basically a financial reform involving retrenchment and sound financial management, but it was a policy that was neither practical nor suitable to that period because it took the form of the regulation or prohibition of the distribution of agricultural produce. Also it encompassed a system of equal distribution of land to farmers. This measure most typically indicates the feudalistic, reactionary land policy and indicates the character of the domain authority which implemented the tax reform. It actually meant the denial of the relationship between landowners and tenant farmers and was a policy intended to reorganise and strengthen the independent farmer system which formed the foundation of the *Bakuhan*

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[19]Nabeshima Naomasa as quoted by Ikeda Yoshimasa, 1970:302.

authority. Tenant farmers became very poor and, if kept in that situation, they would starve to death. Thus, in order to rescue these poor farmers, the domain restrained the wealthy merchants and farmers who kept on accumulating land. They ordered farm rents for the ensuing three years to be reduced to one-third and the following year, in domains under their direct control, they stopped all income from farm rents for the next twenty years as well as the payment of interest on debts of rice and silver. Again, in both 1851 and 1861, this domain took land from the wealthy merchants and wealthy farmers and gave it to tenant farmers. Every ten years the period of enforcement was extended in this way. This system excluded exploitation by middlemen and, while protecting the feudalistic independent farmers, it also aimed at strengthening the serf system. Landlords had to concentrate on agricultural production and were not allowed to be engaged in marketing activities. Thus, the division between farmers and merchants could be maintained and an agricultural mercantile economy could better be developed in rural areas. Consequently, this also was a reform of reactionary rather than progressive nature.

What Chōshū, Tosa, and Hizen domains had in common was that they implemented financial reforms which were nothing but a feudalistic restoration to financial entrenchment. Basically, the reason for the poverty of the samurai class was the development of the monetary economy but, more directly, it was because of the failure of the daimyō and the policy of high-interest loans. The reform in Hizen took the form of a graduated levy increase to the upper-class retainers and an increase of rice allowance according to position. Thus, while strengthening the feudalistic restoration of the retainer group, it was also advantageous to persons of low rank and disadvantageous to those of wealth. As well, it allowed the appointment of capable persons of middle and lower rank. A similar situation to Chōshū appertained in Hizen where, with regard to the sole commercial production of ceramics in the domain, the chief aim was the strengthening of the lord's control and the prevention of distribution by the farmers.

In conclusion, we could say that, although there were significant differences in the political, economic, and social conditions as well as in the respective reforms in the various domains, without exception, the reforms were all basically feudalistic and reactionary. They merely

served to preserve and strengthen the *Bakuhan* feudal system. Nevertheless, against the *Bakufu's* notable failure, in the South-West domains the reforms succeeded. Where did the difference lie? Tōyama Shigeki (1957:30) gives the basic reasons for the *Bakufu*'s failure as:

> i) The *Bakufu* structure was corrupt and its inflexibility did not tolerate a restructuring.
> ii) Shogunate domains were scattered throughout the whole country and control of the farmers was not thorough-going.
> iii) In the Kantō and Kinki regions where the Shogunate domains were centred, the nature of the soil yielded abundant harvests but the land tax was comparatively light.

A commercial economy was fairly well established but the *Bakufu* administration, being decadent and inflexible, was not able effectively to absorb the fruits of the bourgeois development in these areas. Consequently, it was extremely difficult for them to make themselves absolutists and hence their reform was doomed to failure. It is interesting to note that, according to Marxist theory, in the development of history, absolutism precedes revolution. Tōyama and others expected absolutism to come but, when it did not appear, it was confusing to them. Against this, Inoue Kiyoshi (1951:99-101) believes that, in the 1850's, the Shogunate accomplished a reform that was even greater than the Tempō Reforms in the South-West domains and that, again in the 1860's, they began a reform which eclipsed those current in every domain. The difference from 15-20 years earlier was not due solely to economic conditions. He gives the cause for the *Bakufu*'s failure as first, a problem of administration and, secondly, the development of the middle-class landowners, merchants, and low-ranking warriors who mutually represented the pressure of the modern growth of the ordinary people.

The crisis in the *Bakufu* system was extremely grave in the Tempō period. The common ground was that the *Bakufu* and the *han* faced serious financial stringency and the reforms were all carried out resolutely as a command to overcome their financial difficulties. The rulers in their various domains still had great feudalistic power and, although their measures were reactionary and often unsuitable to the times, they were still able to reap some good results. But the *Bakufu* could not manage the same results, because as Tōyama says, the direct-controlled domains, although exceeding four million *koku* (and if we add the 2,600,000 *koku* of the fiefs of the *hatamoto*, it is approximately 23% of the total yield of the whole country), were scattered over large areas with the accompanying

problem of being extremely difficult to control. The *Bakufu* structure was gigantic, complicated, and far harder to manage than the smaller, compact domains. Moreover, it had become old, degenerate and ineffective. Add to this the rise of the middle class and, whatever policy was planned, its effective implementation throughout the whole territory had become virtually impossible. In this sense, the success or failure of the *Bakufu*'s Tempō Reform was not related to the success or failure of the grasp of the fruits of the agricultural commercial economy. Certainly, both the *Bakufu* and the various South-West *han* offered nothing but resistance to social and economic change through the various reactionary measures they employed. Thus, although the reform may have enabled a temporary financial restructuring, it did nothing to cure the fundamental malaise of the *Bakuhan* system which was basically structural. The Reform was just a provisional patching up and shoring up of an obsolete system. We have enumerated the basic nature of the Reform policy of the South-West domains and it is clear that the various policies in their Tempō Reforms were to strengthen and reorganise the *Bakuhan* authority, its system of land ownership, and the restoration of feudalism.

7. *On the Meiji Restoration (1868)*

It is not within the province of this thesis to look at the many intellectual forces and other influences working for the dissolution of the Tokugawa regime, such as the revival of national history, literature, and religion through *Kogaku*, the anti-Chinese influence of Neo-Shintoism, the loyalist movement of the Imperialists to restore the Emperor, the penetration of Western ideas through *Rangaku* and the powerful economic pressures to break down the policy of exclusion. But, it is pertinent to our purpose to trace Ōshio's influence on the Meiji Restoration. There is little doubt that Ōshio's actions kindled a fire within the breasts of the patriots of the 1868 Imperial Restoration. McMullen (1983:357) says:

> "The final phase of Edo Confucian thought coincides with the quickening of intellectual life that took place against the background of the challenge of the West and the decline of Shogunal power. One theme is an increased, if largely private, interest in the teachings of Wang Yang-ming, whose combination of activism and subjectivity was attractive in a time of intellectual and political turbulence."

Nakano Seigō, like some of his Marxist contemporaries, viewed the Tempō uprising as the forerunner of the Meiji Restoration but, unlike the

Marxists, he did not see that event in terms of class dynamics. He merely saw both Ōshio's uprising and the Meiji Restoration as the convergence of "popular energy" and the great individual. To him, the Meiji Restoration was the heroic culmination of the "ideology of rebellion". (Najita, 1971(ii):391) Okamoto (1967:250) asserts that, "Whether one likes it or not, the change to an absolutist tendency became inescapable." This was not accomplished spontaneously but, in no small part, was due to the outside pressure of Perry's arrival at Uraga in June 1853. Through this external pressure, added to increasing pressure from within, the reality of the crisis facing the feudal ruling class could not be denied. The prospect of the Meiji Restoration opened up.

