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KAIMYO (JAPANESE BUDDHIST POSTHUMOUS NAMES) AS INDICATORS OF SOCIAL STATUS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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ABSTRACT

This work focuses on the relationship between religion and social status in a rural town in the Tohoku region of northern Japan. I explore this conflict between egalitarian religious ideology and hierarchical social reality through kaimyo, posthumous Buddhist names. My question is, are kaimyo indicators of social status?

Most Japanese assert they have no religion, but the vast majority are buried and memorialized through Buddhist rites. Kaimyo are a standard and accepted part of these Buddhist rites, written for the deceased by a local priest in exchange for a donation. The donation however, is a matter of dispute.

Priests claim that kaimyo are free, lay people argue that they are not. The priest chooses the different characters and endings that comprise kaimyo after he receives the family's donation. Trends suggest that people are paying larger sums to receive more prestigious characters and higher status endings. In fact, a number of Japanese told me that kaimyo have become status symbols. The historical interaction between Buddhism and the social structure suggests that this is likely.

The beliefs of the laity in Nakada, as documented through surveys and interviews, are weighed against evidence found in three local cemeteries. The
three cemeteries represent different status groups within the township. I hypothesize that higher concentrations of honorific characters and high status kaimyo endings will be found in wealthy areas or those historically associated with the elite. Conversely, in poor or outcaste locales, rates of honorific characters and high status endings should be substantially lower. Additionally, in outcaste areas, derogatory or discriminatory characters may appear in the kaimyo.
To Craig, With Love
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To the people of Nakada, I owe a debt of gratitude for allowing me to work with them. A special thanks must go to the Miura and Yanagawa families for not only housing me, but also for their ceaseless efforts on my behalf. Much of this study would not have taken place without their amazing ability to network, and their willingness to take me to important temples and historic places.

And last, but definitely not least, I wish to thank my father and my husband Craig. To Dad, thanks for not only always being there, but also for coming to my rescue when it became necessary for me to make one more data-gathering trip to Japan, and for always helping with the little things. And Craig, I am grateful for your patience, sacrifices, and shoulder to lean on. Without your help, this never, ever would have been possible.
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In 1995, the family I was living with decided to visit relatives in Sendai. They asked if I wanted to come along, in part, because the Tanabata Festival, for which Sendai is famous, was underway. We drove through verdant rice paddies and small villages until we reached the city. We pressed our way through the crushing throngs of people to see the beautiful paper tanabata hanging from the ceilings of the shopping district and pedestrian malls.

After a long, hot afternoon of tanabata-viewing, we returned to the relatives' house for tea. As everyone relaxed, the conversation turned to my research. The adults conceded that they did not know too much about kaimyo, but were very vocal on several points. They felt that kaimyo were too expensive, and that they had become status symbols. Through my literature research I knew that kaimyo could indicate rank or social status, but I had not considered that they could be thought of as status symbols. The family members pointed out that people sometimes spent lots of money to get a high status kaimyo, in an attempt to raise their family's status.
Later, back in Ohio, I spoke with a Japanese friend about *kaimyo*. He said that, while he didn’t really know much about *kaimyo*, he knew that they probably had links to social status. But, he explained that not all priests were willing to link status with donations. He recounted the story of his uncle, who recently approached his local priest about *kaimyo*. The priest showed an example of the kind of *kaimyo* he could expect based on the man’s family history and position.

Death and funeral rituals are issues all Japanese will deal with during their lifetime. And as people age, they begin thinking about their own mortality. In Japan, one aspect of death and funeral rituals is *kaimyo*, posthumous Buddhist names.

*Kaimyo* are a standard part of the Buddhist funeral and memorial service in Japan. They are posthumous names written by the deceased’s family priest in exchange for a donation. Although most Japanese will receive a *kaimyo* or have them written for family members, the majority of people actually know very little about them. However, people do have strong opinions regarding *kaimyo*: they are too expensive, there are “good” ones and “bad” ones, and one can determine a person’s status by evaluating the characters incorporated. As Japan is a hierarchical society, and with hierarchy comes status consciousness, it makes sense that these conclusions are inferred.
Religion and Status: Archaeological Evidence

Archaeological and historical evidence linking religion and social status, particularly through death rituals, is well established worldwide. One excellent, and widely known example, are burial practices among the ancient Egyptians. In the late pre-dynastic period (4th millennium BCE), the Egyptians began constructing more elaborate tombs for the elite, and furnishing them with grave goods. This practice increased in scale over time. In the Old Kingdom period (2600-2200 BCE), King Khufu (known in Greek as Cheops) commissioned the building of the great pyramid at Giza. His pyramid is surrounded by the smaller pyramids of his relatives and successors. In the New Kingdom period (1560-1070 BCE), kings were considered quasi-divine and buried in rock-cut tombs in the Valley of the Kings (Price and Feinman 1993). Egyptians ornately decorated and furnished pyramids and tombs. Of note, many people are familiar with the treasures of Tutankhamon, which toured the world in the 1970s. It is interesting to point out, however, that despite the vast riches found in his tomb, he was actually a relatively minor figure in Egyptian history (World Atlas of Archaeology 1988). The rank of the deceased could be determined by a number of factors including the type and amount of grave goods, titles (inscribed or painted on walls and sarcophagi), mummification techniques and wrapping styles, etc. Commoner burials were simple, plain, and mummification normally occurred through natural rather than artificial means.
We find similar practices throughout the world: Greek and Roman tombs, megalithic tombs in Western Europe, Adena and Hopewell burial mounds in North America, treasure-filled tombs of the ancient Moche in Peru, royal Mayan burial pyramids, tombs of elite in China with their armies of terracotta warriors, and so forth.

Japan also has a history of large, keyhole-shaped tombs built for its elite. These tombs, called kofun, were built between the 3rd and 7th centuries CE, and range from Kyushu to north eastern Honshu. Kofun were sometimes painted or carved inside, but more often were surrounded by terracotta haniwa figurines portraying humans, animals, etc (World Atlas 1988, Varley 1973, Hane 1992).

The most common grave goods were bronze mirrors, swords, and decorative objects known as magatama. These three articles (mirror, sword, and jewel) are also symbols of imperial rule.

The burials of elites leave little doubt as to their status in life. Their tombs are significantly larger, better built, decorated and furnished than their commoner counterparts.

The Research Question

In Japan, most people are cremated, and with land constraints, enormous tombs cannot be constructed. The wealthy can afford to have larger cemetery
plots and more elaborate tombstones, but these must be kept within reasonable limits. I believe that status differences are now demonstrated through death rituals such as kaimyo.

People are paying increasingly large amounts for these names, in some cases up to $US 50,000, and as a result, they are becoming increasingly frustrated by the perceived cost. Why are these names considered so important that people are willing to spend tremendous amounts of money on them? Have kaimyo merely become an extension of the desire to raise one's rank through achieved status in a notoriously vertical society? Has the idealism of Buddhism take a backseat to the reality of commercialism, or is this a matter of perception? Evidence suggests that the quest for higher status does not end with death.

This dissertation explores the connections between social structure, status, and religion in the Japanese context, posing the question: are kaimyo indicators of social status? I expect to find that kaimyo are being utilized as benchmarks of social status, with wealth playing the dominant role in status assignment today.

Specifically, I expect to find quantifiable evidence such as higher concentrations of honorific characters and high status kaimyo endings in the cemeteries located in wealthy areas or areas historically associated with the elite. Conversely, in poor or outcaste locales, rates of honorific characters and high status endings should be substantially lower. Additionally, I should find a
significant number of characters identified as derogatory as well as lower status kaimyo endings. If wealth influences kaimyo, my evidence should point to notable differences.

This work is unique in that it is the first substantial English examination of kaimyo. A few scholars such as Ooms mention kaimyo in brief, but the existing body of literature is predominantly Japanese. My research involved the translation of the Japanese literature, including recent internet information, as well as interviews and surveys conducted in Japanese. Additionally, I translated samples of kaimyo from cemeteries in Nakada.

This work is not an all-encompassing, inter-regional study. Rather, it examines the question of kaimyo as indicators of social status in one specific rural area in northeastern Japan (Figs. 1–3). Although the literature is general to Japan, my interviews, surveys and cemetery analysis are specific to Nakada Township. The results of my fieldwork however, may serve as a point of departure for comparison throughout Japan.

Chapter Outline

This dissertation is organized into 6 sections. Chapter 1 is the introduction. Chapter 2 discusses the research problem and theoretical considerations, briefly examining past work on social structure, status, and religion. Chapters 3 addresses methods utilized during research and data analysis. It covers reasons for my choice of fieldsite, and within the fieldsite,
why I chose three specific cemeteries for analysis. Chapter 4 examines kaimyo: what they are, their history, composition, sectarian differences, elite and discriminatory kaimyo, etc. The following section, Chapter 5, covers research data and results. It addresses the primary question: in this fieldsite, are kaimyo indicators of social status? I compare over 600 kaimyo from the three cemeteries, and provide a statistical analysis of the results. Additionally, the responses from my surveys and interviews are weighed against the statistical data. I conclude in Chapter 6, with a summary of my results, and how my research relates to larger cultural questions. Additionally, I provide suggested relevant topics for future research.

---

1 Tanabata is a festival held in August, when the stars Vega and Altair appear closest together. The festival is based on a Chinese legend about two young lovers whose behavior angered the King of Heaven, who banishes them to opposite ends of the heavens. They meet only once a year, in August. For the celebration, elaborate paper and ribbon decorations called tanabata are constructed and hung around the central parts of town.

2 The men speaking actually used the phrase statusu shimboru, (status symbol).


4 The Moche culture ruled northern Peru between 100 and 800 CE. Recent excavations uncovered three tombs of nobles in a large pyramid. Details of the discovery were published in the March 2001 issue of National Geographic.

5 See Archaeology at www.archaeology.org/online/features/mexico/
RESEARCH PROBLEM AND THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A Rationale for This Study

Japan is undeniably one of the world’s most vertical and status-conscious societies. Hierarchy and status are central to Japanese life. But what about after life? Does the emphasis on status end with death? I propose that it does not. This was certainly the case for the Trobrianders described by Annette Weiner (1976). I assert that kaimyo are indicators of social status and provide a means for transforming symbolic cultural capital into economic capital (Bourdieu 1984). The following chapter will briefly outline theoretical justifications for this view.

Death is universal, not only in its physical realities, but in the fact that regardless of the culture, it impacts the social order. Relationships between the living and the dead change, and relationships among the survivors change as well.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS: STATUS, STRUCTURE, AND STRATIFICATION

This study involves the study of the interaction between status, structure, stratification, and religion. Therefore, an overview of these terms is provided.
What is Status?

An important word to define for this study is status. People often use "status" synonymously with "prestige," but social scientists view it within a broader social context. There are two main views of status, one proposed by Ralph Linton, the other by Max Weber. According to Linton’s functionalist perspective, status is any position within a social system (Siles 1972, Barnard and Spencer 1998, Kuper and Kuper 1996). This position carries rights, duties, and expected behaviors called roles. Interactions within and between people and their positions are culturally determined and linked to their society’s social structure (Magill 1995).

Weber, however, viewed status, as “an effective claim to social esteem in terms of positive or negative privileges” (Weber 1968). Status, along with power and wealth, form the basis of social stratification. These three elements are not mutually exclusive, but, Weber suggests, they normally coincide (Weber 1968, Kuper and Kuper 1996, Barnard and Spencer 1998). Conflicts often arise when changes in traditional economic systems occur, because of shifts in the distribution of power and wealth. For example, in Great Britain in the late 1800s, conflicts transpired between impoverished aristocrats (little wealth, high status, waning power) and the nouveau riche such as prosperous merchant families (much wealth, little status, increasing power) (Magill 1995).
Status is commonly divided into two types: ascribed and achieved. Ascribed status is a social position into which one is born, and therefore cannot change. Age, sex (and gender, some argue), family membership, racial identity, and caste membership are examples of ascribed status. Achieved status, in contrast, is that which can be changed. It includes marital status, educational level, religion (with a few exceptions), occupation, club membership, etc. Ascribed and achieved statuses are related, in that in many cases, one's ascribed status affects one's ability to change achieved status (Crapo 1996, Magill 1995, Kuper and Kuper).

Additionally, status may be acquired through following social norms such as expected behavior patterns, and through associations with other people. Conversely, nonconformity to social norms and forming imprudent intimate relationships tend to lower status (Milner 1994).

Status is conveyed through cues, actions and status symbols. Goffman (1972) defines status symbols as "specialized means of displaying one's position." Symbolic meaning can be attached to most anything: objects, language, manners, gestures, etc. In Britain, Queen's English is markedly different from the Cockney dialect, and it identifies the speaker as having a higher social position. But, status symbols may be manipulated and used duplicitously, commanding higher status and privilege than is due (1996 Kuper and Kuper).
Veblen's (1899) study of status symbolism provided three basic assumptions. First, the objects of consumption were significant because they were symbolic of superior ability and import. Second, contentment with the objects was a matter of comparison with others of similar situation. And third, it was appropriate to display one's status and even surpass others when possible.

Structure

Status does not occur in isolation. It transpires as part of a larger phenomenon, the social structure. As people interact, they acquire statuses, and a single person has multiple statuses both ascribed and achieved. Each status held is relative to another person or position within the larger structural context.

Social structure and social organization are often used interchangeably. But, social scientists have in the past distinguished between the two terms. Social organization refers to the "sum total of activities performed in a given social context, "while social structure is "the social context itself ... the set of social relations which link individuals in a society" (Barnard and Spencer 1998:510). That is, social organization involves the roles played during interaction, while social structure elucidates the statuses associated with the roles.

Radcliffe-Brown (1952) viewed social structure as relationships between individuals. In contrast, the positions people occupy relative to each other, can
be termed structural form. Lévi-Strauss and many others use the term social structure to refer to Radcliffe-Brown's structural form. Talcott Parsons' views mirrored those of Radcliffe-Brown, moreover he added the idea of the social system, which included elements of both structure and organization. Parsons’ social system included: “social values, institutional patterns, specialized groups and roles performed by individuals in these groups” (Barnard and Spencer 1998:511).

Stratification

Social stratification is the ranking of people within a social structure according to their different levels of wealth, prestige, power, status or other social measures. Stratification is most often found in complex societies with centralized political systems and large population. Luxury goods and privileges distinguish the elite from commoners (Levinson and Ember 1996).

Views on the origins of stratification vary. Functionalists see stratification arising from occupational specialization. Some occupations are difficult, requiring extensive preparation or training. Individuals who choose to undertake such tasks are rewarded for their efforts with wealth, power and/or prestige. Parsons believed that the resulting order was based on the society’s norms and values, and that stratification provided stability to the social system through rewards (Magill 1995).
Marxists, in contrast, analyze stratification according to unequal access to material goods, property and power. Inequality leads to conflict and higher levels of inequality. At the top of the social structure are the exploiters (bourgeoisie in capitalist societies), who own the means of production, but do not produce goods or services themselves. At the lower end of the social structure are the exploited (proletariat), those who do not own the means of production, but are the producers of goods and services (Magill 1995). Not only do the proletariat not own means of production, but they have unequal (or often no) access to education, power, and other means of raising their position. Inequality is systemic.

Weber examined stratification as a complex system based on economic factors such as skills, credentials, market relationships, property ownership, status, etc. He divided stratification into three basic types: estate, caste, and class. Estate stratification is based on laws regulating relationships and behavior. Estates are "political associations in which the means of administration are autonomously controlled...by the dependent administrative staff" (Weber 1958:51). An example of this is feudal system, in which vassals oversaw and paid for the administration of justice in their fiefdoms. Caste stratification is regulated by religion and ritual. Castes are closed status groups, that is, there is no mobility between status groups, and status distinctions and behaviors are prescribed by norms, laws and ritual. In classes, economic
behavior determines social ranking. Strongly linked to this was property ownership. Weber believed that once a person owned property, prestige and power would naturally follow (Magill 1995, Weber 1946).

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF KAIMYO

Representation/Reproduction of the Social Order

*Kaimyo* are religious symbols that can, in a larger context, be seen as both representing and reproducing the order of this social structure. As discussed previously, social structure is the network of relations connecting individuals, occupying various social positions, into an integrated whole. It includes the differential social positions of individuals and classes (Radcliffe-Brown 1952).