Most historians find the origin of the Meiji Restoration in the Tempō period. For instance, the famous leftist historian, Tōyama Shigeki,[20] believes that the various social and political influences which were prominent in the political history of the Meiji Restoration were significant in that they all appeared together in this period. The model of class relationship, which made the change of political system both possible and necessary, came into being in the Tempō period. Naramoto Tatsuya[21] made clear for the first time the significance of the Tempō period in the Meiji Restoration. He saw two questions:

> i) The development of the dissolution of the capitalistic farmers in the Tempō period.
> ii) The recognition of the class alliance of the political power which advanced the political process from the Tempō Reform to the Meiji Reform of the middle farmer-class which was constituted through the dissolution of these wealthy farmers.

Later research has not supported his first point of the disintegration of the farmers because of the penetration of capitalism in the farmers' lives, but the second point has been basically recognised as a suitable method of analysis of the political history of the restoration (Ikeda 1970:288), although different historians use different terminology.

Since the 1960's, some have criticised such an analytical method from various angles. Horie Hideichi[22] takes the Meiji Restoration as a

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[20]Quoted by Ikeda, 1970:287.
[21]ibid., 288.
[22]Horie Hideichi, "Kaikuha Dōmei", *Meiji Ishin no Shakai Kōzō*, as quoted by Ikeda, 1970:289.

transformation of the national pattern from the Tokugawa *Bakuhan* system towards Imperial absolutism and the class relationship which regulated that change. He also makes the change from a confrontation between the *Bakuhan* lords and the farmer class to a confrontation between the village ruling class (parasitic landowner-class) and the general farmer-class. Horie points to Ōshio's revolt in the Tempō period as its starting point. "As for the points of view which saw the Tempō era as the formation of the new class relationship, that is to say, as the starting point of the formation of a class relationship which made the Meiji Restoration inevitable, they are almost commonly agreed and, moreover, the nature of the formation of that class relationship is understood in the direction of the dissolution of the bourgeois farmer." (Ikeda, 1970:290) Although, naturally, there are various differences regarding the extent of the dissolution of the bourgeois farmers depending on the proponents' standpoint, viewing their disintegration as the basis of the formation of the class relationships after the Tempō period was common ground. Nakamura Tetsu[23] typically summed up the position: "In this way,in the Tempō period, seen from a financial point of view, the manufacturing industry in the agriculture villages was the motive power for the development of markets throughout the country and this created the conditions for the economic foundation of the people's unity and, on that account, was all the more regarded as the point in time when the united character of the *Bakuhan* decisively faced its disintegration and dissolution."

Also in the 1960's, Sasaki Junnosuke[24] vigorously challenged this commonly accepted Hattori theory of the method of analysis of class relationship at the end of the *Bakufu* period, the tendency which he suggests idealises the bourgeois democratic movement. It was also a thorough-going criticism of Naramoto's village samurai-middle class farmer alliance theory. Sasaki, contrariwise, creates a "powerful farmer" category with the non-realisation of the bourgeois development as a premise. He explains the class relationship of the late *Bakufu* period as a confrontation between the powerful farmers and the semi-proletariat. To him, small management generally developed under the control of commercial and high-interest loan capital and, through that, landowners

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[23]Nakamura Tetsu, *Meiji Ishin no Kiso Kōzō*, as quoted by Ikeda, ibid.,290
[24]As in Ikeda, ibid., 290

in the villages were able to become wealthy farmers. By the mid-Tempō period the development of wealthy farmers had reached a definite limit. It did not change the essence of the "powerful farmer" category. It divested labour conditions from the small producers and it gave shape to the property-less masses, the semi-proletariat class. Thus Sasaki's argument denies the theory of "Leadership and Alliance" of Hattori Shisō, as well as the arguments of other prominent Marxist historians.

The great merchants, restricted by feudal regulations against foreign trade and annoyed by the resort to *goyōkin* or forced loans by the bankrupt Shogunate, looked about for support in their desire to widen the national market. They recognised as political allies the great *tozama* lords of Satsuma, Chōshū, Tosa, and Hizen who were gradually and cautiously drawing together for a concerted attack upon the *Bakufu*. The *Bakufu* desperately tried to keep its enemies at bay by appeals to Confucian morality and by trying to tighten the social status system at a time when monetary power was of increasing importance and when social distress was eroding social bonds. Plagued with bankruptcy and revolt, the *Bakufu* soon found itself face to face with the threat of invasion from abroad. On its own the foreign menace may have been overcome, but coming at the very time of the feudal regime's greatest confusion, facing as it was rising revolt and political discontent, it helped to demonstrate decisively the utter incompetence of *Bakufu* rule. It had lost the ability and, therefore, had forfeited the right to rule.

Ōshio's self-effacing act of rising in a *kamikaze* attack on the feudal authorities was recalled to mind and cherished in the hearts of patriots of the Meiji Restoration. Many of these men, known for their distinguished service, were admirers of Heihachirō and lovers of Yōmei teaching. They fathomed Heihachirō's true nature, understood his heart and acted as they thought he would have acted. They advocated the rights of the people, but when one despotic authority replaced another the free rights of the people were further suppressed. Heihachirō was then admired as the founder of the people's rights. In fact, Inoue Senjirō (1880:1), in describing Heihachirō, acclaims him as "the originator of ancient and modern people's rights".

Conclusion

What do we make of Ōshio Heihachirō? Social revolutionary? Political rebel? Iconoclast? Opportunist? Incipient Marxist? Even though, on the surface, there seem to be reasons for seeing him as such, I regard him basically as none of these, but rather as a moral reformer.

Primarily, Heihachirō was a deeply sincere and somewhat religious person who acted out of moral, not political, impulses. Ōshio was neither a political rebel, nor a conscious social revolutionary. In the addendum to his novel, Mori Ōgai (1940:79-80) observes that "his philosophy could produce neither humane nor frightening socialism." Ōshio's defiance of the feudal authorities on behalf of the poor and wretched has led some modern observers to describe him as a revolutionary leader and even as an "incipient socialist". (Morris, 1975:199) Truly his revolt had far greater social implications than the numerous local riots which preceded and followed it, but Heihachirō had no revolutionary intention. It is an oversimplification of his motives and a distortion of his objectives to categorise him as an "incipient socialist".

Heihachirō was a religous leader whose philosophy of moral activism, in the context in which he lived, took the form of social protest. Neither in his writings nor in his lectures did he pronounce political criticisms on the Shogunate or feudalism per se. In fact, he wholeheartedly endorsed the social system which gave such high status to his own samurai class. He fulminated against the abuses of the system, not the system itself; he was indignant at the corruption and inefficiency of the officials who neglected their moral responsibilities, not with the form of government. He idealistically believed that, if the culprits were removed from positions of power and honest officials installed in their places, evils could be rectified and a timeless order of justice could be established.

He was a reformer fighting for a Utopia of moral justice, not a revolutionary bent on demolishing the system. He was a consistent supporter of the feudal order and, as a member of the ruling samurai class which was at the head of the four-tiered social strata, he was determined to correct the evils and misgovernment which he saw to be responsible for the universal distress of his time.