The relationship between structure, status and religion both reflects and reproduces the social order. Durkheim (1965) viewed religion as an important mechanism for increasing and enforcing social solidarity. It encourages the feeling of community and commitment to the group's values. He defines religion as:

\[\text{A unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden, beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them (1965: 62).}\]
Religious things are *représentations*, expressing the nature of sacred things and the relations they maintain with each other, or with profane things. Religion functions to perpetuate certain behaviors for the good of society. The mechanism through which this is accomplished is ritual.

Religious rituals reaffirm and strengthen sentiments, such as values and norms, upon which social orders depend. Rituals reproduce and reinforce social solidarity (Durkheim 1965, Douglas 1966, Radcliffe-Brown 1952). Rites "regulate, maintain, and transmit" society's sentiments from one generation to another (Radcliffe-Brown 1952:157). These sentiments maintain social order through prescribing the behavior of individuals (Durkheim 1965, Douglas 1966, Radcliffe-Brown 1952).

Rituals associated with death in particular demonstrate this emphasis on the social order. Death by its very nature disrupts the social order by removing the holder of a particular position and status. After a death, social relationships must be redefined in order to maintain the social structure. Durkheim (1965) examines the role of piacular rites, associated with mourning, and their structure maintenance function in societies, and Radcliffe-Brown discusses the studies of early Confucian scholars on the maintenance of social order through mourning rites (Radcliffe-Brown 1952). Of course, the impact of death varies with regard to such factors as the size of the society, the status or rank of the deceased, age, sex, etc. For example, Scheper-Hughes (1989) examined the impact of high infant mortality in impoverished Brazilian shantytowns. Status was low,
overcrowding was high, and with an infant mortality rate of over 1 million per year, a child's death was greeted with little emotion and a hasty burial. Disturbance to the social order is minimal to non-existent. However, when people of high status die, it was quite a different matter. This is true even in the United States, with its few formal mourning requirements. When John F. Kennedy was killed, the entire nation mourned publicly. His death had a profound impact, not only socio-politically, but on the national psyche. More recently, many nations mourned the death of Diana, former Princess of Wales. The shock and grief was profound, even in Japan, where I was engaged in fieldwork at the time. The outpouring of sentiment reflected not only the impact of her humanitarian efforts, but her high status as a former royal princess.

Religion mirrors society (Radcliffe-Brown 1952). Therefore, a hierarchical society will most likely have a hierarchical rather than egalitarian religion. As Buddhism moved across the Asian continent and into Japan, its ideals changed as cultures adapted the religion. This is certainly true of Japan. Traditional Buddhism was egalitarian, offering the prospect of enlightenment to all beings. Even women and people of low castes were included. Indeed, Buddhism was called the Middle Way as its practices were neither too simple nor too severe. Its practice was not extreme and could, theoretically, be performed by anyone. When Buddhism was introduced into Japan, it was brought to the court first. The elites patronized it, and monasteries were established in the areas surrounding the capital. It was largely monastic and catered to the elites. The
Japanese adapted Buddhism to suit their culture. The ecclesiastic structure mirrored the Japanese social organization. Temples and monasteries grew into powerful land-owning institutions.

Buddhism was one of the factors in establishing, maintaining and perpetuating the feudal social categories. Once military rule divided the social structure into four basic castes, Buddhist temples kept records of families' castes. Buddhist priests could threaten or punish families with outcaste status if they did not comply with social norms and values. Buddhist ideology reinforced the idea that one's current socio-economic condition was a result of karma accrued in previous lives. This conception of karma suggested that the responsibility for low status or physical/mental disabilities rested with those so afflicted, and thereby admonished everyone to fulfill their social roles appropriately. This was important not only because of their duty in this life, but to prevent the further accumulation of negative or harmful karma.

*Kaimyo,* Buddhist posthumous names, were used to reflect the social order. Families of different statuses were given different *kaimyo,* so that even in death, their social situation was clear. It also helped maintain the social order by slotting people into their appropriate roles.
Marking Social Boundaries: High Status, Low Status, and Outcastes

*Kaimyo* have different ranks, some considered high, others low. Additionally, characters added can increase or decrease the status of the *kaimyo*, and therefore, the deceased. *Kaimyo* reflect social status and boundaries.

According to Milner (1994), status mobility is often restricted or limited by a status group. In pre-war Japan, this was certainly the case. The ruling elite, both aristocratic and military, restricted the status mobility of the rest of the population. Rules proscribed behavior, and sumptuary laws defined appropriate dress, housing, etc. *Kaimyo* were no exception, and were limited to the elites until the 1600s.

High status groups believe that if a significant number of people are elevated in status, some distinction must be made or some people lowered, or the high status group risks losing its high status (Milner 1994). In Japan, when the elites felt that *kaimyo* were becoming too widespread, or that the traditional *kaimyo* no longer conferred enough status, they added characters such as *in* (mansion) or *dono* (feudal lord), and restricted the use of these characters. And in the early 1800s, the government passed legislation to combat an "epidemic" of high status *kaimyo* among commoners. *Kaimyo* have been actively used to demarcate high and low status (Ooms 1996, Matsune 1990a, 1990b).
*Kaimyo* have also been used to designate those with very low status, such as the outcasts. Discriminatory *kaimyo* were used, in some areas (as recently as the 1970s or 1980s) to mark the graves and memorial tablets of outcasts/former outcasts. Douglas suggests that symbols are used to divide or distinguish parts of the social order (Wuthnow 1984, Douglas 1966). Moreover, societies which use spatial criteria for status differentiation often are concerned with the concept of pollution. For example, not only were the outcasts in Japan physically isolated in their living and working conditions, they were also considered spiritually polluted. One of the old terms applied to outcasts was *eta*—"abundant filth." Due to their great ritual impurity, they were prevented from entering shrines, most temples, houses of non-outcasts, etc. The pollution is inheritable, and outcasts were said to contaminate any lineage they married into (Ooms 1996, DeVos and Wagatsuma 1967, Neary 1989).

According to Douglas (1966), pollution becomes a concern in societies anxious about maintaining social boundaries. Those people or groups who do not fit neatly into socially determined categories may be seen as polluting and a danger to the social order. The "uncleanliness or dirt is that which must not be included if a pattern is to be maintained" (1966:40). These ideas of pollution serve to strengthen restriction of inter-group associations and social mobility (Milner 1994).

But these social boundaries are not impermeable. Even in caste societies where ascription limits mobility, changes do occur. For example, in
modem Japan, wealth is a large factor in status determination. Weber (1968) suggests that while property is not necessarily a qualification for high status, that in reality, it is. People moving up the socio-economic ladder may accumulate wealth faster than can be reflected in their social status, as one’s status is linked to the community. Significant status changes tend to occur over time, over a number of generations, so as to avoid direct conflict with social norms (Milner 1994).

As Economic Goods

Today, kaimyo have a distinct economic component. They have essentially become goods to be bought and sold, and are viewed as such by the laity. For example, the one fact that all people I interviewed and surveyed agreed upon is that kaimyo are expensive. Moreover, according to the literature and my interviews with priests, an increasing number of temples have established price lists to help patrons budget their money for kaimyo.

Buddhist priests write kaimyo for the deceased only after receiving a donation. Families of the deceased however, do not view the money as donations, but fees. And it is a common perception that higher status kaimyo can be “purchased” for larger sums of money. This causes problems in that payments for recognition render institutions “morally suspect” (Milner 1994:32). Indeed, many Japanese feel resentful of the Buddhist clergy, whom they view as abusing their positions to accumulate wealth.
Economic goods do not exist in a vacuum. They are part of the cultural system within which they exist. They are commodities because the culture places value on them. Douglas (1979) points out that economic goods, as part of their cultural system, carry meaning and have social functions. She claims that “they can be used as fences or bridges” (1979:12). Economic goods are “social markers used to construct and demarcate social reality” (Wuthnow 1984:116).

In Japanese culture, I argue that this is the case with kaimyo. They are part of the larger framework of society. They have become social markers, not only reflecting social structure, but social status. They delineate the holders of high status from those of lesser standing, and also have been used historically to clearly identify (and segregate) members of outcaste groups.

As Cultural Capital

The economic aspects of kaimyo may fall under the larger framework of the relations between culture, stratification and power. Pierre Bourdieu examines the struggle for power between individuals and groups within classes and status hierarchies. Class socialization plays a large role in the establishment of one’s place within the social hierarchy, as it provides various social advantages and disadvantages related to economic, cultural, and symbolic resources. For example, a person born into an upper class family will most likely have access to economic resources such as money, be trained in
proper grammar and vocabulary, and be schooled in science, history, art, etc. This background will reflect and instill the values of the upper class, which in turn are marks of distinction. Conversely, someone born into an impoverished or blue-collar family will have less access to money, education and other distinguishing forms of cultural capital.

There are finite amounts of these resources. For example, wealth is not equally accessible to all people; universities have limits on enrollment; high-paying, prestigious jobs are finite in number; and due to the unequal distribution of economic and cultural capital, high status eludes the majority of the population. Because of this, people actively pursue means of increasing their access to, or possession of them. Bourdieu claims that "all cultural symbols and practices, ranging from artistic tastes, style in dress, and eating habits to religion, science and philosophy... embody interests and function to enhance social distinctions" (Swartz 1996: 72).

Bourdieu terms these valued resources that provide distinctions, capital. Capital is organized into numerous types, such as: economic – material and financial resources; cultural – usually intangible and exclusionary resources such as language skills, educational credentials, artistic preferences, etc.; and symbolic – the legitimate right to demand recognition, honor, submission, or other such behavior (Swartz 1996, 1997).
Cultural capital is of particular importance. It can be accumulated, and its prestige and privilege passed down through the generations. It can be used to generate economic capital, as when graduates of prestigious universities find that they have easier access to well paying jobs.

The struggles for capital are played out in "fields," or areas in which the particular capital is of significant importance. There is also an emphasis on rank and hierarchy during interaction within fields. Religion is one such field where power struggles occur. Religious leaders "compete for monopoly over the administration of the goods of salvation and of the different classes interested in their services" (Swartz 1996, 1997). Dominant classes seek to legitimate their interests through religious ideology and practice. The laity struggle to compete within the established order.

Kaimyo fit neatly into this conception of the relations between structure and status. As a type of cultural capital, kaimyo make it possible to bridge cultural and economic capital. The social and economic history of kaimyo suggest that these names are objects of value, for which there is a struggle. Initially, they were limited to the elite, thereby being both exclusive and exclusionary. They were symbolic of social power, and a mark of distinction. As kaimyo became common among the population at large, the elite struggled to maintain their power by having high status characters and endings added to their kaimyo. Commoners likewise endeavored to increase the status of their kaimyo. In recent years, there has been an explosion in both the number of
characters and high status characters and endings. People are willing to pay increasingly large amounts of money to receive prestigious kaimyo, actively seeking to increase their status.

Additionally, priests may find it expedient to offer increasingly high ranking kaimyo or have distinct levels of ranks to maintain their religious monopoly or income. As the number of tithing parishioners dwindles, priests are increasingly forced to rely on kaimyo-related fees for support. Knowing that people are willing to pay more for higher ranking kaimyo, they may be more inclined to provide them.

The status of the kaimyo, like many other types of cultural capital, can be inherited. Kaimyo are public and visible within local cemeteries, and multiple generations are found on the same tombstone. Family members buried in the same grave plot have generally similar ranking kaimyo. Perhaps there is a bequest motive, that people seek the highest kaimyo possible to pass the rank on to their descendents. The theoretical point is that kaimyo as cultural capital have provided a bridge to economic capital through the different generations.
This chapter will provide the background and methodology necessary for evaluation of the primary question: do kaimyo serve as indicators of social status? In order to fully understand this or any study it is necessary to understand both the questions asked and the context of the research, as well as the spatial and temporal conditions. Research methods and means of analysis provide the framework for this study, and therefore must be examined.

FIELDWORK

Site Selection

I conducted fieldwork for this dissertation in the summers of 1995 and 1997 in Nakada township, northeastern Japan. I selected this area in part due to the number of variables that could be observed with relation to religion and social status: position along a major river used for irrigation; the continued existence of social hierarchies, both within and outside the
family; and the historical presence of a former leper and outcaste hamlet. Moreover, as Dr. Richard H. Moore conducted research earlier in the same village, previously made contacts were invaluable.

The Township

Nakada township is part of Tome county, Miyagi prefecture, in the northern Tohoku region of Japan (Figs. 14 - 16). Its boundaries are the Kitakami river to the east, and the much smaller Natsu river to the west. The village encompasses approximately 62.23 square kilometers, with 17,444 people comprising 4,091 households (Nakada Jinkokki 1996) is comprised of four villages (Ishinomori, Uwanuma, Takarae, and Asamizu), which are further subdivided into small hamlets.

Its location on the Kitakami, the largest river in Northern Japan, is one of the important factors of this study. Nakada is a rural agricultural township whose primary crop is Sasanishiki variety rice. The water from the river is important for irrigation. Traditionally in Japan, upstream families were wealthier than those downstream due to the access to and control over irrigation water and channels. By comparing the kaimyo from three hamlets at different locations on the river, it is anticipated that some form of social distinction will be found.

Another feature of Nakada township that relates to this study is the maintenance of the traditional forms of social hierarchy, as discussed
earlier, both inside and outside the family. The ie and dozoku patterns discussed in the appendix are strongly maintained, and ties between head and branch families remain largely unbroken in Nakada. It is anticipated that social hierarchy, manifested as rank and status, will be a variable in the analysis of kaimyo.

The presence of a former burakumin/leper hamlet is a third reason I chose this area. Studies in Japanese point to the use of sabetsu kaimyo, discriminatory posthumous Buddhist names (Hirosawa 1993; Kobayashi 1987; Matsune 1990a, 1990b). I will examine a sample of kaimyo from this hamlet’s cemetery for the presence of derogatory characters associated with this type of discrimination.

History

The township of Nakada as a geopolitical entity dates to relatively modern times, although the area itself has quite a long history. Prehistoric remains from the Jomon era (8000 - 300 BCE) are found in various parts of Nakada. In the village of Ishinomori to the northwest is a prehistoric burial site. In the southeast is the Asabe “cooking shells” midden and archaeological site. In Uwanuma to the northeast, large earthenware jars have been found (Nakada Choshi 1996).

Early in Japanese history the northern part of Japan was considered wilderness, and not worthy of much attention by the governing bodies or
peasants. This was true of the Nakada region as well, especially as it was mostly unusable swampland. In 1097 CE the region came under the rule of the Fujiwara clan. Between 1300 and 1600 CE the Fujiwaras and a local family, the Kasais, battled each other for control. In 1604 the powerful Date clan defeated the Kasai family and ruled most of the northern territory in Japan from Aoba castle in Sendai until 1868. During this time the Date lords encouraged the drainage and reclamation of swampland through the granting of tax waivers (Moore 1990). This process continued over hundreds of years until most of the swamp was made arable. Small hamlets grew into villages, and modern Nakada township was created in 1956 by the incorporation of the 4 previously mentioned villages (Nakada Jinkokki 1996).

THE DATA

The Three Sites and Collection Methods

In Japan, Buddhist priests conduct the majority of funerals (Earhart 1982), although Shinto funerals do occur. This is true in Nakada township as well. It is interesting to note that in Nakada, Shinto graves are located within Buddhist temple cemeteries. Although Shinto posthumous names exist, they are not part of this study.

Within Nakada township there are 12 main cemeteries, 11 affiliated with specific Buddhist temples. I took photographs of selected samples of
20 - 25 tombstones from every cemetery. For the purpose of this study, I eventually narrowed my focus to three cemeteries along the river. I chose these sites not only because their location along the river, but also to examine differences between the old elite, the new upperclass, and the former outcastes. The sample consists of: north – Temple M, a Shingon temple that has become powerful and popular in recent history; central – Temple H, a Soto Zen temple historically associated with the nobility and elites; and south – Cemetery O the unaffiliated cemetery in the former burakumin/leper hamlet. The resulting data encompasses over 600 kaimyo.