Heihachirō was a philosopher who did not think the problems through to their logical conclusions. "Ōshio, the samurai-philosopher, did not think in mundane terms of systematic reform or organised social revolution. Rather, his mission...idealistic, romantic and eminently impractical...was to rectify evil in a moment so that he might 'save the people' from the hell of the past...and establish paradise before their very eyes." (Najita, 1970:177) It is doubtful whether he had any specific programme in mind when he revolted. Certainly his aims did not include the overthrow of the Bakufu feudal structure. It rather was aimed at the correction of the injustices, by the appointment of virtuous officials. He was an idealist who naively expected instant answers to deep-rooted, long-standing evils. He believed that he could with one fell swoop rescue the people from their distress and provide an immediate paradise for them. Ōshio's failure resulted from fundamental weaknesses in his approach and planning. Not only was he an extremely poor planner, but also he hopelessly underestimated the strength of the Bakufu and naively overestimated the ability and resolve of his followers. It was not through lack of courage on the part of the leader that the plot failed. Nor was the failure due to "the treachery of one of his followers" as Borton (1938:93) opines.

Professor Abe asserts that Ōshio's movement was doomed from the outset because of his "failure to organise the 'anti-feudal' elements in the country". (1951:283) His main support obviously came from the landowner-village head type of power-base and this would limit the possibility of obtaining effective popular support for his revolt. This was also typical of the many other attempted revolts which did not fully capitalise on the anti-Shogunate feeling of the period. However, in order to put his plan into effect, Heihachirō was obliged to enlist the help of members of the oppressed lower classes who had their own reasons for confronting feudal authority.

It is not surprising that Ōshio, the furious opponent of social and economic injustice, should be hailed by modern left-wing radicals as a prototype of the modern revolutionary who gives his life for the people in the struggle against the intolerable status quo. But, although Heihachirō was sincere in his self-sacrificial act on behalf of the oppressed, he cannot be pigeon-holed as a champion of the down-trodden

masses for he never sought to liberate them. Nor can Ōshio's later admirers take comfort in the thought that their hero's philosophy and action had set a precedent for successful resistance to unjust authority because subsequent uprisings after 1873 against the equally harsh conditions that the Meiji regime had imposed upon the peasants all failed to accomplish their purpose. The Imperial bureaucracy which replaced the Tokugawa *Bakufu* was a mere change of master. The Restoration mocked Heihachirō's idea that the Imperial institution could be reshaped to symbolise justice for the common people. The disastrous conditions which had inspired Ōshio to revolt persisted under new management.

Certainly Heihachirō's admirers are not limited to one end of the political spectrum; he has had his devotees among leftists and rightists alike. One of his modern counterparts, Mishima Yukio, believes that the value of his act was entirely regardless of its actual effectiveness. Such interpreters of Heihachirō's sincerity, courage, and self-sacrifice would say that its failure, in actual fact, adds to its poignancy. He detested the moral and political situation of his time and determined to confront the gargantuan power of the establishment, however hopeless the task, even though it meant personal defeat, death, and ignominy. Even though he died five years before the revolt, his philosopher-historian friend, Rai Sanyō, foresaw this outcome when, on the occasion of Ōshio's retirement from public office, he wrote a poem praising Ōshio as a true child of Wang Yang-ming. He added, "I fear only that you will bring misfortune on your extraordinary talent; I pray you sheathe your sword after polishing it".[1] Rai obviously recognised Ōshio's reckless impracticality.

Although the direct cause of the revolt was the suffering of the people which, in turn, was induced by the Tempō famine, their plight was aggravated by the harsh economic policies and lack of concern of the Shogunate officials. Ōshio's sympathy with the suffering masses turned into fury against the corrupt, inactive officials and the callous, indulgent merchants who, though they saw the plight of the poor, continued living in extravagant luxury and unbridled debauchery. Heihachirō was a sage of great intelligence and dedication who was greatly angered and frustrated by the corrupt *Bakufu* bureaucrats. He was

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[1]As quoted by Najita, 1970:175.

of a humane and sympathetic nature and it was his sincere and deep belief in the Yōmei doctrine of the unity of knowledge and action that impelled him to rise against the ills of his society.

Morris (1975:215-6) makes a perceptive interpretation of Ōshio's action when he writes:

> "In a tight-knit, conformist society like Japan's, in which the greatest value is attached to achieving success within a conventional and carefully defined framework, there is a special fascination about an individual whose idiosyncratic personality and commitment to a set of abstract ideas impel him to break out of the 'web society' and confront the overwhelming force of established authority in an outbreak of desperate defiance. Not only is such a man admired for his physical courage and readiness to risk everything for a worthy cause (qualities that are regarded as heroic in almost any culture), but his life becomes a symbolic expression of the resistance to practical restrictions that thousands of other people must feel yet dare not bring to the surface. Accordingly, his sacrifice provides them with a vicarious release from frustration."

Ōshio's action was a *kamikaze* attack and dealt a body-blow to the ruling feudal authorities. Although people's estimates of Ōshio are diverse, his memory has lived on in the hearts of the people. Particularly, he is remembered in times of injustice and oppression, but at all times he has continued to provide strong spiritual inspiration in people's struggle for the redress of injustices and the relief of basic needs. Following World War II, in the move towards democracy and the liberation of the people, his name and deeds have again been recalled. In spite of the abject failure of his uprising, he is still the people's hero. It seems as though even time cannot easily dethrone him from the place of affection he enjoys in the hearts of the people.

Heihachirō was a rugged individual, different from his fellow countrymen, and, as the Japanese proverbial adage on the dangers of individualism states, "The nail that sticks out is knocked on the head". He stuck out and was hit. He gave up a secure, promising career as a samurai official and followed the heterodox Yōmei teaching which drove him to leave the seclusion of retirement and the safety of his study to involve himself in a personal mission against entrenched corruption. He dared to challenge the unchallengable and was bound to lose. Out of moral principle he championed the downtrodden and attempted to reform the system. Although he was destined to fail, he raised issues that were to be of increasing importance in years to come.

Appendices

Appendix I -- Glossary

ashiarai	foot washing, a term used in reference to outcastes of the category of "*hinin*" (beggars) whose feet were regarded as being dirty and thus needing to be washed clean in order to regain the status of ordinary people.
bakufu	literally "tent government", the term for the Army Headquarters of the Shōgun in the feudal period, hence derivatively, the military government of the Shōgun which was called the "Shogunate".
bakuhan	a term describing the Tokugawa Shogunate system of government in which the *Bakufu* exercised authority over *han*. The Shogunate ruled through the autonomous *daimyō* domains or *han*.
bakuhansei	an abbreviation of *bakuhan taisei*, a term of comparatively recent origin, coming into general use only after World War II, that is used to describe the government and society of the period from 1580-1868.
bakumatsu	the end of the *Bakufu* or Shogunate era.
bu	military arts or affairs.
bumbu	literary and military arts, "the sword and the pen".
bun	"letters", literature.
bushi	warrior or samurai class.
bushidō	literally "the Way of the Warrior"; the code of conduct and action of the warrior during the Tokugawa period. It emphasised such virtues as personal loyalty, obedience, sobriety, frugality, the acceptance of class distinctions, etcetera.
chōhazure	literally "lost to the record", a term used of peasants who absconded from their native villages and lived "unofficially" in the towns.
chōnin	literally meaning "townsmen"; urban dwellers -- merchants and artisans, as contrasted to the military class of *bushi*; it was generally applied to the merchant class in the towns during the Tokugawa period.
daikan	"intendants"; under the Tokugawa Shogunate, it became a formal, permanent, official post in the local

government. Such "magistrates" were appointed by the Shōgun or feudal lords to manage the administration and judicial affairs of the direct holdings (domains) of the Shogunate. Most were senior Tokugawa vassals (*hatamoto*) who were chosen from among the commissioners of finance ("*kanjō bugyō*"). Each *daikan* had charge of an area of 50,000-100,000 *koku* and oversaw police and judicial matters and everyday affairs. They usually had two official residences; one in their area of jurisdiction and one in Edo.

daimyō — a feudal lord ruling a fief or clan (*han*); a generic term applied to the largest of the landholding military lords in pre-modern Japan.

dōshin — a policeman or constable; low-ranking officials who were engaged in general administrative and police affairs. They belonged under the control of such people as the various city commissioners, castle wardens, and the authorities who policed the movements of the Emperor and aristocrats in Kyōto; those who policed the castle and city of Edo and those who were responsible for the protection of the Shōgun during the Edo period. They were subordinate to *yoriki* (police officers).