Within each cemetery, I selected an area, then tried to stay within rows or clearly marked sections. In a few cases this was not possible, as graves in some cemeteries were scattered over the landscape, and others on badly eroding hillsides that made photography dangerous as well as difficult. Other factors influencing choice were time of day and the type of stone used. Because of glare from the sun, it was impossible to photograph certain areas during the times of the day I was working. Additionally, certain stone colors and types photographed better than others. Nakada township has a large rock quarry, and many tombstones, especially older ones, were made of this local stone. Unfortunately, inscriptions in this pale gray rock were not only difficult to photograph, but in many cases impossible to read entirely. Erosion and the presence of
moss further complicated the matter. I had best success with the newer tombstones made of highly polished, imported black granite. The carved inscriptions are filled in with white paint, providing a good visual contrast. Although the newer stones were easier to photograph, they posed an initial concern: would the samples be biased toward the present? The answer is both yes and no. Although the samples are primarily modern (1868 to present), the newer stones included 58 (confirmable) ancestral dates prior to 1868. The oldest date recorded in the three samples is 1686.

The data from the three cemeteries is useful for aggregate comparisons, but to further test my hypothesis, I also gathered the kaimyo of families of known socio-economic status. All the families in the specific comparison have graves in the same cemetery, and live in the same hamlet.

Surveys and Interviews

I collected data through surveys and interviews, both formal and informal. Fetterman (1989:47) calls interviewing "the ethnographer's most important data gathering technique." In both situations I made use of both closed- and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions are those which generate quantifiable answers such as yes/no, how much, and when. Open-ended questions allow for interpretation and explanation (Fetterman 1989). Informal interviews occurred in many places and in
many settings. Formal interviews were conducted through the auspices of
the local Nichiren priest, who invited me along on his Obon rounds.
Fortunately, I conducted these interviews during a particularly good time of
year to be researching kaimyo, as Obon rituals center around the family
gravesite and the butsudan, the household Buddhist altar. After a formal
introduction by the priest, I interviewed his parishioners as he performed
prayers for their ancestors. I recorded the interviews in a notebook, which
were transcribed at the end of each day.

I created a survey that was given to the Nichiren priest's parishioners
I was unable to meet, to members of the local board of education, workers
at the town hall, and employees of the local agricultural cooperative. These
groups were chosen based on personal connections established through
my host family.

The response rate of the first group, the priest's parishioners, was
0%, but the other groups all had 100% returns. I believe this was due to the
differing levels of obligation involved. I had no connection with the priest's
parishioners other than the survey, so obligation, an important facet of
Japanese life, was minimal. However, as I had been introduced to several
of the other groups prior to the survey, had lived in 1995 with the mayor's
family, and the father of the family I stayed with in 1997 was a well-liked,
well-connected businessman who initiated the survey distribution, the
sense of obligation was greatly increased.
The survey was comprised of 16 questions, the first half of which the Nichiren priest asked me to include so that he could gain a better understanding of what his parishioners thought about religion and the role of the clergy. Although these questions are on all surveys, they are not part of this study.

The survey was anonymous, and included the Japanese symbol for confidentiality. It began with an introduction to who I was and the purpose of my research. At the end of the survey, I wanted to ask for such statistical information such as sex and age range. However, the woman typing and printing the survey changed this, asking instead for marital/family status such as grandfather/grandmother, father/mother, or child. She felt that these categories would provide me with important data. Additionally, respondents were asked to identify whether they belonged to a main (honke) or branch (bunke) family. The majority of those surveyed did not answer any of these statistical questions.

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Due to the nature of this study, data existed in a number of forms: photographs, videotapes, maps, written survey answers, formal interview transcripts, informal interview fieldnotes, personal translations of articles and books, brochures and pamphlets from temples and museums, etc.
I began by transcribing the photographs of *kaimyo* from the three cemeteries, and entering them into a database in Japanese. This was fairly straightforward, but very time consuming as many characters were not "everyday" ones, and a good number were archaic forms that were difficult to look up in the character dictionaries. Additionally, I had to convert dates of death written in imperial years into the Western system. This occasionally caused problems in that imperial years sometimes overlap. For example, Emperor Showa (Hirohito) died in 1989, and his son Heisei (Akihito) ascended the throne. 1989 can therefore be referred to either as Showa 64 or Heisei 1. I tried to be as consistent as possible, referring to Japanese sources as needed to find the most common usages.

**Data Analysis**

Once translated, I entered the cemetery data into a database. The primary data included the presence of the high status character *in*, the *igo* status ending, and the length of the *kaimyo*. All three are positively associated with status. Secondary data included age at death, year of death, and sex. I checked all *kaimyo* for characters said by scholars to be discriminatory and indicative of low or outcaste status (Hirosawa 1993, Kobayashi 1987, Matsune 1990a, Matsune 1990b), as well as those associated with high status (Hanayama 1988, Hearn 1898, Sakura 1993,
Tanigawa 1992). To create a baseline for status comparison, I examined the kaimyo of both well-known high status Japanese figures, as well as discriminatory kaimyo assigned to outcastes.

To test whether kaimyo are indicators of status in my fieldsite, I approached the data in two different ways. First, I used the aggregate data, comprised of over 600 kaimyo, to compare the frequency of status marking characters between the three cemeteries. Since the histories of the three cemeteries are distinct with regard to status and socio-economics, there should be differences in the frequency of status markers in the kaimyo of those buried in each. I compared the frequency of the status markers and ran chi squares that showed that this assumption was indeed valid. I then ran multiple and logistic regressions to predict whether the different status characters, as well as length of the kaimyo, were associated with age, date of death, and sex. I eliminated children from the sample, as their kaimyo include neither the status character in nor status endings.

Second, once I analyzed the aggregate data, I moved to test the kaimyo of specific households of known socio-economic/historical/political backgrounds. By comparing these individual cases a clearer picture of whether kaimyo are indicators of social status is created. Households were chosen to represent certain categories for comparison: main v. branch households (honke/bunke) where the main household was of high economic and political status, a test of a main household and its varying
levels of branches, a test of a main and branch household where the
branch holds high economic status, comparisons of various levels of
unrelated households of the same economic status, a test of households
with land ownership records dating to the early 1800s, and finally,
households whose graves are in remote locations within the cemetery
(suggesting lower status). The results of the analysis are in chapter 5.

Finally, I compared my data results against the questionnaires and
interviews to see if there was a difference between what people say they do
or perceive, and the reality of the data.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Translation

Language issues are common in anthropological fieldwork, and the
ability to use the native language is therefore highly beneficial (Mead 1939).
As there is little to no information in English regarding kaimyo, translation
was of course necessary. I translated all written material myself. In a few
instances, I did seek the help of a native speaker, especially when reading
handwritten responses, or double-checking the meaning when my
translations did not seem logical.

Additionally, all interviews and conversations were conducted in
Japanese, without an interpreter, and have in the following pages been put
into English using what I consider to be the best or most accurate phrases.³
Berreman (1968) and Sherzer (1994) discuss the difficulties surrounding such foreign languages and translations. Sherzer prefers to use the native word, bracketed, followed by the translation and notes on usage. Berreman, in contrast, uses English approximations of the native words or phrases. My approach is more similar to Sherzer’s, in that in most cases I make use of both native words, italicized in this study, and explanations.

Names

I follow the Japanese system of writing the family name, then personal name. Interestingly, in the cases of a few very important people such as shoguns and feudal lords (as will be examined later), they are referred to by their personal name only. For example, the great shogun Tokugawa leyasu (Tokugawa = family name), is often referred to simply as leyasu.

Privacy Concerns

As my study deals with the very personal subjects of religion and social status, my informants will remain anonymous. The guarantee of anonymity allowed freer discussion of the topics, especially as a number of informants were critical of the kaimyo system and the clergy. All surveys were anonymous, with minimal identifiers (age, sex, etc.), and included a seal that assured confidentiality.
Additionally, subjects of my cemetery sampling will remain as anonymous as is possible under the circumstances. I did not alter the kaimyo under investigation in any way, but in most cases I either delete or change the family name in question. Although the argument could be made that one could use the photos included in this study and find the graves, and therefore the actual family and personal names, I feel that this is unlikely. Moreover, in the cemeteries themselves, the kaimyo are available for anyone to read.

1 Shinto tombstones are distinguished by the use of posthumous names called okurina instead of kaimyo. The ending for a man's okurina is 大人命 (ushinomikoto - "polite address to an important person," lord) and a woman's, 刀自命 (tojinomikoto - lady, lord) (Matsunami 1993).

2 Imperial dates are still commonly used in Japan, from magazines and newspapers to daily train passes. Many people know their significant dates only in this system, and tombstones use these for dates of death. Each time a new emperor ascends the throne, he picks an imperial era name that will be used until he steps down. For example, the current emperor, Akihito ascended the throne in 1989. He chose the name Heisei ("era of peace"), and 1989 became Heisei 1. The year 2000 is Heisei 12. His father, Hirohito, was known as Showa ("era of peace and harmony"). The Showa era began in 1926 (Showa 1) and ended upon his death in 1989 (Showa 64/Heisei 1).

3 My primary sources for translation were:
NELSON, Andrew
Rutland VT: Charles E. Tuttle Co.

KONDO Ineko and TAKANO Fumi, eds.
KAIMYO AND SOCIAL STATUS: IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP?

*Kaimyo* (Buddhist posthumous names), a necessary part of the funeral and memorial ritual process, appear to have switched from being associated with ascribed status to achieved status. Under the Japanese feudal system, *kaimyo* were limited to the elite, a rank into which one was born. Later, as commoners began receiving them, certain characters such as *indono* 院殿, and *taikoji* 大居士 were reserved for the elite to show their higher status. The use of discriminatory characters in the *kaimyo* of outcastes also reflects the ascribed nature of these names.

Japan became truly modernized after WWII, but the vestiges of its feudal past lingered in its hierarchical social structure. Although the 4-class system was abolished in 1872 and class-identifying characters were erased from or whited out on government documents, in many cases enough of the characters were left intact as to make identification possible. Additionally,
outcastes were identified as shinheimin, or new commoners. To see this on documents automatically identifies the person in question as being of outcaste descent.

With the booming of the Japanese post-war economy, people eagerly embraced capitalism, although with a few Confucian twists. Loyalty to the emperor seemed to be replaced by loyalty to the company, and in return for this economic filial piety, the men were guaranteed lifetime employment. This increased financial stability and rising levels of expendable income lead to the boom period in the 1970s and 80s known as "the bubble."

Consumerism swept the country like wildfire, with people clamoring to buy the newest and the best. Designer goods were in high demand: Louis Vuitton, Godiva, anything purchased in the Ginza (the world's most expensive shopping district, located in Tokyo), and so on. In the late 80s, friends and I furnished our apartments with perfectly good, almost new appliances and furniture that had been discarded because they were not the "very latest, and very best." People were using luxury items as status symbols, thereby moving from the ascribed to the achieved.

According to the literature, and local sources in my fieldsite, kaimyo became part of this trend. People began thinking about kaimyo, and again, wanted only the very best. In informal conversations, on more than one occasion, people referred to kaimyo as status symbols. It is unclear how this trend started. Did families begin giving large donations with the unspoken
hope of receiving "prestigious" characters for their loved ones? Or did they actually negotiate with their parish priests for specific characters? What is clear is that a small, but growing number of people are taking matters into their own hands with kaimyo character selection. They view this as an opportunity to craft a death name that they feel reflects who they truly are. Or perhaps more precisely, who they would like others to think they were.

Before my research results can be analyzed, it is necessary to gain a fuller understanding of what kaimyo are, what information they communicate, and when and how they do so. This chapter will trace the origins and development of kaimyo, their important components and meanings, financial considerations, and their temporal/spatial mechanics. As there is very little information on this topic in English, the majority of this comes from Japanese sources I translated myself.

WHAT ARE KAIMYO?

Kaimyo are Buddhist posthumous names, composed of kanji (Chinese-based) characters, which have both social and ideological significance. They are names given by the priest of the Buddhist temple with which the deceased was affiliated.

The deceased's kaimyo is typically found in several places: on the family tombstone (Fig 22); in the family's and temple's kakocho (a record of the names of the deceased and their dates of death, a necrology), and on the
memorial tablet (*ihai*) (Figs. 23, 24) which is housed in the family’s household Buddhist altar (*butsdan*) (Fig. 25). Hearn (1971) suggests that the memorial tablet was introduced into Japan from China with the arrival of Confucianism. The tablets were not widespread until the Kamakura era, during which time funerals were increasingly conducted by Buddhist priests (Smith 1974). *Kaimyo* are also sometimes included on death notices or post-funeral thank-you cards sent to family, friends, and associates (Fig. 26).

Some sects believe that the status of one’s *kaimyo* influences the ease of the transition to the afterlife, or affects one’s position in it (Smith 1974). According to this line of belief, higher status names allow one to enter paradise at a higher stage of enlightenment or being, “skipping” the lower levels. This notion, however, is not universal. No one I asked knew much about this belief, and most people said that this was not a reason that their family members (or eventually themselves) had *kaimyo*.

*Kaimyo* have both formal and informal religious value as well as meaning both to the temple member and the wider community.

**History**

The term *kaimyo*, called *homyo* or *hogo* among some Buddhist sects, originally meant the name given to a Buddhist initiate by his master upon acceptance of the precepts (Inagaki 1992, Azuma 1993). This idea spread from India through China and Korea, and eventually to Japan.
It is possible that the Japanese were already accustomed to the idea of posthumous names through their contact with China. Kao (1988) traces the development and consistent usage of Chinese posthumous (non-Buddhist) names to the Shang dynasty (1550 - 1051 BCE). The sons of elite, deceased men commissioned these names as a show of filial piety. Moreover, these names serve to identify status, both in one’s clan, and in the hierarchy of the spiritual world. Evidence suggests that the names were chosen through oracle divination, though the combinations of characters also helped identify the days that offerings could be made to the deceased. These names were often inscribed on ritual objects such as stone slabs, bronze containers or oracle bones, which were kept in specially built ancestral ritual halls or buried in tombs (Kao 1988).

Interestingly, even though Japanese society was patriarchal by the time Buddhism was introduced, its earliest Buddhist kaimyo was granted to a woman. The first recorded Japanese kaimyo appears in the 13th year of the reign of Emperor Bidatsu (584 CE), when a young woman took religious orders and received the name Zenshin (goodness + believe). Two other women also joined with her, and were given the names Zenso (meditation + cherish/keep) and Keizen (wise + goodness). This original usage of kaimyo is similar to the name change that Catholic nuns undergo.
One of the first recorded uses of *kaimyo* outside of taking religious orders occurred in the 16th year of the reign of Empress Suiko (608 CE). At this time, a wealthy man from the province of Settsu willingly became a human sacrifice for the building of an important bridge.\(^1\) In his honor, the temple 大願寺 *Daiganji* \(^2\) (in modern Osaka) was built. At his memorial service he was given the *kaimyo* 巖空道和大居士 (*gan, ku, do, wa, taikoji* – crag/rock, sky/emptiness, way/path, peace/harmony, great Buddhist layman) (Azuma 1993). Soon posthumous *kaimyo* became common among members of the imperial household, feudal lords, and samurai of high rank.

Although normally limited to the elite, *kaimyo* grew prevalent among commoners during the 1600s, the time during which the government legally required all Japanese to become members and supporters of Buddhist temples. Although the original intent of this legislation was to lessen the influence of Christianity introduced by the Jesuits (Earhart 1982), it also increased the practice of ancestor worship. Buddhist altars were constructed for the wealthy so that memorial rites could be performed in the home instead of the temple. Commoners sought to copy the elites and have their own altars. This in turn increased the demand for altar goods such as memorial tablets onto which *kaimyo* are inscribed.
HOW ARE KAΙΜΥΟ CREATED?

Traditionally, a Buddhist priest writes a kaimyo for the deceased after receiving a donation (ofusei) from the family. Recently, however, there is a growing trend toward the living asserting themselves and demanding a role in the selection of characters for their kaimyo, although this still accounts for only a small percentage of the total. Many priests are accommodating their parishioners in this endeavor. The kaimyo of the living are typically written in red ink, those of the dead, always in black.