Edo — modern Tōkyō; it was the seat of the administrative government (*Bakufu*) of Tokugawa Japan.

eitazune — literally "eternally wanted", a term used for outcastes who absconded from their native places and were still not found after the invocation of *rokujinhō*, a six-fold repetition of the thirty-day search period.

eta — the vulgar, but widely used, term for Japanese outcastes or pariahs in the Tokugawa period, but which has gone out of favour, having been replaced by *burakumin* which refers to people living in "special" (outcaste) villages.

fudai — a hereditary daimyō or feudal lord in vassalage to the Tokugawa family, as contrasted to the semi-autonomous *tozama* or outside lords. They comprised the descendants of those men who recognised Ieyasu as their overlord on or before 1600.

gimmisho — a government Book of Inquiry in which important matters of judicial investigation were recorded.

goningumi — a group of five who shared collective responsibility; the basic administration unit in the village under the feudal regime, probably originating in China.

gōnō — a wealthy farmer; landed gentry.

goyōnin — chamberlain or advisor, usually in financial matters, to a daimyō or *hatamoto*.

haikai — in the narrow sense, the equivalent of *haiku* which was a 17-syllable poem in three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. It formed the first three lines of a *haikai renga*. In Ōshio's time, *haikai* and *haiku* were almost synonymous; also a humorous *haiku*.

hakama — a man's formal divided skirt.

han — a fief (domain) or clan; the territorial division with its own administrative structure ruled by a daimyō or feudal lord.

hatamoto — "bannermen" or banner warriors who were direct military vassals of the Tokugawa Shōgun with stipends ranging from 500-10,000 *koku* and with the privilege of audience with the Shōgun.

hinin — literally "non-human"; people who belonged to the lowest social class, along with the outcaste group (*eta*), in the Edo period. Under the Tokugawa Shogunate *hinin* were prohibited from making a living by any other means than begging; they were subject to compulsory labour, were assigned to various disagreeable jobs such as caring for victims of contagious diseases and taking criminals to execution grounds. They were compelled to live secluded in the poorer sections of the cities and suffered from much social discrimination. The class was legally abolished in 1871.

honbyakushō — independent farmers, the mainstay of agriculture, who were responsible for paying taxes.

honke — the head or main family, in contrast to the branch or junior family.

hōzuki — a Japanese bladder cherry or winter cherry.

hyō — a bale or bag of rice and other grains.

hyōjōsho — the Supreme Court of Justice comprised of temple and shrine commissioners, the finance commissioners, and the Edo city magistrates, assisted by the Great Censor and others.

ikki	or *hyakushō ikki*, peasant riots in rural areas; they were appeals to the authorities for a reduction in taxes, famine relief, and the alleviation of their stringent financial policies.
jisha bugyō	commissioners or magistrates in charge of temples and shrines in the Edo period.
jōi	"Respect the Emperor"
Kabuki	one of the three major classical theatres of Japan, together with Noh and Bunraku. It began as a kind of dance with song in the late sixteenth century to early seventeenth century, by Okuni, a former nun, as a kind of variety show given by troupes of itinerant entertainers. During the second half of the Edo period, it was the most popular form of stage entertainment among the townspeople. *Kabuki* connoted its "usual" or "shocking" character.
kabu nakama	a federation of craft guilds in the Tokugawa period.
kamikaze	literally "divine wind". The providential gales that saved Japan from the successive invasions of the Mongol armadas in 1274 and 1281 were called "divine wind". Since the suicidal, self-sacrificing missions of Japanese pilots and submarine operators during World War II, the term has been used generally to describe a suicidal act.
kamme/kan	a measurement of weight, 3.75 kilograms or 8.27 lbs.
kanjō bugyō	finance commissioners, numbering four, who administered the finances or accounts of the feudal government; two handled the finances of the *Bakufu* and two performed administrative and judicial functions.
karō	a principal retainer; senior minister to a daimyō.
kawaramono	literally meaning "dry river bed people", a term used for members of the lowest stratum of Japanese society; a derisive term for *Kabuki* actors, from the fact that they usually performed in dry riverbeds.
Kikitori Fusetsu	a document of rumours collected from people and appearing like an official government document. It is one of the earliest records of the revolt. c.f. "Ukiyo no Arisama VII":456.
kinnō	literally "revere the Emperor", a term that was applied to the Loyalists or supporters of the Restoration.

Kogaku(ha)	the School of Ancient Learning, a school of Japanese Confucianism which based its philosophy on the original texts and directed them to the betterment of society.
koku	a measurement of capacity, differing according to the period and locality, but standardised at 4.96 English bushels or 5.12 American bushels, or 1.80 hectolitres (180 litres).
kokudaka	the assessed taxable yield.
Kokugakusha	literally "National learning", the term applied to "Nationalist" Tokugawa scholars who emphasised the native cultural heritage in contrast to the dominant Chinese influence.
kokuso	the farmers' struggle against the authorities that spread as far as the whole province (*koku*); not a riot, but a legal struggle against authorities. The first such was in Settsu and Kawachi in 1823.
kuge	the Court nobles or aristocrats (in contrast to the feudal nobles or daimyō) who in pre-Restoration times resided with the Emperor's Court in Kyōto.
kunten	punctuation marks added to Chinese writing to change the order so as to be read as Japanese.
kyūmin	literally "Saving the People", a slogan used by Ōshio Heihachirō in his 1837 revolt.
mabiki	literally "thinning", a colloquial expression used euphemistically for infanticide.
machi bugyō	city commissioners who functioned under the authority of the keeper of the Ōsaka castle and the Kyōto deputy. They guarded these municipalities and the surrounding country as the Shōgun's direct representatives. They also served as governors of such cities as Ōsaka which were under direct Shogunal control.
makoto	sincerity, fidelity, truth.
Meiji Ishin	the Meiji Restoration, 1867-8. Formally, this Restoration was signalised by the recognition of the last Shōgun, Tokugawa Keiki, that the Emperor was the *de facto* as well as the *de jure* ruler of the nation.
metsuke	censors; officials of the Tokugawa government in charge of morals and espionage.
momme	a measurement of weight, in modern times equal to .1325 ounces or 3.7565 grams. In pre-Meiji times it was used

	as a measurement of coinage, 60 silver *momme* making one gold *ryō*.
mudakaso	or "mudaka hyakushō", literally meaning "without yield" (*taka*); farmers who were not responsible for paying tax, in contrast to the independent "honbyakushō" who paid tax to their feudal lords; subordinate to independent farmers.
nengu	the main tax levied on peasants; a land tax which was based on the established productivity of the land.
okagedori	the *okagemairi* was, for some, a profound religious experience and a unique chance to receive the special blessings of Amaterasu; for others, the mass pilgrimage provided an outlet for pent-up emotions as was seen in the wild dancing (*okagedori*), singing and cavorting that took place en route to Ise.
okagemairi	wild and licentious dances and pilgrimages to Ise in order to give thanks (*okage*) to the Sun Goddess. These occurred at least every sixty years throughout the Tokugawa period, four major *okagemairi* being held during the Edo period -- 1650, 1705, 1771, 1830. Poor peasants, and even poorer city dwellers, left their homes and wandered throughout the country demanding alms, eating the rice and claiming the goods of the wealthy. Contemporary observers report that many (seemingly) took the pilgrimage as an opportunity to indulge in a continuous sexual orgy.
otoshibumi	a dropped letter, purposely dropped or left behind so that people would pick it up and read it, a strategem widely used in Tokugawa times.
Rangaku	Dutch learning, a term which became synonymous with *Yōgaku* or Western learning.
Rinke	the Hayashi family; also the academy which was the official school of orthodox Chu Hsi philosophy established by Hayashi Razan under Tokugawa Ieyasu's sponsorship. The school embodied Shushigaku, the official philosophy of the Tokugawa Shogunate.
rōjū	"Elders" or Senior Counsellors to the *Bakufu* (Shogunate government).

rokujinhō	the thirty-day search period which was repeated six times in the case of outcastes who left their native places.
rōnin	a wandering or vagrant swordsman; samurai who for economic, political or personal reasons no longer owed fealty to a lord.
ryō	a monetary unit, usually in gold, in pre-Meiji Japan. It was made equal to one yen in 1871.
ryōchi	intuition, "good knowledge".
saikyojō	a written judgment of the *Bakufu* Court during the military age.
sake	rice wine.
samurai	a feudal warrior or knight, owing fealty to his daimyō and, in return, paid by his lord in rice.
seidō	literally "holy hall"; part of a Confucian shrine. In the Tokugawa period there were several "seidō", the most famous being the one built by Hayashi in Edo in 1632.
Senshindō Sakki	the annual publication and one of Ōshio's main literary works. *Senshindō* was the name of the private academy which he established at his own residence. Ivan Morris (1975:192) translates *Senshindō* as "Cleansing-the-heart-to-obtain-Insight" Academy.
Shōgun	Generalissimo or Commander. This title, an abbreviation of "*Sei-i-tai-Shōgun*" (Barbarian-subduing-Generalissimo) was given by the Emperor (who lived in virtual retirement in Kyōto until 1868) to the military dictator of feudal Japan.
shōya	one of the pre-Meiji names for a village headman.
Shushigaku	the Japanese name for the Neo-Confucianist teaching founded by the Chinese sage, Chu Hsi, in the twelfth century and accepted as the official philosophy of the Tokugawa administration.
Sonnō-jōi	"Exalt the Emperor, expel the barbarian", the rallying cry of the anti-Tokugawa forces in the years before the Restoration.
sukegō	one of the most onerous forms of the corvee; by it, horses and men were requisitioned for courier and postal service in the Tokugawa period.

tan	a land measurement equivalent to .245 acres or one-tenth of a *chō*.
tan	a linear measurement, approximately ten yards.
Tokugawa	the name of the ruling feudal family which dominated Japan from 1600 till the Meiji Restoration of 1867-8. The head of the family governed as the Shōgun from Edo.
tonya	a wholesale house.
toshiyori	an elder, hence a Counsellor; also one of the many pre-Meiji names for the village headman.
tozama	literally "outside lord", a daimyō who, in contrast to hereditary *fudai*, owed nominal vassalage to the Tokugawa family. They only came under Tokugawa influence after 1600 (Battle of Sekigahara). It was these strong, semi-autonomous lords who combined to overthrow the Tokugawa.
tsukegō	a special labour tax for those living around *shuku* (stations). Since the Genroku period (late seventeenth century), the seven villages of Kadoma which belonged to Moriguchi shuku: Sanban, Yonban, Bamba, Segi, Ōeda, Nishihashinami and Doi had been designated to pay this duty.
uchikowashi	literally "smashing" because poor townsmen broke into the homes of the rich merchants who had been favoured by the *Bakufu* officials, had cornered the rice market and forced up prices. Their homes were destroyed, their warehouses smashed, and rice and other goods were looted. These city riots were usually directed against the high price of rice and against the clan monopoly system.
uji	a clan; the patriarchal unit of ancient Japan, to be distinguished from the *han*, the fief or clan of a daimyō which was a territorial unit.
Yōmeigaku	the Japanese name for a revisionist form of Neo-Confucianism founded on the teaching of Wang Yang-ming (Ōyōmei in Japanese), a Chinese philosopher of the fifteenth century. It was regarded as heterodox by the Tokugawa establishment and, at times, even proscribed as heresy.
yoriki	a class of retainer attached to important personages in the *Bakufu*; a police officer.

zuihitsu — a genre of writing, literally meaning "to follow the brush", hence stray notes, fugitive essays, or a miscellany.

Appendix II *Translation of Ōshio Heihachirō's Manifesto*

Preamble: This text was give by Heaven to the common people in all the local villages.

Text:

i) If the whole world is in poverty, the food which is given by heaven will not last long. The ancient sage warned all future generations (rulers and subjects) that "if the nation is ruled by men of small stature, both disaster and harm are inevitable." Because of this, the deity enshrined in Tōshōgū[1] also decreed that showing compassion to the poor who had no support was the basis of benevolent rule. However, during the past 240-250 years of peace, gradually, the ruling people have become accustomed to extreme luxury and they now live in sheer extravagance. All the officials who are entrusted with important political affairs openly give and receive bribes. Lower status people, without morals or sense of duty, are being promoted to positions of importance through their connections with the ladies in waiting in the families of the Shōgun and daimyō. They devote their wisdom and efforts to enrich their private coffers. They extract excessive levies from the common people and farmers in their own domains or in the districts they administer. Land tax and corvee have become overburdensome and the government now proposes unreasonable demands as stated earlier. As the needs of those officials increase, so the poverty of the whole world is compounded. There is no person who does not bear a grudge against the government. From the Tokugawa Government to the local daimyō, all have fallen into the previously explained habit[2].

ii) Since the period when the Ashikaga[3] family ruled, the Emperor especially is like a retired person as he has lost his function of rewarding or punishing the people. There is nowhere for the commoners to lay a complaint and, thus, society is out of order and the people's resentful mood cries to the heavens. Yearly, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions as well as landslides, floods, and various natural disasters

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[1]Refers to Tokugawa Ieyasu.
[2]That is, of charging more taxes.
[3]Ashikaga era, 1392-1573.

are prevalent and this has resulted in a famine of all the five cereal grains. Although all these were very strong warnings sent from heaven, the upper classes pay no heed; furthermore, people of mean ability and scoundrels are executing the important role of government. They merely distress the people and resort to various means of extorting money and rice. Really, a person like me (who, although I am an official, am only a minor person) is always observing and pitying the tenant farmers in their difficulties but it is only from the bottom, not from a higher position. Not having the status of Kings Tō and Bu[4], and not having the morality of Confucius and Mencius, I cannot do anything while I am in useless seclusion.

iii) Recently the price of rice has increased excessively but that does not deter the Ōsaka Commissioner and his officials from engaging in their arbitrary handling of policies. They transport rice to Edo, but fail to make any provision for the delivery of rice to Kyōto where the Emperor resides. They even arrest people who come down to buy 5-10 quarts (small amounts) of rice. Really they are just as bad as the old time Daimyō "Kuzuhaku"[5] who killed a child who was carrying a farmer's lunch-box. No words can express such irrational behaviour. The people of every region are all ruled by the Tokugawa family and, in that sense, there is equality. But, in reality, there are differences as stated above, as follows: All the commissioners are heartless and, as well, they often arbitrarily send out official announcements of their own in favour of the merchant class in Ōsaka city. As I stated above, these lower-status people (who are occupying high-ranking positions in government), who do not understand morals or a sense of duty, issue such statements on their own account and are extremely arrogant and unrepentant. Moreover, the wealthy people in the three districts comprising Ōsaka have for some years made profitable loans to the daimyō and have seized a large sum of gold, silver and stipend rice in interest. They have seldom been so well-off before and, even though they are merchants, they are treated as, and appointed to positions comparable to, retainers and elders in daimyō

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[4]There are two explanations regarding Kings Tō (T'ang) and Bu (Wu): 1) They were, respectively, founders of the Shang (1523 BC) and Chou (1122 BC) dynasties. 2) They were sacred Kings of the Confucianists about 1500 BC.