One priest I spoke with showed me the separate books of kaimyo he keeps: one for those written after death, and the other for those written before death. Interestingly, the kaimyo in both books were written in black ink. He said that it is acceptable for people to write their own kaimyo, either on their own or with his assistance. However, this is very rare among his parishioners. He does ask that if a parishioner decides to write his/her own kaimyo, that they show it to him so that it can be recorded in the temple’s pre-death kaimyo book. When the person dies, the priest draws a single line down through the kaimyo to indicate death.

Today priests use a variety of methods to formulate kaimyo. They consider the personality and occupation of the deceased. For example, a priest might incorporate the character 教 meaning education or learning, into the kaimyo of a teacher. Sometimes a character is passed down through the
generations so that the *kaimyo* of most members of that lineage will contain it. Priests have many dictionaries such as the *Hogo Daijiten (Encyclopedia of Posthumous Names)*, which list countless possibilities for character combinations and meanings. For the more computer savvy, software has been developed to help in the selection of characters. A number of priests I spoke with use this. They find it useful because of the instant access to the multiple readings, meanings, and nuances that each character has. They said that even though others might guess at the meaning of a *kaimyo*, only they know the true interpretation of the characters. However, the laity maintain that they can generally guess *kaimyo* meanings, and definitely distinguish between "good" and "bad" ones.

A priest I spoke with acknowledged the difficulty of writing *kaimyo*. He said that although *kaimyo* are supposed to be equal, there are different status levels and many factors to be contemplated. For example, he must consider the very wealthy parishioners who have donated neither money nor time; the very poor, yet devout parishioners who offer as much money or time as they can; the parishioners who only contact him for funerals; people who are not members and just need a *kaimyo* or funeral performed, and so forth. He suggested that many people, especially those without close ties to a temple, must rely on the priest's good will when it comes to *kaimyo*. 
Once the family receives the *kaimyo*, they contact a stone company to engrave it on the family's tombstone. While there is no certification process to ensure that a *kaimyo* is written or approved by a priest, it appears that most, if not all *kaimyo* in my fieldsite were.

In fact, most sects have no certification process for *kaimyo*, and duplication does not appear to be a problem. One priest said that *kaimyo* were like Christian baptismal or confirmation names. They simply acknowledge an acceptance of the religion, in this case Buddhism. And as there is no problem with duplication of Christian names, neither is there a problem with two people receiving identical *kaimyo*. *Kaimyo* are considered a function of individual temples, and are therefore not of concern to higher levels of the ecclesiastic structure.

**ORGANIZATION OF KA/MTO**

An understanding of the organization of *kaimyo* is necessary, as the different sections denote specific information about the deceased.

Initially, *kaimyo* were comprised of two parts: a two character "*kaimyo*" and a one or two character religious rank indicator, the *igo*. For the purposes of this dissertation, the term *kaimyo* will be used to denote the entire posthumous name unless noted otherwise. In the 800s, "decorative" characters were sometimes included, such as *in* 院 (mansion), by the imperial
family, but the majority of kaimyo remained two characters in length. In the 1300s, in was no longer viewed as conferring sufficient status, and indono 院殿 (mansion + feudal lord) appeared. In the death registry of the Ashikaga clan, the kaimyo of the first Ashikaga shogun, Takauji (1305 - 1358), incorporates indono. Ashikaga Takauji apparently was unsatisfied with simply in, so dono (feudal lord, shogun) was added to increase rank. In and indono were limited to the imperial family and the ruling elite. Commoners were forbidden to use them. In the 1500s, kaimyo length increased to 4 characters plus the igo rank ending. Today's modern kaimyo length, on average between 6 and 12 characters, dates to this era. In the 1600s, an additional character, tai 大, great, was added to the igo rank ending to boost status. The ending taikoji 大居士, great Buddhist layman, came into use (Hara 1993).

Over time, kaimyo became increasingly common, and a study of two Edo (present day Tokyo) cemeteries suggests that kaimyo started to be used as indicators of social status between 1716 and 1735 (Tanigawa 1992). This association increased as time passed, as by the early 1800s, the government had grown sufficiently concerned over an increase in "inappropriately high ranks" granted to commoners, to pass laws regarding the proper status kaimyo for them (Ooms 1996).
Organizational Structure

According to Azuma (1993), while the meaning of kaimyo is the same across the different sects of Buddhism in Japan, the organization varies. There are four main parts, the basic pattern of usage tending to be, from top to bottom (see also Fig. 27):

- ingo 院号
- dogo 道号
- kaimyo/homyolhogo 戒名／法名／法号
- igo 位号

and looking like this:

```
O   (ingo)
   
院
   (dogo)
   
O   (kaimyo)
   
居（igo）士
```

（居士 is used for men, 大師 for women.）

Figure 1: General kaimyo organizational pattern

In 院, a highly desired character, was adopted from China. It originally meant temple or mansion, but the usage changed to include the residence of
former emperors as well as the former emperors themselves. As time passed, the term also encompassed retired empresses, princes, regents, or military rulers (shogun). During the Tokugawa era, the custom arose of incorporating *in* into the *kaimyo* of samurai (Inagaki 1992). Hearn (1971) traces the usage of *in* to ancient China, where upon the death of an important man, a temple was erected for special memorial services. This practice passed to Japan, wherein entire temples or sections of temples were dedicated to ancestor memorial rites for the aristocracy. Eventually the building of separate temples for individual members of the elite became unfeasible. To overcome this problem, Buddhism incorporated *in* into *kaimyo*, referring to the temple that would have been built if circumstances had permitted. Because this term was originally limited to the elite, it was considered prestigious, a view which continues today. According to informants and the literature, the *ingo* is the most expensive and sought after part of the entire *kaimyo*.

The *dogo* is a two-character combination that represents the person's virtue, although each Buddhist sect appears to have its own interpretation of what this means. This is the section where personality or occupational characters appear (Sakura 1993, Azuma 1993, Matsune 1990a, Shimada 1991).
Within the kaimyo proper is a section also known as kaimyo. This two-character part symbolizes the name one receives as a follower of Buddha (Sakura 1993, Azuma 1993, Matsune 1990a, Smith 1974, Shimada 1991). To alleviate confusion, the term “kaimyo” will be used to refer to the whole name unless specifically noted as the internal section.

The igo is the ending of the kaimyo, and it indicates the rank or status of the deceased. This can range from “plain” shinshi 信士 and shinnyo 信女, to the very “honorific” indonodaikoji 院殿大居士. For young children, it is common to give only the two-character kaimyo and an age-appropriate igo (Sakura 1993, Azuma 1993, Matsune 1990a, Shimada 1991).

Recently the public and media have voiced criticism over what they view as the creation of new statuses and classes for the dead. These new statuses increase the perception of discrimination through religion. However, a number of priests claim that the igo is neither sexist nor discriminatory, merely reflecting the diversity in understanding and practicing a life of Buddhist faith (Azuma 1993).

There does not appear to be a maximum limit on the numbers of characters in a kaimyo, but they tend to average 12 or fewer. According to informants, the more characters, the better. A longer kaimyo is viewed as prestigious. There is evidence that the length of kaimyo is increasing. This trend will be examined in chapter 5.
Sectarian Differences

It is worth noting some of the basic sectarian differences in kaimyo characters and organization. In many cases it is possible to identify the particular sect the deceased belonged to by looking at organization or for sect-specific characters. As discussed previously, historically certain sects appealed to different segments of the population. Jodo-shu, Jodo Shinshu, Nichiren, and Soto Zen for example were popular among the lower classes, while Tendai, Shingon and Rinzai Zen catered more to the elites.

Jodo Shin-shu (Fig. 28) uses the term homyo instead of kaimyo. The uppermost part of the Jodo Shin-shu homyo is called the shakugo (Shaku=Buddha). For men, just the character shaku is used, while women receive the two character shakuni (ni=nun). The significance of this character is that everyone is equally a follower of Buddha. The Jodo Shin-shu headquarters can issue an ingo for the homyo, so that it would look like: 00 00 (or 00 00 00 for a woman).

Nichiren (Fig. 29) normally includes the characters myoho as found in the Lotus Sutra (Azuma 1993). Also typical of Nichiren kaimyo are the characters nichi 日 (sun) for men and myo 妙 (mystery) for women (Katsuzaki 1993). Sometimes senzo dai dai 先祖代々 (forefathers of the generations) is included (Hearn 1971).
The Jodo sect (Fig. 19) often incorporates an abbreviation of the name Sakyamuni (the Buddha's name) or the character yo 誉 (honor/praise) (Hearn 1971, Katsuzaki 1993).

Shingon (Fig. 31) follows the general pattern discussed above, but also incorporates the mantric Sanskrit character “A,” signifying that the deceased was a follower of Dainichi-nyorai (the Buddha Mahavairocana).

Among the Soto Zen sect, the dogo and kaimyo often make reference to Buddhist scriptures, the deceased's ancestors, or Chinese poetry (Sakura 1993). The character for Zen (meditation) 禪 is also commonly used (Katsuzaki 1993). According to Hearn (1971:135), the first and last characters in Zen kaimyo, when read together, often form Buddhist terms or “mystical phrases.”

WHAT CAN KAIMYO CHARACTERS REVEAL?

Besides sect affiliation, the actual characters in a kaimyo can reveal quite a bit of information about the deceased. Sex, relative age, and strength of religious commitment are shown through the endings (Fig. 32). Jo/nyo 女 signifies girl or woman. Shi 女 is also used for women. Boys' kaimyo are distinguished by the character ko 子, and men's by the use of shi 士. Relative age can be determined from the ending of the kaimyo. Mizuko (also suiji)
水子 denotes a miscarriage, abortion, or stillbirth. Ei 嬰, baby, is commonly used for those 1 year-old or younger (Fig. 33). Gai 孩, meaning baby or infant, is used for those who died before the age of 2 or 3. Do 童, child, is used for those between 3 or 4 and 15 years. Shinshi and shinnyo 信士/信女 (Fig. 34), faithful man/woman, are ordinarily for laypeople who have limited interaction with their family temple and priest. Koji and taishi 居士/大姊 (Fig. 35), active Buddhist layman / great elder sister, are endings for those above the age of 15 and have made contributions or performed services to society, their religious group, and their family temple (Sakura 1993, Matsune 1990a). Informants and survey responses indicated the belief that shinshi and shinnyo were indicators of lower status than koji and taishi. Hearn (1971) elaborates on the status features historically associated with these various characters. Koji (layman) and taishi (great elder sister) were associated with the samurai and aristocracy, while shinshi and shinnyo (faithful man/woman) were used by commoners. The lowest ranked igo were 禪定門 zenjomon (Zen+decide+gate [enter the priesthood]) given to men, and 禪定尼 zenjoni (Zen+decide+nun) for women (Tanigawa 1992, Atobe 1970).
As well as showing occupation and personality traits as mentioned above, *kaimyo* can also give clues as to who died in service of the country, frequently in war. For example, the character *shu*, 守, meaning to save or defend, is common among those who died in World War II.

Information on *kaimyo* is starting to appear on the internet, but how much of it can be believed is another matter. According to a recent anonymous Japanese website, certain *kaimyo* characters can be categorized as good (*yor*) or bad (*kyo*). “Good” characters include 信 *shin* - belief, 法 *ho* - law (Buddhist law), and 礼 *kei* - respect. Although it is relatively easy to see why certain characters are highly considered, many of the characters on the “bad” list are difficult to explain as to their inferiority. For example, on the “bad” list are 天 *ten* - heaven, 花 *hana* - flower, and 仁 *jin* - virtue, benevolence. No justification is given for the designation of these as “bad.” Additionally, some characters are linked to the circumstances surrounding the deceased’s death. For example, 水 *sui* (water) can denote a drowning, while 海 *kai* (ocean) can signify either a drowning or death due to a severe illness. 春 *shun* (spring) can symbolize a premature death. 童 *yuu* (to play) can be used to denote someone “wicked” (不良 *furyo*) such as a criminal or juvenile delinquent. And finally, 本 *hon* (main) can signify the end of a family lineage.

(ftp://www.geocities.co.jp/Milkyway/3382/kaimyo.htm).
Kaimyo characters can also be viewed as a type of death poetry, revealing not only the deceased's basic information, but including:

names of virtues and sanctities and meditations, - names of ecstasies and powers and splendors and luminous immeasurable unfoldings, - names of all ways and means of escape from the Six States of Existence and the sorrow of 'peopling the cemeteries again and again.' (Hearn 1971:137)

For example, a young man's kaimyo, ko shin in ken do nichii ki koji, is translated as "Bright Sun on the Way of the Wise, in the Mansion of the Luminous Mind." Hearn divides the kaimyo based on sex and igo, that is, kojiilshinshi and taishilshinnyo. (1971: 139-146)

Koji:

Law Nature Eternally Complete, in the Mansion of the Mirror of Light
Law Echo Proclaiming Truth, in the Mansion of Real Zeal
Effective Benevolence Hearing with Pure Heart the Supplications of the Poor, dwelling in the Mansion of Virtue of Pity

Shinshi:

Prosperity Wide Shining as the Moon of Autumn
Vow-Abiding Wondrously without Fault
Winter Mountain Chastity Mind

Taishii:

Moon Dawn of the Mountain of Light, dwelling in the August Mansion of Self-witness
Wondrous Lotus of Fleckless Light, in the Mansion of the Moonlike Heart
Wonderful Chastity Responding with Pure Mind to the Summons of Duty, in the Mansion of the Great Sea of Compassion
Shinnyo:

Rejoicing in the Way of the Infinite
Excellent Courage to Follow Wisdom to the End
Winter Moon Shedding Purest Light

Children:

boys:

Frost Glimmer Baby Male
Dewy Light Boy Child
Ethereal Nature Boy Child

girls:

Snowy Bubble Baby Female
Plumflower Light Child Girl
Chaste Spring Child Girl

It is important to note, as discussed earlier, that children’s kaimyo do not contain the mansion character, and historically, neither did the lower status shinshi and shinnyo kaimyo.

Discriminatory Names

Kaimyo can also be used to identify members of the former outcaste group, the burakumin. A number of Buddhist sects have recently been criticized for the practice of assigning derogatory character to people of burakumin descent. Kobayashi (1987) and Matsune (1990a, 1990b) identify boku 僕 (servant), boku 朴 (simple, plain), kaku 革(tanned leather) as linked
with deliberate discrimination. Moreover, several of my informants listed *kemono* 獣 (beast) as a character likely to be found in the *kaimyo* of *burakumin*.

The dilemma of discriminatory posthumous names is complex, with roots in issues older than *kaimyo* or even Japanese Buddhism. The ideas of karma and reincarnation, two Indic traditions that pre-date Buddhism, were often used to justify discrimination. Karma, a kind of supernatural accounting system for keeping track of good and bad deeds, holds that a person’s every action is permanently tallied. Reincarnation, the belief in rebirth, works together with karma. That is, one’s current position in life is due to the accumulation of both good and bad karma, accrued not in this life, but past ones (Nara).

Although Buddhism offered the hope of an end to reincarnation, ideas about karma persisted. A good, comfortable life was obviously the result of meritorious actions in one’s past life, but being poor or disabled was the physical manifestation of one’s prior wickedness or lack of proper Buddha worship. These beliefs often served as the basis of a “blame the victim” mentality. The poor, low status, disabled, etc. were seen as being directly responsible for their own conditions. Their only hope was to fulfill their societal roles and perform as many good deeds as possible (Nara).
In Japan, this view was applied to the burakumin. They were viewed as being in a state of great karmic distress, their bad karma heavily outweighing their good. To merely interact with a burakumin was to risk spiritual contamination. The Sanskrit terms candala (Jp. sendara - outcaste, the lowest class of people in India, those who made their living hunting, killing cattle, burying the dead (Inagaki 1992: 281)) and icchantika (Jp. issendai - "one who has no goodness in his nature and, therefore, no possibility of becoming a buddha (Inagaki 1992: 126)) were adopted and used in Japanese Buddhism. Certain sutras (Buddhist texts) such as the Nehangyo (Sk. Mahaparinirvana sutra) develop and expound upon the ideas of candala and icchantika. Many interpret the Nehangyo as meaning that outcastes (candala) are inherently icchantika, that is, they are unredeemable and beyond salvation. The Nehangyo, in this light, becomes a justification for discrimination (Alldritt 1999). The Sanskrit symbol for candala was often used to mark the tombstones of burakumin, an early form of discrimination.

As the popularity and frequency of kaimyo increased, discriminatory kaimyo were created, again, to eternally separate the outcastes from non-outcastes. Additionally, temple registers (kakocho) clearly identified the burakumin and later, their descendents. These registers were routinely made available to investigators who were documenting family backgrounds for marriage or employment purposes. For example, in 1981 a Soto temple wrote
a letter in defense of a proposed marriage, explaining that even though the young woman's family lived near a buraku ghetto, the family was not of outcaste origins (Bodiford 1996).

The problem of Buddhist sects and discriminatory names did not receive much media attention until the 1980s, when the Buraku Liberation League began to campaign against religious discrimination. Although many schools of Japanese Buddhism engaged in various forms of discrimination against *Burakumin*, the Soto school in particular was singled out in 1978 after its president, Rev. Machida, declared that there were no longer outcastes in Japan, and that there was absolutely no discrimination against the outcastes' descendents. This statement led to an outcry by buraku and civil rights groups, and in 1981 the Soto school began creating human rights and review commissions to study the subject. Soto Buddhism has actively worked on the problem, taking such measures as changing discriminatory names as they are found, not only in records, but also paying to have tombstones replaced (Bodiford 1996, Nara).

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

*Kaimyo* are viewed as a necessary, though expensive part of the funeral process. Although all the priests I spoke with said that *kaimyo* were free, the reality perceived by lay people appears to be different. My informants said that family members feel pressured into giving larger and larger amounts to the
temples in the hope of getting what are perceived as good or more desirable characters in their loved one's kaimyo. This perception is based on the fact that it is customary for the family of the deceased to give a donation to the priest before the kaimyo is written. The larger the donation, the better the kaimyo, it is thought. This sentiment is not a recent phenomenon, however, as Smith discusses it in his work Ancestors in 1974. When discussing kaimyo with local informants and others throughout Japan, complaints about the expense were common.

It should be noted however, that although the financial costs associated with kaimyo have risen, the overall status of kaimyo has also grown. Increased length, presence of in, and higher status endings are significantly more common now than in years past. Perhaps this can be seen as "kaimyo inflation."

The donation is not always monetary. Several priests I interviewed discussed other ways temple patrons make offerings: service to the temple, or material goods. One priest showed me that most of the furniture and the air-conditioner in his living room (where most interaction with his parishioners takes place) were donations. Moreover, parishioners, especially retirees, care for the temple building and grounds as part of this service. These members believe that this increases their chances of receiving a higher-ranked igo, even without large cash donations, as their service can be viewed as religious commitment. According to one priest I interviewed, money received for kaimyo
goes into the individual temple's general fund, which the priest uses to cover temple-related and living expenses. He likened the situation to that of a company president – the money belongs to the company, but the president has discretionary of it to cover business expenditures.

Books on funerals and memorial services mention the soaring cost of kaimyo. Hanayama (1988) shows that certain characters may be purchased for specific amounts of money. For example, 信士/信女 (shinshi/shinnyo) may be acquired for 30,000 yen ($300 US), while 院居士/大婶 (in ko jūtai shi) are
more pricey at 80,000 yen. Shimada (1991) provides a table of sectarian
prices for the various standard components and lengths of kaimyo. All prices
have been translated into US dollars, using an exchange of 100¥ = 1$US.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sect</th>
<th>Shingon</th>
<th>Jodo-shu*</th>
<th>Rinzai</th>
<th>Soto</th>
<th>Nichiren</th>
<th>Jodo Shin-shu***</th>
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<td><strong>6 characters</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>500</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>3500**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>1500</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>3500**</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>3500</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in+taishi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10+characters</strong></td>
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<td>6000-10,000</td>
<td>30,000+</td>
<td>varies</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Prices provided by different sects for specific kaimyo endings and
lengths (Adapted from Shimada 1991:63)

*All Jodo-shu kaimyo include the character yo, honor/praise

**$3500 includes memorial services and a 7-character kaimyo, which
includes in and 1 of the 4 status endings

***Jodo Shin-shu kaimyo are listed as running between $2000 and $3000,
and include in + shaku (male)/shakuni (female) + 1 of the 4 status endings.
Some sects, such as Jodo Shin-shu tend to be cheaper. As a Jodo Shin-shu priest explained to Yamada Kyoko, "Historically, Jodo Shin-shu was no friend to the royal family or the samurai class," and thus prices were lower. The egalitarian and populist doctrines espoused by Jodo Shin-shu's founder, Shinran (1173-1262 CE), made the sect especially attractive to commoners and outcastes, but not the ruling classes. For Jodo Shin-shu, the homyo fee is 5000¥ (US$50) upon conversion by a living person. The price increases to 10,000¥ (US$100) for conversion after death. The minimum for an ingo is 100,000¥ (US$1000). In the 7 or 8 years this particular priest had served his temple he only had one that cost 1,000,000¥ (US$10,000) (Yamada 1993).

Nichiren and the two Zen schools, Rinzai and Soto, tend to fall at the high end of the price spectrum. In a recent study in Nagoya, a basic Nichiren kaimyo (6 characters) ran between $4000 - $5000, while 9 characters cost between $10,000 - $20,000. The two Zen sects averaged between $3000 - $5000 for a basic 6-character kaimyo, with the 9 character one costing between $5000 - $15,000 (Tomatsu 1995).

According to a recent survey by the Tokyo metropolitan government, the kaimyo is the most expensive part of funeral expenses. On average, the kaimyo accounts for about 63% of funeral expenses paid to temples. That is, of the 640,000¥ average per funeral temple cost, 400,000¥ is the kaimyo "fee." For the highest rank of ingo, or one with a seal, the cost rises to approximately 1 million yen (US$10,000) (Pressguide FPC, Seizenkaimyo Fukyukai). These
costs are merely the temple fees, though. According to the Japanese Consumer Association, in 1992 the average total funeral cost was $20,800: $11,200 for the funeral home, $4,300 for catering, and the rest was the temple’s fee for the cremation, wake, funeral, kaimyo, and first seven-day services (Tomatsu 1995).

People are becoming increasingly disillusioned, and in some cases, slightly bitter over the perceived costs of kaimyo, and funerals in general. Over a cup of tea and a plate sweet bean cakes, the mother of one of my informants animatedly confided to me that “they could just write ‘A’ or ‘B’” on her tombstone because the whole situation had gotten out of hand financially and she did not care.

In discussions with townspeople in my fieldsite, repeated references were made to “Benzu priests,” (from Mercedes Benz) those they considered to be using their positions solely to acquire wealth. Tomatsu (1995) notes that although people may be pleasant to a priest while in his company, once away they often use the term bozumarumoke to refer to him. Bozu is a slang-ish term for priest (actually referring to the shaved head of priests), while marumoke means “one who works little with low overhead and gets paid well” (Tomatsu 1995). Although most priests I spoke with live in very modest fashion, they said that with dwindling temple membership, they were increasingly reliant on kaimyo and funeral fees to make ends meet. This may increase the perception that they “do little with low overhead and get paid well.”
The view of temples as money-making enterprises may not be that far removed from reality, however. The Meiji government passed an edict in 1872 that permitted Buddhist priests to marry and have children. Therefore, temples and the priesthood became a matter of both family livelihood and inheritance. Tomatsu (1995) roughly estimates that between 80 and 90% of current Japanese Buddhist priests inherited their positions from their fathers. Often the decision to enter the priesthood is economic: in a wealthy temple, the eldest son is expected to follow in his father's footsteps, however, in less prosperous temples, the most intelligent sons are encouraged to study and get a good job elsewhere.

Some temples appear to be changing in response to public pressure. One temple in Hiroshima, for example, has introduced a 50,000¥ (US$500), flat-rate funeral which includes the kaimyo. Another in Tokyo performs memorial rites and scatters the ashes into the ocean, dispensing with kaimyo altogether (Pressguide FPC). Internet websites now offer pre-death names (seizenkaimyo) at the bargain price of US$300, telling web surfers that:

The largest problem surrounding the issue is that in most cases, families leave everything up to the mortuary to handle the funeral, therefore the fees associated with each process, especially those associated with receiving a kaimyo can be unbelievably high (Seizenkaimyo Fukyukai).

Visitors to the web page are exhorted to "not become a victim to these outrageous costs."
In certain areas such as Yokohama and Aoyama, Buddhist societies have been formed to keep the price of funerals down. For example the Seiho Buddhist Association (正法仏教) was founded in 1983 and handles all sects other than Tendai. According to Mr. Kanemoto, a representative for the group, "Christians don't have to pay for baptism, so doesn't it seem strange that we have to pay for kaimyo?" (Yamada 1993: 238). He suggests that it would make more sense for priests to pay people who want them, offering an incentive for the first time (Yamada 1993).

SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL ASPECTS

Though kaimyo are personal, they also have public aspects: they are readily on display in a number of places, and become the focal points of memorial services and the festival of the dead. Perhaps it is their highly visible nature that makes them susceptible to society's emphasis on status.

Graves and Tombstones

One of the most prominent and public places kaimyo can be seen is in the local cemetery. In addition to the supposed social status shown by the kaimyo, the gravesites and tombstones offer additional status information.

Unlike in the US and many Western cultures, neither Japanese graves nor tombstones are commonly made for individuals or a single married
couple. The focus has historically been on the *ie*, which is a larger unit than the nuclear family. This traditional emphasis on lineage is seen in Japanese tombstones as well. As the vast majority of Japanese are cremated, gravesites are designed to hold multiple members and multiple generations of the patrilineal family. The typical modern gravesite is characterized by a central stone with the family's surname and another with the *kaimyo* of all those buried in the vault beneath. In Nakada single tombstones can be found, often as part of a larger family burial plot.

In Nakada, the tombstones and gravesites themselves can be indicators of status or wealth. Tanigawa's (1992) research on tombstones in Edo suggests that it is often possible to speculate on a family’s social class or status based on gravestone shape. Families of higher status usually purchased 5-storyed pagoda-style tombstones, or ones that resembled cone-topped pillars. According a local monument maker I spoke with, the 5-storyed pagoda, called *gorin no to*, was once strictly limited to feudal lords. I only found a few of these in the Nakada cemeteries.

Stone color, style, and the number of grave accouterments also give an indication of the amount of money spent, and the relative importance each family places on public display for their ancestors. For example, in Nakada, black imported stone was becoming very popular, though it was more
expensive than the gray stone quarried from the nearby mountain. Most tombstones in Nakada were based on the same pattern: a tall, thin stone for the family name, and a wide slab for the kaimyo.

A dizzying array of accessories are available at additional cost. One can add stone lanterns (of which there is an amazing amount of different styles), flower vases, incense holders, a statue or two of one's favorite Buddhist deity (Jizo, the patron saint of children, is probably most common), a small hollowed out "hand washing" stone, a name card holder, and many other things.

The cemetery plots themselves perhaps play an additional role. A 1-meter square cemetery plot can be quite costly. In Tokyo, the average price starts at $20,000 (Tomatsu 1995), while in the suburbs of Tokyo, plots can range up to $43,000 (Columbus Dispatch 7/13/2000). Perhaps the costs are high in the city due to spatial constraints. Unfortunately, I have no data on the pricing of Nakada cemetery plots, but being in the country, most of the plots are larger than those in cities, and the cemeteries appear to still have plenty of room to expand.

Plot location is often significant, as Prior (1989) discusses in his examination of Irish cemeteries. Who is buried, and where, is a matter of social concern. This may be the case in Nakada as well. For example, in the cemetery of one of the larger temples, the tombs of the two most prominent families in the town face each other at the main entrance. On one side of the
main path are the graves of family X, a prestigious family long associated with local administration and government. On the opposite side are the graves of family Y, a highly regarded family with a more populist background such as involvement with the local agricultural cooperative. The graves' location at the entrance of the grounds is certainly significant, as is their position across from each other. I believe this is symbolic of the town's social and political structures.

Butsudan: The Family Buddhist Altar

The second place kaimyo are displayed is in the family's home Buddhist altar. Most families have one, though they can range from a small, simple wooden box, to a gilded structure occupying an entire wall.5

Although the altar configurations and main images differ from sect to sect, the kaimyo-inscribed memorial tablets (ihai) are central to most home altars. A more detailed description of the altars and memorial tablets is given in the discussion of memorial rites below.

Temporal Mechanics of Kaimyo

There are several times during the year when kaimyo take on additional importance: immediately after a death; during memorial services, and during Obon, the festival of the dead.
The days immediately following the death of a family member in Japan are hectic. The family must make funeral, cremation, and wake arrangements; and notify friends and acquaintances. They must offer a donation (ofusei) to the family's Buddhist priest for the kaimyo. Small gifts must be purchased for mourners, and funeral thank-you cards must be ordered. These cards often incorporate the kaimyo in their text. The family also purchases memorial tablets and has them inscribed with the deceased's kaimyo.

After the funeral, the household Buddhist altar becomes a focal point. The newly deceased's memorial tablet with their kaimyo is introduced into the altar and placed in a prominent place, often along with a picture of the deceased. The kaimyo is on display for all visitors to see. Sticks of incense are kept burning, and offerings of flowers and food are made daily. The family's priest makes numerous visits to pray with the family and their friends and relatives in front of the altar.

Memorial rites for the deceased are held at specified intervals: every 7 days until the 49th day after death; on the 100th day after death; on the first Obon after death; and thereafter on the death anniversary at 1, 3, 5, 7, 13, 23, 27, 33 and 50 years. The final memorial rite, the tomuraiage, is held on either the 33rd or 50th anniversary. At this point, the deceased has achieved "ancestorhood" and is considered to have become a hotoke (buddha). Over the years, the deceased's memorial is relegated to less and less prominent places in the altar, symbolizing the passage from life to ancestorhood (Smith
After the *tomuraiage*, the tablet can either be left where it is in the altar, placed in storage, or given to the temple for safekeeping (Hamabata 1990, Ooms 1976, Yonemura 1976, Hanayama 1988). It is not uncommon for families to have memorial tablets for people they can no longer identify.

Memorial tablets are normally passed down through the generations as part of the lineal household. However, the altar may include the tablets of non-lineal kin. It is perfectly acceptable to have multiple copies of memorial tablets made and distributed to those seeking them. Wives may include the tablets of their relatives in their husband’s household altar. People who had strong attachments to the deceased may include their tablets. Sometimes people "adopt" the tablets of unrelated, unknown dead after a natural disaster (Smith 1974). However, these extra-lineal *kaimyo* will not appear on the family’s tombstone.

In addition to memorial services, *kaimyo* play a role during *Obon*, roughly translated into English as the Festival of the Dead. This holiday occurs in mid-July or mid-August, depending on location. In the northern parts of Japan it is celebrated in August. The term *Obon*, originally *urabon* in Japanese, comes from the Sanskrit term *uiclambana (avalambana)* meaning “hanging upside down.” These were Buddhist services performed for the dead to save them from tortures such as being hanged upside down in hell.
According to the *Ullambana Sutra*, a disciple of the Buddha saved his mother from torment in the afterworld by making offerings to Buddhist monks. *Obon* has been annually observed in Japan since 657 CE (Inagaki 355).

During *Obon*, many families construct special Buddhist altars, or tidy up their existing ones, in honor of the recently departed as well as their ancestors. Memorial tablets, upon which *kaimyo* are written, are dusted off and given more prominence than usual in the home altar. In some cases I witnessed families pulling old memorial tablets out of drawers to be placed on the altar for the occasion.

This leads to the question: whose *kaimyo* are displayed during *Obon*? Do families put all memorial tablets on their *Obon* altar, or are they more selective? When asked, most people responded that it varies from family to family. Some put all memorial tablets out for *Obon*. This is particularly true of families that only possess a few tablets. Others choose those of relatives they remember, or remember their parents or grandparents setting out.

The special *Obon* altars, *bondoana*, are carefully constructed, and though the focal points are the memorial tablets, a number of interesting objects are traditionally used in the arrangement. I watched and videotaped the entire set-up process by a prominent Nakada family. They began by assembling a wooden frame that would support tiers of shelves. The shelves were draped with a beautiful red and gold brocade cloth. The memorial tablets from the regular household altar were removed and dusted, and
placed on the two top shelves of the bondana. Also on the upper shelves were
decorative stands, one filled with mini gelatin dessert cups, the other with a
traditional offering of pressed sugar flowers in bright yellow, pink and green. A
large cantaloupe was also placed on a stand on an upper shelf.