[5]Kuzuhaku was a *daimyō* although there are doubts as to the reading of his name.

households. Further, they own large areas of ricefields, gardens, and newly cultivated paddies and they live without going short of anything. While they observe the natural disasters and Divine punishments of these days, they have no fear. Also, although they see the poor and beggars starving to death, they do not try to save them. They themselves luxuriously eat fine foods, keep mistresses, and entice the retainers of daimyō to brothels and teahouses, and they drink expensive *sake* as if it was water. At this difficult time, they invite *Kabuki* actors who wear silk clothes together with *geisha* girls. What a thing it is, just playing around and indulging in pleasure as in normal times. This is not different from King Chou's[6] all-night feasts.

iv) The commissioner and officials of Ōsaka have the administrative power to control the actions of the above-mentioned people (merchants) and to help the lowly, but they do not do this. They do not even try to save them. Day after day they manipulate the Dōjima Exchange[7]. Actually, they are bandits, stealing the beneficence of heaven, and their actions cannot be condoned either by heaven or by the will of the sage. We who are confined to our homes can no longer tolerate the existing conditions. We lack the power of Kings Tō and Bu and we do not have the virtues of Confucius and Mencius. For the sake of all the people, knowing that they have no one to depend on, even though we may incur punishments on our families, those of us who are of like mind have now resolved as follows:

v) First, we shall execute those officials who torment and harass the lowly. Next we shall execute those rich merchants in the city of Ōsaka who are accustomed to a life of luxury. Then we shall uncover the gold and silver coins and other valuables that they hoard as well as the bags of rice kept hidden in their storehouses. These will be distributed to those who do not own ricefields, gardens, and possessions in the domains of Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima. We will divide, share, and deliver these resources, and, even to those who own land but who are still too poor to support their parents, wife, and children and who suffer from the famine, we will distribute the money and rice that we confiscate. So, whenever you hear the news that there is a riot in Ōsaka

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[6]King Chou (about 1100 BC) was the last of the Shang Dynasty and was known for his cruelty and evil deeds.
[7]The Dōjima Exchange was the large central rice market in Ōsaka.

city, rush immediately to Ōsaka regardless of the distance. We will divide to these people the rice and money as stated above. We intend to give the lowly-ranked these items and we will save the people at this time of famine and difficulty. Also, if there are people who have the abilities, they will be appointed to government positions. And those people (who have the talents) will be used in the army to conquer the unreasonable tyrants. This is definitely different from an ordinary (peasant) uprising. We will decrease the land tax and various service taxes and everything will be the same as in the administration of the restorer, Emperor Jimmu[8]. We will treat everybody generously (as Emperor Jimmu did), and we will completely change the manners of the luxurious and decadent. We will return to the principle of frugality and make all the people of the whole land thankful for the blessings of heaven and enable the people to look after their parents, wife, and children. We will save them from the hell they are experiencing during their lifetime and let them visualise the paradise which is usually only experienced after death. Even if we cannot restore the period of the idealised Emperors[9] of China and the period of Amaterasu, we would like to restore the society (age) of Emperor Jimmu, the restorer.

vi) I would like to notify each village individually but there are so many villages and so I have posted notices at the Shintō shrines of the large central villages where there are many houses, being careful that this message was not discovered by the watchmen who are sent from Ōsaka, and that it be circulated as speedily as possible to all the villages. If it seems that the watchmen have seen it and that they have informed the scoundrels in the four offices in Ōsaka, then, without hesitation, people should make the necessary arrangements to kill all the watchmen, not leaving one of them. When you hear of a big uprising occurring, if anyone is still doubtful about it, or else, if you come too late, the rice and money of the wealthy will have all been turned into ashes in the blaze and all the treasure of the world will have been lost. Those who lose their possessions will certainly bear us a grudge and will circulate the gossip that we are the malicious type of people who throw away

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[8]Emperor Jimmu was the legendary first Emperor and mythical founder of Japan's Imperial House.
[9]Idealised Emperors of the Shang Dynasty in China (16th-11th Centuries BC).

treasure. So, in order that they do not do this, we must behave in a seemly manner. For this reason everyone has been contacted and notified.

vii) The various documents and records which relate to land tax and which are held by the headmen of the villages should all be torn, burned and thrown away. I am deeply concerned about this matter. My real intention is not to make the people's life difficult. However, although some people say that our present uprising resembles the revolt of Japan's Taira no Masakado and Akechi Mitsuhide[10] and China's Lyu Yu and Shu Zen-chung[11], and there is quite good reason for that, nevertheless, in the heart of all of us there certainly is no desire to steal the whole world. The god of the sun, moon, and stars will clearly acknowledge that we do not have any such intention. In short, our real intention is the same spirit as the Confucian sacred Emperors Tō and Bu in the past and Kan no Kōso and Min no Taiso[12] who pitied the people and punished the existing ruler on behalf of heaven. If you are still doubtful then look at us, opening your eyes wide until our work is completed. Note well! This notice to the minor people (those who cannot read), priests of seminaries, doctors, and others should read clearly for them to hear. If the village headmen and elders are afraid of the imminent calamity and thus conceal this (manifesto) within themselves, then later on those people will certainly be punished.

viii) I am acting on behalf of God's will; I will punish those who deserve punishment.

Tempō 8th year (1837) Month Day

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[10]Taira no Masakado (d 940 AD), the warrior who led the first major rebellion by the rising warrior class against the Fujiwara-controlled central government in the tenth century. Akechi Mitsuhide (d 1582), one of the principal captains and the assassin of the hegemon, Ōda Nobunaga, in the sixteenth century.

[11]Lyū Yū (356-422), the general who overthrew the Chin dynasty and usurped the throne, becoming the first Liu-Sung emperor in 420 AD. Shu Zen-chung (852-912), leader of the Kōso revolt against the T'ang kingdom in 875-884. He later betrayed the revolt and sided with the T'ang government to suppress it. After the decline of the T'ang dynasty, he founded the later Liang dynasty.

[12]Kan no Kōso, the founder of the Han Dynasty 205 BC.
Min no Taiso, the founder of the Ming Dynasty, 1368 AD.

Addressed to the villages of the four provinces of Settsu, Kawachi, Izumi, and Harima.

To Village Headmen, Elders, Farmers, and Tenant Farmers.
Signed: Anonymous

Note: This document was called *Fukurojōshō*, (The Envelope Document), probably because it was put into an envelope. This Manifesto, entitled "Punishment from Heaven", was distributed in Ōsaka and the four neighbouring provinces, copies being affixed to the pillars of all the temples and shrines. Ōshio summoned volunteers from among the peasants to join a "punitive expedition against corrupt officials and covetous merchants". The slogan "Save the People!" (*kyūmin*) was blazoned on banners when Ōshio took to the streets.