On the middle shelf were cups of tea, rice and water, customary
offerings to the dead, and two small gold electric lamps in an ornate Chinese
style. On the lowest shelf of the bondana, two candles inscribed with Buddhist
sutras flanked the family’s death register (kakocho).

In front of the bondana was a low table, roughly the size of a coffeetable.
This was carefully outfitted with incense sticks in a porcelain holder, a bowl for
burning incense, a bowl-shaped Buddhist prayer bell and its striker, a stand
with Buddhist rosary beads, and a red plastic butane lighter. Visitors would
drop by, light a stick of incense, and say a prayer for the household’s
ancestors.

Branches of bamboo were attached to the upper parts of the altar frame,
then wakame (a type of seaweed) was draped over the left side. Origami
paper ornaments in five colors, each backed with either gold or silver, were
hung from a string running around the sides and front of the top of the altar
construction. The household head said that these were to ward off evil. A
large lotus leaf was later added to the altar and offerings of food were placed
on it.
The second significant part of Obon is the ohaka-mairi, the visitation of the graves of family, friends, and important local figures. Most companies give employees several days off to celebrate Obon, so that families and relatives who have moved away from their hometowns can return for this event. In Nakada, the ohaka-mairi begins early in the day, most likely to beat the oppressive August heat and humidity. Families bring water for cleaning the stones of the gravesite; fresh flowers, fruit,¹⁶ special rice-flour and herb balls, and incense as offerings; and business cards or slips of paper imprinted with the family’s name. Visitors leave the name cards in a small niche in the tombstone, or on newer graves, in the special stone name card receptacle. The cards let the family know who has stopped by to pray for their ancestors, and in some cases this becomes a matter of reciprocal obligation similar to Christmas cards in the US.

Obon is also the busiest time of year for Buddhist priests, as they must make housecalls to their parishioners for special Obon prayers. The Nichiren priest I accompanied introduced me and my research subject to his temple members, and left me to interview them as he performed Obon rituals at their household Buddhist altar.

Obon is a good time of year to conduct research on kaimyo, as many people’s thoughts are on ancestors and memorial rites. Local people were willing to take time and show me their ancestors’ kaimyo, and tell stories about them. A number of people welcomed me into their homes to show me
their altars and memorial tablets. Although initially the response to my questions about *kaimyo* was typically, "gee, what a deep subject, I never really think about them," the knowledge people had about their ancestors (and sometimes the gossip on others' ancestors), showed that it is a topic of concern, especially as they grow older.

1 Human sacrifice was not unknown in premodern Japanese history. There is a true story in my fieldsite about a young woman who was sacrificed during the building of the town's levies. The young woman, Otsuru, was chosen by the local feudal lord due to her sweetness and beauty, and buried alive in the levy to appease the apparently angry water god. Today, along the river side of the Uwanuma section of the levy, the small shrine devoted to Otsuru still stands. For her sacrifice she was deified with the Shinto suffix *myojin* (gracious deity), becoming Otsurumyojin.

2 The sources I used did not offer a reading for these characters. *Daiganji* is my interpretation of the temple's name, and native speakers I consulted agreed that this was probably correct.

3 The literature does not elaborate on this.

4 The edict also permitted Buddhist priests to eat meat, grow out their hair, not wear robes unless officiating, and to take on family names (Tomatsu 1995).

5 Japanese Christians can now buy their own version of the Butsudan. Although the design is very similar, the main images are crosses and the Virgin Mary (Seibo No Kishi Catholic Monthly 9/97).

6 One of my informants told me that it was good luck to eat the fruit after it had been offered to the ancestors. She said that it would prevent headaches throughout the year.
CHAPTER 5

DATA AND RESULTS

THE PROBLEM

Japanese religion has been associated with status and politics throughout Japanese history (see appendix D for an historical analysis). Japan is a hierarchical society, and with hierarchy comes status differentiation. This status differentiation, according to Bourdieu (1984), is manifested in values, tastes, material objects, patterns of behavior, etc., all of which form markers of class. It therefore seems plausible that in Japan, religion or religious objects, such as kaimyo, could serve as indicators of social status.

My research, conducted in a rural northeastern Japanese town, explored this hypothesis. This study was, however, limited in scope, and I did not attempt to present an exhaustive, sweeping survey of kaimyo and social status in Japan. Rather, it was an examination of the situation in one specific, rather typical northeastern farming community.
ELITE KAIMYO

First, to establish a basis for status comparison, I examined the kaimyo of a few high-ranking historical figures for characters that gave indications of high standing, or an outstanding personality trait. In addition, I examined two factors which I believed to be indicative of status, rank endings (igo) and the length of the kaimyo.
Oda Nobunaga (1534 - 1582) was a daimyo (feudal lord) from central Japan who took the first step towards the unification of Japan after centuries of civil war. He extended his domain by making use of the newly introduced European firearms, and went on to overthrow the last Ashikaga shogun and gain control of the imperial capital of Kyoto. He was assassinated in 1582 by one of his own generals. His kaimyo reads:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>忍</td>
<td>soo</td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>見</td>
<td>ken/gen</td>
<td>hopes/idea/witness/see/regard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>院</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>mansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>殿</td>
<td>dono</td>
<td>feudal lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>賞</td>
<td>soo/zoo</td>
<td>award/confer/present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>大</td>
<td>tai</td>
<td>great (alternately, tai + soo = very, very much)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>相</td>
<td>sou</td>
<td>minister of state, councilor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>国</td>
<td>koku/kuni</td>
<td>country, nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>一</td>
<td>ichi</td>
<td>one (alternately, ichi + hin = an article, item)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>品</td>
<td>hin/hon</td>
<td>refinement/dignity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>泰</td>
<td>tai</td>
<td>calm/peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>崖</td>
<td>gan</td>
<td>rock/crag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>尊</td>
<td>son</td>
<td>precious/noble/exalted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>儀</td>
<td>gi</td>
<td>rule/ceremony/case</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hara 1993)

Figure 2: Oda Nobunaga's kaimyo
Analysis

First, it was noticeable that Nobunaga's kaimyo included indono, suggesting his rank as a feudal lord, and therefore as someone of high standing. The inclusion of the characters tai and soo made an additional statement about personal rank in that one reading suggests "great councilor." The character koku, or nation, notes that his importance superseded the personal level and was national in scope. The last few characters were perhaps statements about his personality.

One very interesting characteristic of Nobunaga's kaimyo was that it had no readily discernable igo, or rank ending. I am unsure why this was the case, as in this era rank endings were almost always present. In Nobunaga's case, I would have predicted that he would have an igo of taikoji, or great active Buddhist layman, as was common among the elite.

The length of Nobunaga's kaimyo was an additional indicator of status. At this time a standard kaimyo was approximately 6 characters long (4 character kaimyo + 2 character igo). Longer kaimyo suggest the importance of the deceased by the addition of characters that show rank, personality traits, or are simply "decorative."

Nobunaga's kaimyo, even without an igo, demonstrated characteristics of high-status, with an emphasis on ascribed status, followed by characters of achieved status.
Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536 - 1598) was born into the peasantry, but through his remarkable ability and drive, rose through the ranks to become one of the greatest Japanese military leaders of all time. He was one of Oda Nobunaga's generals, and it was he who avenged Nobunaga's death. Within eight years of assuming power, Hideyoshi unified the rest of Japan and began to carry out attempts (both unsuccessful) to invade Korea. After his death two rival factions sprang up and began a battle for control of all of Japan. Hideyoshi's *kaimyo*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>国</td>
<td>koku/kuni</td>
<td>country/nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>泰</td>
<td>tai</td>
<td>calm/peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>祐</td>
<td>yuu</td>
<td>help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>松</td>
<td>matsu/shoo</td>
<td>pine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>院</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>mansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>殿</td>
<td>dono</td>
<td>feudal lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>雲</td>
<td>rei/ryo</td>
<td>soul/spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>山</td>
<td>yama/san</td>
<td>mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>俊</td>
<td>shun</td>
<td>excellence/genius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>龍</td>
<td>ryuu/ryo</td>
<td>dragon/imperial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>大</td>
<td>tai</td>
<td>tai + ko + ji = great active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Buddhist layman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hara 1993)

Figure 3: Toyotomi Hideyoshi's *kaimyo*
Analysis

High rank can be achieved, ascribed, or a combination of the two. Toyotomi Hideyoshi's case was very interesting, especially in a socially stratified society. Although Hideyoshi gained the rank of shogun, he was born a commoner. In his kaimyo there were high status characters based on achieved rather than the traditionally ascribed status.

Hideyoshi's kaimyo included the recognized high status characters of indono and taikoji, as would be expected of someone of such high rank.

The first two characters, koku and tai, suggested his work as the unifier of Japan and bringer of peace. The character yuu, to help, could indicate either his effort to unite the country, or his aid to Oda Nobunaga. Shun, excellence, is perhaps a comment on his character. Ryuu, also pronounced tatsu, is an auspicious character that means both dragon and imperial. The dragon in Japanese mythology, an idea most likely to have come from China, is highly regarded as involved with prosperity.

Both the characters and the length of Hideyoshi's kaimyo, 13 characters, suggested high status, with an emphasis on achieved status.

Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542 - 1616) was perhaps Japan's greatest shogun. After Hideyoshi's death, confederations of warlords once again began battling for control of Japan. Eventually the sides were narrowed to two factions, one led by Ieyasu. In the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Ieyasu led his side to victory,
thereby uniting the country under his military rule, the Tokugawa Shogunate.

Ieyasu's descendants ruled Japan until 1868, when the Emperor Meiji reclaimed the power of the imperial throne. Ieyasu's remains are enshrined at the Toshogu shrine and mausoleum in Nikko. Tokugawa Ieyasu's kaimyo is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>一</td>
<td>ichi</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>品</td>
<td>hin/hon</td>
<td>refinement/dignity/type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>大</td>
<td>t'ai</td>
<td>great</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>相</td>
<td>soo</td>
<td>minister of state/councilor (could also be read as t'ai+soo = very, very much)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>国</td>
<td>kuni/koku</td>
<td>country/nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>安</td>
<td>yasu</td>
<td>yasu+kuni= peacefully ruled country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>国</td>
<td>kuni</td>
<td>mansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>院</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>mansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>殿</td>
<td>dono</td>
<td>lord/mansion/palace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>德</td>
<td>toku</td>
<td>from Tokugawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>蓮</td>
<td>hasu</td>
<td>lotus (Buddhist term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>社</td>
<td>sha/ja</td>
<td>shrine (Shinto term)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>業</td>
<td>aga(meru)</td>
<td>respect/revere/adorerever worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>誉</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>praise/honor/glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>道</td>
<td>michi/doo</td>
<td>path/duty/morality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>和</td>
<td>wa/ka</td>
<td>harmony/reconcile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>大</td>
<td>t'ai</td>
<td>t'ai+ko+ji = great active Buddhist layman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>居</td>
<td>ko/kyo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>士</td>
<td>ji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(courtesy of a field informant)

Figure 4: Tokugawa Ieyasu's kaimyo
Analysis

Tokugawa leyasu was one of Japan's greatest historical figures. As such, I expected to find many of the classic ascribed and achieved indicators of status in his kaimyo. A key difference between Hideyoshi's kaimyo and leyasu's was that the latter had more achieved status characters before the dono character.

leyasu's kaimyo includes the previously discussed high-status characters of indono and taikoji. Additionally, the use of tai and soo, possibly meaning "great councilor," suggests importance.

Yasu and kuni can be read together to mean "peacefully ruled country," an obvious reference to the unification and order restored by leyasu.

There are many suggestive terms included such as aga(meru) (respect/revere), yo (praise/honor), and wa (harmony/reconcile).

One interesting feature is the use of hasu (lotus), an obvious Buddhist term, and sha (shrine), a Shinto term. Perhaps this is indicative of some type of religious syncretism.

The 19-character kaimyo is the longest I encountered during my research, and is unsurprising for someone of such high status. leyasu's kaimyo appears to be a clear statement of status.

Date Masamune (1567 - 1636) is of particular relevance, in that he was the feudal lord for the fiefdom surrounding Sendai in what today is Miyagi
Prefecture. This was also the area where I conducted most of my fieldwork. He became the head of the Date family at age 18, and later was Tokugawa Ieyasu’s ally in the battle of Sekigahara and thwarted the attack of two rival lords. For this deed, Ieyasu granted him control of northern Japan and bestowed upon him the title of daimyo (feudal lord). He moved the seat of Date rule to Aoba castle in Sendai in 1603. He opened Sendai as a city of 52,000, and controlled over 620,000 koku (300,000,000 US bushels of rice). His remains are enshrined in Zuihoden mausoleum in Sendai. (Zuihoden Visitor Pamphlet, Sendai) His kaimyo is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>瑞</td>
<td>zui</td>
<td>congratulations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>崎</td>
<td>gan</td>
<td>rock/crag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>寺</td>
<td>ji</td>
<td>temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>殿</td>
<td>dono</td>
<td>lord/mansion/palace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>貞</td>
<td>jo/tei</td>
<td>chastity/constancy/righteousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>山</td>
<td>yama/san</td>
<td>mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>利</td>
<td>ri</td>
<td>advantage/benefit/victory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>公</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>prince/lord/daimyo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>大</td>
<td>tai/dai</td>
<td>tai + ko + ji = great active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>居</td>
<td>ko/kyo</td>
<td>Buddhist layman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>士</td>
<td>ji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kaimyo courtesy of the Zuihoden Foundation)

Figure 5: Date Masamune’s kaimyo
Analysis

Date Masamune’s kaimyo is interesting to analyze. First, it should be noted that Zuiganji is the name of a Zen temple in Matsushima, a beautiful coastal area near Sendai. Built originally as a Tendai temple in 828, its name (formerly Enpukuji) and affiliation were changed in the 13th century. Date Masamune became a patron of the temple and commissioned its reconstruction in 1604 (Zuiganji Visitor Pamphlet, Matsushima).

Second, although in is not used, Masamune was permitted to have both dono and ko to mark his status as a great daimyo. Moreover, taikoji denotes the highest igo rank possible according to the literature. Perhaps the temple name Zuiganji was substituted for in, as in was said to represent a temple that would normally have been built for the deceased.

The kaimyo of Date Masamune exhibits the characteristics we would expect to find if status played a role in its composition.

LOW STATUS/DISCRIMINATORY KAIMYO

Kaimyo can also denote low status, and were used, particularly in the case of outcastes, to perpetuate discrimination. Historically, mobility in Japan was low, with families staying in the same areas for generations. Moreover, outcastes were legally required to live in segregated, and often easily identifiable communities. Kaimyo were used to maintain the segregation, and provided an easy way of identifying or tracing those of outcaste descent.
The utilization of discriminatory kaimyo was widespread. For example, the outcaste civil rights group Buraku Kaiho Domei (Chuo chapter) sent a questionnaire to various Buddhist sects in Japan surveying outcaste-related topics. One question asked about the presence of discriminatory names on tombstones. The incidents ranged from a low of 1 (Tendai), to a high of 700 (Soto Zen, occurring between 1659 – 1921) (Matsune 1990a).

The following are examples of discriminatory (and low status) kaimyo found on the tombstones of people of known outcaste status. The cases illustrate a variety of techniques used to denote low/outcaste status, including character choice, status endings, and the manipulation of characters through adding additional strokes. Additionally, the names are shorter in length than average, and none include the character in.

Male, died 1835, Tendai Buddhism (Matsune 1990a: 27)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>空</td>
<td>sora</td>
<td>sky, emptiness, hollow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>義</td>
<td>gi</td>
<td>justice, loyalty, devotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>達</td>
<td>tatsu</td>
<td>reach, attain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>善</td>
<td>zen</td>
<td>goodness, virtue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>以</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>with, less than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>男</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Female, died 1802, Tendai Buddhism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>净</td>
<td>jo</td>
<td>clean, pure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>心</td>
<td>shin</td>
<td>heart, mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>善</td>
<td>zen</td>
<td>goodness, virtue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>以</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>with, less than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>女</td>
<td>jo</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 6 and 7: Low status *kaimyo* including the characters zen and i

**Analysis**

The previous two examples end in zen + i + a sex marker (*dan = male, jo = female*). This is a very common Tendai practice, the i suggesting that the deceased was not considered a person/human being. It is also common to see the ending without zen. Additionally, these kaimyo are very short, another indicator of low status.