Appendix III -- Exchange of Letters between Ōshio Heihachirō and Satō Issai

In order to highlight the relationship between Heihachirō and Issai, it may be profitable to translate both a letter sent from Heihachirō to Issai in April 1833 and Issai's reply of 1st July, 1833, as reproduced in Miyagi (1984:447-451). Ōshio entrusted the two volumes of his recently published *Senshindō Sakki* and an accompanying letter to Hazama Gorōbei who delivered them to Satō Issai in Edo. At that time, Issai was 62 and for nearly 30 years he had been the principal of the Rinke school. He had established himself as a great authority in Confucian thought in Edo and was also well-known for his deep erudition and Yōmei scholarship. Ōshio obviously respected Issai and regarded him as "a person who knew himself". He submitted his *Sakki* to Issai for his comments and criticisms. Ōshio's covering letter was written in over-formal classical Chinese, probably in deference to the veteran authority who had requested a reading of his main work. However, due to age and the pressure of work, Issai's reply was written in Japanese and its contents also fell short of Ōshio's expectations. Maybe Issai had only quickly perused *Sakki* or, perhaps, he felt that as a representative of the official philosophy he had to answer diplomatically.

1. *A Letter Sent to Satō Issai* in April 1833 that Ōshio, now retired from office as a city police official, wrote to "the old master", Satō Issai:

I have not yet met you personally but Hazama (Gorōbei) from this area has sent by courier your *Ainichi Rōshū* (published in 1829). I have read it and realise that your learning is deeper than the abyss, brighter than the stars, and is not disagreeable to the ear. Having already read the preface by Rinkō (Hayashi Jussai), the head of the college, I am cognisant both of your career and your misfortune. I grieve and yearn for you and really desire to see you. If you ask why I didn't ask to visit and inquire of you, it was not just because it was far away. Formerly, having been tied to official work, I have been buried under documents and was completely unable to free myself to get away. Therefore, I could just stand on tiptoe and scan the scene. However, now that I have retired and am at home, I would be quite free to go to Edo and serve you. But I cannot accomplish that desire.

If you ask why, it is because the people's personal grudges fill the whole country and so I am biding my time, retired for a while. From what I hear, you have already passed 60 years of age. I am 41 but my body is feeble and often sick. I do not know whether or not I have missed the opportunity of seeing you. If such is the case, there would be nothing that I regret more. Therefore, to you who are no mere passing acquaintance, I will state my intentions and solicit your instruction.

Formerly I was merely a distant official. I just sat in the seat of judgment and meted out punishment under the direction of my superiors, maintained a hereditary stipend, lived my own life, and did not especially try to seek anything else. In spite of that, and without devoting myself to it, I myself aspired to the ancients and studied the Way. Thus, I was neither accepted by the world nor loved by people. What a poor way of living! Ah, you who know me, have mercy on my intentions. But it is natural for the people who do not know me to condemn such a poor way of life.

My aims in the past have changed three times. At the age of 15 I read my family genealogy. According to that, my ancestor was a retainer of the Imagawa family and was his dependent. After the collapse of Mr. Imagawa, my ancestor entered the service of the Divine ancestors, the Tokugawa family. At the battle at Odawara he slew an enemy general in front of his (Ieyasu's) horse and was rewarded with one of his bows as well as given a domain in Tsukamoto village in Izu. He was already too old for the winter and summer camps in Ōsaka and so was not able to fulfil his purpose of joining the colours. Hence, he only guarded the Kashiwazaki fort in Echigo. After the inauguration of the Shogunate he was affiliated with the Owari domain. The eldest son inherited that house and that has carried on until the present while the younger son became an Ōsaka city official. This was my ancestor. Reading this history, I deeply regretted and was ashamed of being caught up in official work among prison guards and city officials. But my intention at that time seemed to be to follow the aims of my ancestors through great achievements and integrity. Was that the reason my spirit was always depressed and I was dejected just like the time when Ryū Chū Kai had no purpose? From the outset, his and my personalities were not comparable.

When I was seven years old[1], both my father and mother died. Thus, I had to inherit my grandfather's office early and my daily contact was solely with criminals and petty officials. What I saw and heard was nothing but stories of fame and taxes, moans and groans. I merely mastered rules and memorised regulations. Even though I tried to fulfil my former aims, I was not able to. I became uncertain and irresolute and, in this manner, passed the age of twenty. Among the officials there have never been any scholars and, if one made mistakes, there were no good friends to warn one and so the natural outcome was that it gave rise to such illnesses as deception, errors, living in luxury, and self-indulgence. Mencius said, "Whoever is devoid of a heart of right and wrong is not human."[2] However, if you secretly question yourself, there are many things that you could call sin in your words and actions which, after all, is little different from the criminal who is punished. Again we say, "It is not in man to have a heart that feels no evil," but the one who controls his sin seems not to be able to correct his own faults. How can I heal such illness? If I followed Confucianists, read books, and mastered reason, I thought I would be able to heal such illnesses and so I pursued learning. Here the aim of my achievements and integrity completely changed. But my intention at that time was to get rid of sickness through objectively seeking reason. I was like a person who longed for his heart to become right. We cannot escape the error of rashness. This is exactly the same attitude as Sai Shi-sho took when he was a child. Previously my predisposition could not reach him.

If Confucianist instruction was not exegesis, it was poetry. I stole my leisure and became acquainted with that and so gradually, without realising it, I was fitting into that mould and being influenced by it. For that reason, I covered over injustice. The knowledge of how to decorate words and eloquence was already endowed in my heart and mouth. I was composed and without fear, but the illness became more serious than before. Upon reflection, I found that I was far away from my former purpose. Why was I not regretful? Then I retreated and engaged in personal study. After indescribable hardships and privations, through

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[1]It seems that Heihachirō's memory was not clear because, as we have mentioned earlier, his father died in 1799 when he was seven and his mother died in 1800 when he was eight.
[2]*Mencius* II.A.6; Lau, 1970:83.

the help of heaven, I was able to buy *Shingingo*[3], an imported book by Ro Shin-go. This book was written during Ro Shin-go's illness. Through careful reading and tasting it, it seemed as though I suddenly realised that here was the Way. Did the so-called long needle take away the deep swelling? I was able to become a righteous person completely and, fortunately, the sin which was little different from that of a criminal was stripped away. From then on, I studied further the source of Ro Shin-go and realised that it originated in Yōmeigaku.

After the two gentlemen, Tōju and Banzan, and then Miwa Shissai, the study of "Intuition" had died out in West Japan where I lived. Thus, there was not even one person who lectured on it (Yōmeigaku). Herein my former aim of objectively seeking reason completely changed. In this way, my intention became to make sincerity my goal and to make acting intuitively my method. Since then, without looking back, I have pushed on with a spirited advance and have simply exhausted my strength in the present official work. Thus, I have repaid both the rulers' and my ancestors' favours and, in my intention of attempting to reward the teaching of ancient saints and sages, I have not dared convey it to people. Then, quite unexpectedly, my name has become popular throughout the whole country but it is a popularity based on a misunderstanding. In my opinion, even though I have not yet really attained to the Way, false popularity has abounded in this manner. This is something which heaven abhors. Therefore, I retired with determination and returned to my house to rest. It was not that I needlessly feared people's misfortune. At this time I was 38. Hence, now I am able to nourish my spirit wholeheartedly at home, to look back and reflect, amend errors and simply work at progressing towards goodness. But I have no good teacher and friends. If I live to 50 or 60 years of age, I fear that I may slacken my efforts. This is the thing that I constantly dread. From now on, how can I, by practising *kōfu*[4], increasingly stand firm in my purpose and allow my heart to return to the "great vacuum".