Male, 1821 (Matsune 1990a: 27)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>新</td>
<td>shin</td>
<td>new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>連</td>
<td>ren/tsura</td>
<td>company, join, companion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>寂</td>
<td>jaku/sabi</td>
<td>quietly, lonely, solitary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>一</td>
<td>ichi</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>如</td>
<td>jo/myo/goto</td>
<td>like, such as, as if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>僕</td>
<td>boku</td>
<td>servant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>男</td>
<td>dan</td>
<td>male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8: Low status *kaimyo* including the characters ren and boku
Analysis

This kaimyo incorporates several common discriminatory characters. The character ren, in combination with another character (in this example, jaku) is a frequent component of discriminatory names. Other ren combinations include ren+, ren + and shin+ren. Additionally, the term boku, servant, is used to denote subservient status. This is often incorporated in various combinations such as boku + ama (servant nun), boku + jo (servant woman), boku + ko (servant child), and boku + rei (servant spirit/ghost).

Male, died 1803, Soto Zen (Matsune 1990a: 30)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>睐</td>
<td>ki</td>
<td>reins, connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>覚</td>
<td>kaku/o-</td>
<td>remember, expect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>禅</td>
<td>zen</td>
<td>meditation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>定</td>
<td>tei/jo</td>
<td>decide, arranged, doomed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>門</td>
<td>kannuki</td>
<td>gate, bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>位</td>
<td>kurai</td>
<td>rank</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9: Low status kaimyo showing the inclusion of extra strokes to a character to reduce its status, and mark the individual as an outcaste.

Analysis

This case is interesting, in that it uses an already low status ending, zen+tei+mon, but modifies it so that it is even lower. The practice of changing common characters, through the addition of an extra stroke or two, to denote
outcaste status occurred throughout Japan. In this case, mon 门 (gate) is changed to kannuki by the addition of one horizontal stroke in the center 门.

Male (no date of death) (Matsune 1990a: 29)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>光</td>
<td>ko, hikari</td>
<td>shine, light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>道</td>
<td>do, michi</td>
<td>path, way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>革</td>
<td>kaku</td>
<td>leather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>士</td>
<td>shi</td>
<td>male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Female (no date of death)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>真</td>
<td>shin</td>
<td>truth, reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>光</td>
<td>ko, hikari</td>
<td>shine, light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>革</td>
<td>kaku</td>
<td>leather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>女</td>
<td>jo</td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures 10 and 11: Discriminatory kaimyo including the character kaku

Analysis

These two kaimyo denote outcaste status in two ways. First, they are adult kaimyo, but consist of only four characters, which immediately suggests low status. Second, the inclusion of kaku, leather, is one of the most common markers of outcaste status. As the outcasts often engaged in such “unclean” occupations as leatherwork, this character was symbolic of their defilement.

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THREE CEMETERY COMPARISON

Having examined the *kaimyo* of people of known high or low status, and demonstrated that in particular, achieved status was represented in both character number and content, it was time to turn to the data from my fieldsite. To see if status differentiation could be confirmed in a rural farming community, I analyzed three samples: Temple "H," Temple "M," and Cemetery O (Fig. 16).

Temple H

Temple H is a Soto-Zen temple (Fig. 36), and the temple of the former nobles and elite of the Nakada area. It is a smallish wooden structure fronted by its cemetery, located in the village of Uwanuma on a flat piece of land surrounded by rice paddies. The current mayor, descended from a family of high standing, is a member. However, his family gravesite was transferred over to Temple M in the 1960s. He also has a *kyuuhaka* area behind his home.

Temple M

Temple M is a Shingon temple located on top of one of the highest hills in the area (Fig. 37). The path to the top takes one up massive stone steps through the wooded hillside. A small meadow with tall grass has a picnic spot and affords a scenic view of the area. At the top of the hill one enters the cemetery, divided by the main path. At the end of the path is Temple "M," a large wooden structure. One of the interesting features of this temple are the
wooden shelves which hold photos and garments of the deceased, articles which families bring to have enshrined inside. Temple M is the temple of choice of the new movers and shakers, considered by many to be a powerful institution. The temple festival in August is an important and well-attended event.

Cemetery 0

Cemetery 0 is unaffiliated with any particular temple (Fig 38). It sits in the middle of a rice paddy off the main road in the southeastern-most part of Nakada. It is noticeable as it sits on a small raised plot of land, though I do not know if this is natural or man-made. It is relatively new in comparison with the temple cemeteries, which are hundreds of years old. One informant from this area told me that back in the 1970s, the people in the hamlet surrounding Cemetery 0 decided to incorporate their graves into one nice, new cemetery. Previous to this time, the graves were scattered throughout the area, often on the families' private lands.

This area historically was associated with outcasts and those suffering densenbyo, that is, contagious and often incurable diseases such as leprosy (raibyo/hansen-byo). It was separated from the rest of the town for many years by the original path of the Kitakami River, which was later rerouted. One section of this area was known as Mizukoshi, or “water runs over it” hamlet. Not surprisingly, given Japan’s historic discrimination against such groups, this area is the least productive and the most prone to flooding and droughts (Moore
Due to low mobility, especially in rural Japan, location and the history of this area, I assumed that most of the graves in Cemetery O would be those of former burakumin and leper descendents. Although there are several other small former outcaste hamlets, this area is the only one with its own cemetery.

**Cemetery Data**

The data from the three cemeteries encompassed a total of 609 *kaimyo*: 207 from Temple M, 196 from Temple H, and 206 from Cemetery O. I photographed these *kaimyo*, transcribed them from the photos by hand with the aid of Nelson's *Japanese-English Character Dictionary*, and entered them into a database. The table below compares the *kaimyo* with regards to the following traits: adults vs. children (and those which, for different reasons, could not be adequately identified), men vs. women, frequencies of different *igo* (rank endings), the presence of the character in vs. the total number of times it could have been theoretically present, the presence of *indono*, the presence of characters that could be potentially labeled discriminatory, and finally, the average length of adult *kaimyo*.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Temple M</th>
<th>Temple H</th>
<th>Cemetery O</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Kaimyo</strong></td>
<td>207</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>adults</strong></td>
<td>160</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>children</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>unidentifiable</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Men</strong></td>
<td>85</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>shinshi</strong></td>
<td>21 (25%)</td>
<td>10 (15%)</td>
<td>27 (34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>koji</strong></td>
<td>64 (75%)</td>
<td>58 (85%)</td>
<td>53 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Women</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>shinnyo</strong></td>
<td>19 (25%)</td>
<td>8 (12%)</td>
<td>21 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>taishi</strong></td>
<td>56 (75%)</td>
<td>57 (88%)</td>
<td>45 (68%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presence of In</strong></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In Percentage</strong></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presence of Indono</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discriminatory Characters</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Length (Characters)</strong></td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.62</td>
<td>8.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Comparison of kaimyo data from the three cemeteries

**Analysis:**

My examination of the data for evidence of status, high or low, proved a challenging task. First, I eliminated children’s kaimyo as they do not receive
ingō, and there is little evidence to suggest that the endings of their kaimyo bear any relation to status. The main differentiations between children's characters are age and sex.

Additionally, there was a group of kaimyo from which I could not decipher the individuals' ages. Some of the reasons for this included the fact that very old kaimyo often have only 4 characters, making them indistinguishable from children's kaimyo, especially as older kaimyo for children sometimes do not make use of common endings. Also, in some cases the ages or death dates were missing, leading to inadequate identification. Finally, some kaimyo made use of non-traditional endings or had no apparent rank ending. Although I found this in only a few cases, I discarded these for the purposes of this study.

Igo: Status Endings

When examining the kaimyo of adult men, I found that the overwhelming majority (75% Temple M, 85% Temple H, 66% Cemetery O) received the igo of koji, which is seen as the more prestigious of the two customary endings for men. Shinshi, viewed as lower in status, appeared at the highest rate in Cemetery O, but even then at only 34% of the total. The figures were similar among women, which made sense as the data covers not merely isolated individuals, but spouses and lineages who would theoretically share the same status. Among women, the higher status taishi was found at the rates of 75%
Temple M, 88% Temple H, and 68% Cemetery O. Again, the less prestigious shinnyo was found at lower frequencies (25% Temple M, 12% Temple H, and 32% Cemetery O), with the highest rate found in Cemetery O.

The differences in rates of distribution followed my hypothesis. I expected to find higher rates of the higher status rank endings in Temple H, based on its historical association with the old elite families, the samurai, etc. I also expected, and found, lower frequencies of the higher rank endings in Cemetery O due to its history of being part of an outcaste village.

In

When in was examined the situation was less clear cut. Again, in is seen as a prestigious character, a "must have" character for people thinking about kaimyo. It is also the one for which people are willing to pay the most to receive, perhaps due to its association with the nobility. When the actual appearance of in was compared against the potential number of times it could have appeared (once again, excluding children and the unidentifiable), the percentages were strikingly similar. The frequency of in was 60% Temple M, 66% Temple H, and 61% Cemetery O. It is worth noting that in appeared in Cemetery O at a higher rate than at Temple M, something I had not anticipated. I expected that Temple H would have the highest percentage of in, and this was in reality the case. One possible explanation for the higher rate in Cemetery O could be that my sample contained a higher percentage of more recent kaimyo. It also suggests that
there are *kaimyo* trends over time. Newer *kaimyo* (those since the early 1900s) tend to include *in* more frequently than older ones. The highest status *in* combination, *indono*, once limited to feudal lords, was not found in any of my samples, not even at Temple H. This does not mean it does not exist in Nakada, just that it was not present in my sample. Historically, Nakada was part of a feudal domain, and therefore the *kaimyo* of the family of its local feudal lord (*tono*) would be likely to incorporate *indono*.

I found no characters identified as discriminatory by Hirosawa (1993) Kobayashi (1987), or Matsune (1990a, 1990b). Such characters include *kaku* 革 tanned leather, *boku* 僕 servant, and *buraku* 部落 outcaste. Additionally, several townspeople mentioned in interviews or on the survey that *kemono* 獣 beast, would denote very low or outcaste status. This character was not present in my sample either.

It was interesting, and perhaps a bit surprising that of 206 *kaimyo* from an area historically identified with outcastes and those segregated due to diseases such as leprosy, I found no discriminatory characters. Perhaps this was due to the fact that the concentration of outcastes was much smaller in northern Japan. In central and western Japan, Kyoto and Osaka for example, the outcaste population was much larger, and perhaps viewed by the general population as more of a threat. Ooms (1996) discusses a law aimed at reducing the outcaste population by limiting the number of outcastes who could marry.
Attitudes toward outcastes vary. When I lived in Kyoto, there were many outcaste neighborhoods and ghettos, and people I spoke with were very hesitant to discuss the subject. In these areas, action groups such as the Buraku Liberation League were vocal and active in seeking economic and social parity, in many ways mirroring US groups such as the NAACP. Kaimyo in these areas, according to the literature, were likely to contain discriminatory names, and nearby temples received criticism for this practice. Conversely, in Nakada, the outcaste communities were relatively small, and often geographically confined by rivers or to hills. One could easily identify cemetery O’s village on a map, because it is a round entity covering a low hill, resembling an island.

It appeared that, in Nakada, the outcaste situation escaped scholarly scrutiny in recent times. A drawing in the Tome Gunshi, depicting them collecting roots in the former Nakada Marsh during a famine, however, hinted at their historical plight. No buraku-rights groups exist in Nakada, but overt discrimination does not appear either. People I spoke with usually replied that there were probably outcastes around, but it did not really matter. The attitude was largely, “it may be a problem in other parts of Japan, but not around here.” It is said that a small group of outcastes lived along the river side of the levy, but as they were frequently the victims of floods, they were incorporated into the main village, which would not have occurred in places with higher levels of outcaste discrimination. Living adjacent to rivers is a common trait among outcaste communities, perhaps the most notable cases being Kamagasaki in
Osaka and Sanya in Tokyo. The absence of derogatory characters further suggests that discrimination in Nakada was not as entrenched or systemic as in other areas. This is not to say that discrimination has never, or does not now occur in Nakada. The investigation of such matters would be worthy of further studies of social stratification or discrimination, but are not the focus of this dissertation.

Average Length

I calculated the average length of adult kaimyo in each of the three cemeteries. The length refers to the number of Chinese characters that comprise each kaimyo. Typical adult kaimyo range from a low of 6 characters to a high of 12, though there is no set minimum or maximum. Modern names average approximately 9 characters, older ones, fewer characters. Longer names are considered more prestigious.

When I compared the cemeteries' average length of kaimyo, I found that this case study was similar to that of the character in. Temple H had the highest average length of 8.62 characters. Cemetery O had the next highest length, averaging 8.42 characters, followed by Temple M with an average of 8.40. Again, perhaps the age of the kaimyo sampled affected the results. I will examine factors affecting kaimyo length in a later section.
Chi Square ($x^2$)

To test the frequencies of the different igo relative to specific cemeteries for statistical significance, I turned to the chi square, one of the most commonly used statistics in anthropology. It is a nonparametric test that compares empirically observed values to theoretically expected frequencies. In many cases, such as this study, there are no set expected frequencies, so expected frequencies must be produced to represent chance association. These frequencies are calculated using the formula (Thomas 1986):

$$E = \frac{(\text{row total})(\text{column total})}{\text{grand total}}$$

I used the expanded bivariate chi square 2x2 contingency table, which allows multiple variates to be compared.

The standard equation for the chi square 2x2 contingency table is

(Thomas 1986):

$$x^2 = \frac{(ad - bc)^2n}{(a+b)(c+d)(a+c)(b+d)}$$

I began by creating a hypothesis that stated that the igo frequencies are associated with specific cemeteries. Then, a "null hypothesis" which stated the opposite, that igo frequencies are not associated with specific cemeteries. Next,
I calculated the chi square to test the hypothesis. The data and resulting chi squares are as follows:

(O=observed frequency, E=expected frequency)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>O</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>O-E</th>
<th>(O-E)^2</th>
<th>(O-E)^2/E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>21.16</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>0.0256</td>
<td>0.0012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64</td>
<td>63.64</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.0256</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>16.93</td>
<td>-6.93</td>
<td>48.025</td>
<td>2.837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>51.07</td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>48.025</td>
<td>0.9404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.91</td>
<td>7.09</td>
<td>50.268</td>
<td>2.525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>60.09</td>
<td>-7.09</td>
<td>50.268</td>
<td>0.8365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Chi square statistics for adult male kaimyo

The resulting chi square was 7.1405, which at 2 degrees of freedom (number of rows - 1)x(number of columns - 1) tested at a .05 (5%) level of significance was greater than the pre-calculated value of 5.9915. The null hypothesis was rejected, signifying that there was an association between the frequencies of the igo and the cemeteries in which they were found.
Table 4: Chi square statistics for adult female *kaimyo*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>O</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>O-E</th>
<th>(O-E)^2</th>
<th>(O-E)^2/E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>17.48</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>0.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>57.52</td>
<td>-1.52</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>15.15</td>
<td>-7.15</td>
<td>51.12</td>
<td>3.374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>49.85</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>51.12</td>
<td>1.0255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>15.38</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>31.584</td>
<td>2.0536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>50.62</td>
<td>-5.62</td>
<td>31.584</td>
<td>0.6239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206</td>
<td>205.99</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 7.249 \]

The resulting chi square was 7.249, which at 2 degrees of freedom, tested at the .05 level of significance, was greater than the tabled value of 5.9915. Again, as in the case above, the null hypothesis was rejected, signifying that there was a specific association between the *igo* frequencies and the cemeteries in which they were found.

Both of the chi squares suggested that in the case of the three cemeteries under investigation, there was a slight difference between the rates of the different endings. Although the literature links *kaimyo* with social status, in my fieldsite samples, the relationship was very slight.