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[3]*Shingingo*, six volumes, was published in 1584. "Shingin" is the "groaning of sickness". The utterances from deep within are expressed when one feels difficulty in finding the real way. It was printed in Japan in 1860 as *The Analects of Ro Shin-go*.
[4]*kōfu* (Miyagi, 1984:449), a term for which we are unable to find a suitable modern translation.

You, teacher, also are following the study of "Intuition". If I do go to Edo, and even if I request to see you in the proper manner, I know that you will not treat me as Confucius treated Ju Hi.[5] Therefore, I request you to recognise this letter and give me instruction on what I have said about my aims. Please do not condemn me for such frankness. In addition, the disciples of my society print my *Sakki* and keep it at my private school. In order to spare the labour of copying, I do not dare show it to everybody. But my intentions are recorded in it.

Fortunately, a certain Mr. Hazama (Gorōbei) has recently gone to work for the Shogunate Astronomy Department and so I have entrusted the first and second volumes of *Sakki* to him and am respectfully presenting them to you. I would deem it a favour if you would read them at your leisure and give your advice about anything. Rinkō, the principal of the college, is friendly towards me. Seeing you visit his residence, you may have heard about me. After you have read them, please also pass them on to Rinkō. And if Rinkō also gives even a word of criticism and some guidance it will show his sincerity towards me. I ask you, teacher, merely to read this work and acknowledge my intentions. I close respectfully.

2. *Satō Issai's Reply*

To Heihachirō From Sutezō[6]

Dear Sir,

We still have not met but, at this time, when the heat of late summer is so severe, I am pleased that you are living in such good spirit. Now recently I have received the two volumes of your work, *Senshindō Sakki*, which you entrusted to your pupil, Mr. Hazama, and I thankfully accept your accompanying letter hand-written in Chinese. I ought to reply in Chinese but, being diverted by busyness and also because of old age and waning strength, I will reply in haste in Japanese. But, of your consideration, please forgive me.

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[5]Miyagi (1984:509,n3) says, "Ju Hi wanted to see Confucius but Confucius refused to see him, pretending to be sick. But soon after he was playing a large harp and singing. In this way he indicated to Ju Hi that there was a reason for not seeing him.

[6]Satō Issai's common name, his given name being Tan with which he signs this letter.

First, I have heard of your name for some years and have always wanted to meet you. Now I have unexpectedly received your letter which gave a summary of your personal history and integrity. I am full of joy for you as it seems the clouds have cleared away. A little time ago, on the occasion of Mr. Hazama coming to the capital, he showed me a book of selections from your book, *Sakki*[7], and now I have further received the whole of your new publications and have read them over and over again. In each line you deeply move and stir people with your true finding of the Way. I was so happy that I just jumped for joy. I do not think that I have reached there yet, but I especially admire and respect your understanding of the doctrine of "the great vacuum".

I also have already come to the understanding that the essence of one's heart was the great vacuum. But even though I myself am conscious of the great void, in reality, I could not escape foregone conclusions, arbitrary predeterminations, obstinacy and egotism[8]. It is very difficult to confirm this for it seems that we mistake the illusion for the truth. If you make strenuous efforts on this point, I certainly believe that your capacity will be greatly increased. Furthermore, I also pray that you will consider the application of what you are thinking to practical purposes. Now you have also mentioned that I like Yōmei learning but, the fact is that, I have not understood it at all and I am quite ashamed. I have previously read books on Yōmei learning, but I have only regarded them as admonition for myself personally; all my teaching has been the regular Sung learning (Shushigaku). Especially, as we have the Rinke family school, I cannot state any other doctrine. Otherwise, it might be an obstacle to the Rinke school and also might become a ground of suspicion for the people. Moreover, also, because I am moving about among many of the feudal lords in Edo, whatever the school, if one cannot himself attain to it, it is meaningless. Nevertheless, I personally am making an effort to practise wisdom and, thus, to rectify the injustice of ruler and subjects. I believe that if only one participates in

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[7]According to Miyagi (1984:509, n2), "Out of *Senshindō Sakki* 75 items had been selected and entrusted to Hazama Gorōbei and Issai's criticism of them was invited."

[8]A quotation from the *Analects* (IX.4; Legge:217): "There were four things from which the Master was entirely free; he had no foregone conclusions, no arbitrary predeterminations, no obstinacy and no egotism."

government, gradually, little by little, there will be compensation for the nation. It seems to me that people do not tend to criticise the content but they criticise the name[9]. It is not rare for the name to be a hindrance to some teaching and so we must strive to forsake the idea of self-assertion and be those who desire to seek impartiality. If we do that, I believe culture will spread. Certainly, whatever the school, if there is no reality in the study, it has no meaning at all. I am conscious that there is no way apart from the accumulation of one's own reality. What I am actually practising is less than one-tenth of what I desire and so I am doing nothing but merely sighing. I have stated somewhat of a summary of my views. I invite your instruction.

Further, in your publication *Sakki*, there is more than one clause which nobody has yet discovered and it is said that "Goodness is not just limited to Gyō and Shin"[10]. Especially, as you are in the prime of life, I hope henceforth that you may make much progress. Therefore, it goes without saying that I earnestly desire that you might investigate more and more deeply. I will comply with your request to show your work to Mr. Hayashi. But, thus far, it is still on my desk. In course of time I will show him. So please accept that. Furthermore, I did not reply in Chinese and so I'll show you my three rough literary miscellanies as transcribed by my private school students. I hope you will correct them. I will not weary of your indicating points which do not meet with your views. Concerning that, later on I will state in full by correspondence. This is a thankful reply. At this time when the season is not propitious, take care of yourself for the sake of the Way.

Your humble servant,

Satō Sutezō

1st July

To Ōshio Heihachirō Tan (his seal or signature)

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[9]"Surface" literally means "the name" and suggests Yōmeigaku. People studying Yōmeigaku were criticised even though their critics did not know the content of that learning.

[10]Gyō and Shin were two symbolic figures of goodness and Confucianists had idealised these two ancient, legendary Emperors and others as saints. Quoted from *Denshūroku*, Vol.I, para 22.

Appendix IV -- Eras of the Late Tokugawa Period

Tenmei	1781-1789
Kansei	1789-1801
Kyōwa	1801-1804
Bunka	1804-1818
Bunsei	1818-1830
Tempō	1830-1844
Kōka	1844-1848
Kaei	1848-1854
Ansei	1854-1860
Man'en	1860-1861
Bunkyū	1861-1864
Genji	1864-1865
Keiō	1865-1866
Meiji	1868-1912

Appendix V -- List of the Tokugawa Shōguns

1.	Ieyasu	1603-1605
2.	Hidetada	1605-1623
3.	Iemitsu	1623-1651
4.	Ietsuna	1651-1680
5.	Tsunayoshi	1680-1709
6.	Ienobu	1709-1712
7.	Ietsugu	1713-1716
8.	Yoshimune	1716-1745
9.	Ieshige	1745-1760
10.	Ieharu	1760-1786
11.	Ienari	1787-1837
12.	Ieyoshi	1837-1853
13.	Iesada	1853-1858
14.	Iemochi	1858-1866
15.	Yoshinobu (Keiki)	1866-1867

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