**Multiple and Logistic Regressions**

As seen in the previous sections, in Nakada, cemetery location affected *kaimyo* status. Upon further reflection, I decided it would be useful to examine other factors. Could age, sex, and date of death have also influenced *kaimyo* status?
To examine the data for such trends, I ran logistic and multiple regressions using AIC (Akike's Information Criterion), a standard statistical model. I coded all variables as 1 or 0, following standard procedure. The dependent variables were the length of the *kaimyo* (the numbers of characters included), the presence of the high status character *in*, and which of the status endings appeared. The independent variables were date of death, age, sex, and in which cemetery the *kaimyo* were located.

I ran three tests to determine if the independent variables affected the dependent ones. That is, did age, sex, and/or date of death affect the status-related components of *kaimyo*? I used a multivariate regression to test for relationships between the independent variables and *kaimyo* length, and used logistic regressions to predict the probability of the presence of *in* and high status endings.

In these calculations, the software eliminated 50 individuals from the sample due to missing values, such as unknown dates of death or ages. In the following results, the important statistics were t values and p values. T values were used to discover differences between populations, with values above 2 being significant. The higher the value, the greater the difference between populations. P values indicated the probability of whether or not something was likely to be found or occur. P values below .05 were significant, and the smaller
the value, the greater the probability. These significant values indicated that
there was a relationship between the variables, that the correlation was not mere
chance. Asterisks marked the significant values.

Test1: Length of Kaimyo

After testing the length of kaimyo against the variables, the results were
as follows:

Test1: Length of Kaimyo

Table 5: Multiple regression testing the length of kaimyo against independent
variables
When examining the results we see that the date of death was a significant variable in predicting the length of kaimyo, and this was true for all three cemetery samples. The more recent the date of death, the higher the probability of having a longer kaimyo. This was significant because as kaimyo fees have increased, so has length. Perhaps this was in response to rising kaimyo fees and people wanting to “get their money’s worth.”

Additionally, the data showed an association between kaimyo length, and age and sex within Temple M’s cemetery, but not in H’s or O’s. That is, for kaimyo in Temple M’s cemetery, age and sex may affect the length. For example, young women may have shorter kaimyo, and older men, longer ones.

The multiple R–squared figure indicated how much variation in length was explained by the variables. In this case, almost 10% (0.0976) of the variation was associated with the variables, which was statistically significant.

Finally, the tiny p value of 1.023e-05 suggested that date of death was strongly associated with the length of kaimyo.
### Test 2: Presence of *In*

In the next case, the presence or absence of the high status character *in* was tested against the variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>-37.792329493</td>
<td>6.520099539</td>
<td>-5.7962811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.H</td>
<td>0.540933315</td>
<td>0.303941643</td>
<td>1.7797275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.001669617</td>
<td>0.011370665</td>
<td>0.1468354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>-1.457276488</td>
<td>0.909215442</td>
<td>-1.6027846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death.Date</td>
<td>0.019813535</td>
<td>0.003431805</td>
<td>5.7735027*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.M</td>
<td>-2.824720563</td>
<td>1.206019325</td>
<td>-2.3421852*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age:Sex</td>
<td>0.022096443</td>
<td>0.014919899</td>
<td>1.4810048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.M:Age</td>
<td>0.032512746</td>
<td>0.018314103</td>
<td>1.7752846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.M:Sex</td>
<td>4.201179880</td>
<td>1.547001309</td>
<td>2.7156925*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.M:Age:Sex</td>
<td>-0.059555191</td>
<td>0.024143373</td>
<td>-2.4667303*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P value: 8.319367e-11

Table 6: Logistic regression testing the presence of *in* against independent variables

In these results, the t values of importance were the date of death, Temple M, sex and Temple M, and age and sex in Temple M. These statistics indicated that the presence of *in*, in all cemeteries, was correlated with the date of death. The more recent the date of death, the more likely the kaimyo in question was to include *in*.
Additionally, being located in Temple M's cemetery affected the probability of the presence of in. The probability of in was lower in M. Moreover, within Temple M's cemetery, age and sex also affected the likelihood of in's inclusion.

Finally, the p value of 8.319367e-11 was much smaller than the .05 level of significance, meaning that these correlations were significant, not merely chance.

Test 3: Status Endings

Finally, the status endings were tested against the variables. The results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficients:</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Intercept)</td>
<td>-18.28472045</td>
<td>6.433040175</td>
<td>-2.8422754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.H</td>
<td>1.123493539</td>
<td>0.350334392</td>
<td>3.2069176*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.005232770</td>
<td>0.012419521</td>
<td>0.4213343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>-0.421573133</td>
<td>0.969264331</td>
<td>-0.4349413</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death.Date</td>
<td>0.009776677</td>
<td>0.003387548</td>
<td>2.8860635*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.M</td>
<td>-0.217091222</td>
<td>1.183546734</td>
<td>-0.1834243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age:Sex</td>
<td>0.004677472</td>
<td>0.016035689</td>
<td>0.2916913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.M:Age</td>
<td>0.004261848</td>
<td>0.018605318</td>
<td>0.2290661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.M:Sex</td>
<td>1.539880115</td>
<td>1.611201499</td>
<td>0.9557340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery.M:Age:Sex</td>
<td>-0.021050736</td>
<td>0.025520110</td>
<td>-0.8248685</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P-value = 0.004290889

Table 7: Logistic regression testing status endings against independent variables

106
The significant variables in this calculation were date of death and Temple H. The more recent the date of death, the more likely the kaimyo was to have a high status ending (koji or taishi) in all three cemeteries. Additionally, kaimyo found in Temple H's cemetery had an increased probability of having a high status ending. However, although the p value was less than the .05 level of significance, it was much larger than the previous two test cases, suggesting that these variables were weaker predictors of high status endings.

FIELDSITE: SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF KAIMYO AND STATUS

The three cemetery analysis provided a general argument for kaimyo as status markers, but to further test my hypothesis, specific case studies were needed. The first two examples were cases of achieved high status through military service.

War Casualties

The first Japanese pilot to die in the attack on Pearl Harbor was a member of a temple in my fieldsite, though not one of the three in this study. Although the priest asked me to keep the personal name confidential, he gave me the man's kaimyo for study purposes. The priest guessed that the man
was young, most likely 19 or 20. His death was considered courageous and honorable. His kaimyo reads as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>真</td>
<td>jin</td>
<td>jin + shu = Pearl Harbor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>珠</td>
<td>shu</td>
<td>mansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>院</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>chuu + retsu = unswerving loyalty, unswerving devotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>忠</td>
<td>chuu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>烈</td>
<td>retsu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>日</td>
<td>nichi/hi</td>
<td>nichi + su = defender of Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>守</td>
<td>su/shu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>居</td>
<td>ko/kyo</td>
<td>ko + ji = active Buddhist layman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>士</td>
<td>ji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12: Kaimyo of a Japanese pilot who died at Pearl Harbor

**Analysis**

The reading of this kaimyo was relatively simple. Jinshu means Pearl Harbor. In the modern era, dono was rarely if ever used, so in alone denoted high status. Chuu and retsu, unswerving loyalty, commented on the man's honorable character; while nichi and su, defender of Japan, signified for all to see that he died defending his country. Although the igo was koji (active Buddhist layperson), and not the great active Buddhist layperson, it was still considered to be a desirable ending (and higher than other igo).

This case was similar to that of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, in that both were commoners whose high status was achieved rather than ascribed.
Another World War II Example

In my cemetery sample, I found several other kaimyo of war dead. This kaimyo followed the typical pattern, and was similar to the previous example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Meanings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>忠</td>
<td>chu</td>
<td>chu + retsu = unswerving loyalty, unswerving devotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>烈</td>
<td>retsu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>院</td>
<td>in</td>
<td>mansion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>南</td>
<td>nan</td>
<td>south</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>溪</td>
<td>mei</td>
<td>ocean, dark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>勇</td>
<td>yuu</td>
<td>bravery, courage, heroism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>武</td>
<td>mu/bu</td>
<td>military arts, military glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>居</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>ko + ji = active Buddhist layman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>士</td>
<td>ji</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13: Kaimyo of a young man who died during WWII

Analysis

This kaimyo, that of a young man who died at age 18 in 1944, was again fairly simple to decipher. Chuu and retsu, as mentioned above, suggested the deceased’s “unswerving loyalty.” Nan and mei suggested that the young man died in the South Pacific, while yuu and mu extolled his bravery in war. Finally, the use of koji, along with in, indicated high status.
Specific Family Comparisons

To further test the hypothesis that kaimyo are indicators of status, I compared the kaimyo from households of known socio-economic status. The three cemetery comparison confirmed that in general terms, kaimyo were linked to social status. By comparing specific households within the community, I expected a clearer picture of the association between status and kaimyo to emerge.

In the Tohoku region, main and branch household (honke and bunke) relationships are hierarchical (Izumi et al. 1984). Therefore, as part of the analysis, I tested various groups of honke and their bunke to test for evidence of their status difference through kaimyo. It is also important to note that in this region, honke were usually landlords, with their bunke being renters or tenant farmers.

The variables analyzed for these comparisons were: the total number of kaimyo inscribed on the households' tombstones, the frequency of in, the occurrence of the different status endings, and the overall average length of the households' kaimyo. A chart of the different households is located in the footnotes.6

Case 1: Honke of Known High Economic/Political Status

Family A is a main household and B is its first branch. A has a long history in the township, and has numerous branches. The family was not only
wealthy, but has, and continues to play a prominent role in local politics. In a cadastral survey taken in the early 1800s, family A was among the top landholders in the area. Although its landholdings today are considerably smaller, family A has diversified and now maintains its wealth through businesses and other sidelines. In 1948 household A owned 6.68 hectares of farmable land, while household B owned 1.45. By 1983 land owned by household A dropped to 2.3, and B fell to .63. When their kaimyo are compared:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th></th>
<th>B</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Honke</strong></td>
<td><strong>First Bunke</strong></td>
<td><strong>Honke</strong></td>
<td><strong>First Bunke</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total=8</td>
<td>total=8</td>
<td>in =7</td>
<td>in =8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koji =4</td>
<td>koji =4</td>
<td>taishi =4</td>
<td>taishi =3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average 10.875</td>
<td>shinshi =1</td>
<td>average=8.875</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Comparison of households – honke (main household) of known high economic/political status v. its first bunke (branch household)

Both A and B had 8 adult kaimyo that could be compared. Although in appeared more frequently in B (8 of 8), A had more high status endings. It should be noted perhaps, that the individual who received the ending shinshi died in his mid-teens, while all others, in both families, were older adults. A also had the advantage in length, with an average of 10.25 characters. B’s average length
was 8.87. Main household A, with its higher rates of land ownership, revenue-generating occupations, and political involvement, also clearly had higher status kaimyo.

It is also worth comparing main household A with two of its lesser branches. Households C and D are not only lower ranked branches of A, they are fictive bunke, that is, they are neither affinally nor consanguinely related to A. C and D most likely were at some point in time servants or tenant farmers on A's land. It was not uncommon for landlords to reward faithful service with land and fictive kinship. Both C and D own land, though significantly less than A. In 1948, C owned 1.18 hectares. The figure for D was unavailable. However, in 1983, C owned 1.3 hectares, and D owned 1.8. This being the case, it was natural to posit that A would have higher ranked kaimyo than both C and D. The comparison:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Honke</th>
<th>Fictive Bunke</th>
<th>Fictive Bunke</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>total=8</td>
<td>in =7</td>
<td>kōji =4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>total=11</td>
<td>in =3</td>
<td>kōji =2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>total=8</td>
<td>in =6</td>
<td>kōji =4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Comparison of households – honke (main household) of known high economic/political status and two fictive bunke (branch households)
From this chart it was evident that A had the advantage in the presence of the character \textit{in}, as well as in length. C had not only a very low incidence of \textit{in}, but a high frequency of low status endings, and the average of the number of characters was very low. C's \textit{kaimyo} were obviously of lower status than A's. D's \textit{kaimyo} were only modestly shorter than A's, and had a fairly high frequency of \textit{in}, with it appearing in 6 of 8 \textit{kaimyo}. This may be tied to economic status, as D owns more land than C, but less than A.

These cases suggest that main-branch household hierarchy and status are reflected in \textit{kaimyo}.

Case 2: \textit{Honke v. Bunke} Within a Large Dozoku Group

To further test the relationship between familial hierarchy and \textit{kaimyo}, I compared the \textit{kaimyo} of four families within a dozoku group. Household E was the main household, and like A, was an old family with many branches and historically, among the largest landlords in the region. Household F was E's first branch family, which gave it the second highest ranking within the family hierarchy. F owned 1.77 hectares of land in 1948, and 2.1 in 1983. Household G was the second household to split from E's second branch household (B2-2), and household H was the third (and more recent) offshoot of the second branch household (B2-3). In 1948 G owned .48 hectares of land, which it increased to
2.05 by 1983, significantly improving its economic status. In comparison, H owned .5 in 1948 and 1.47 in 1983. In both status and wealth, E was the highest and H the lowest. The comparison:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Honke</strong></td>
<td><strong>First Bunke</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bunke B2-2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bunke B2-3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total=28</td>
<td>total=9</td>
<td>total=1</td>
<td>total=4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in =16</td>
<td>in =8</td>
<td>in =1</td>
<td>in =4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koji =10</td>
<td>koji =6</td>
<td>koji =1</td>
<td>koji =2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taishi =10</td>
<td>taishi =3</td>
<td></td>
<td>taishi =2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinshi =1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinryo =5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other=2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10: Comparison of households – Honke (main household) v. bunke (branch households) within a large dozoku group

This comparison was less conclusive than the previous two. Household E’s tombstone included the kaimyo of over 28 adult individuals, spanning at least 150 years. The other households’ stones were much more recent and included significantly fewer individuals. In fact, F had only one kaimyo that dated to 1999. This was to be expected – the more recent the branch, the fewer and more recent the names should be. As E historically was wealthy, owned a significant amount of land, and held high status in the area, the appearance of low status endings and moderate frequency of in possibly reflected the changing nature of kaimyo over time. In fact, E’s kaimyo may have demonstrated an “inflation
effect," that is, a gradual increase in status markers and length over time. All of E's branches demonstrated a high proportion of *in* and high status endings.

**Case 3: Honke v. Bunke, Where the Bunke is of High Economic Status**

Household J was one of I's branch households. In the period between 1900 and 1948, J increased its wealth significantly, far surpassing its main household and becoming the wealthiest pre-war landowner and landlord in the region. J was not I's first branch (J's rank was not available). In 1948, main household I owned 3.12 hectares of land, which dropped to 2.05 by 1983. In contrast, branch household J owned 20.91 hectares in 1948. This shrank to 1.1 hectares in the years following land reform. Their *kaimyo* compared:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Honke</th>
<th>Bunke</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total=11</td>
<td>total=7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>in</em> =9</td>
<td><em>in</em> =7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>koji</em> =4</td>
<td><em>koji</em> =3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>taishi</em> =6</td>
<td><em>taishi</em> =4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average=9.55</td>
<td>average=10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: Comparison of households – *Honke* (main household) v. *bunke* (branch household), where the *bunke* is of high economic status

J's economic status appeared to override its status as a branch household in this comparison. Although both demonstrated high status *kaimyo*, J had the advantage in both the frequency of *in* and length.
Case 4: Test of Households of Various Economic Statuses: High Ranking

In this comparison, I tested the *kaimyo* of two families of known high economic status. Household A, as described earlier, was wealthy, politically active, and traditionally held high status in the area. Household J, discussed in the previous case, was likewise wealthy, politically active, and held high status. Both households currently relied more on business, sidelines, and political positions than land to maintain their economic status. The comparison:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>J</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total=8</td>
<td>total=7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in =7</td>
<td>in =7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koji =4</td>
<td>koji =3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taishi =4</td>
<td>taishi =4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average=10.25</td>
<td>average=10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12: Comparison of households – households of various economic statuses: high ranking

A and J had very similar *kaimyo* statistics. Although A had one less incidence of being present, the average length of its *kaimyo* was slightly longer. None of the household samples included low status endings, and the average length was well above the norm of 8-9 characters. The *kaimyo* of both indicated high status.
Case 5: Test of Households of Various Economic Statuses: Middle Ranking

Next, I compared the *kaimyo* of several middle ranking families within the area. Households K and F, in 1983 were mid-ranking agricultural leaders. K's landholdings changed over time, but were always in the moderate range. Neither household owned vast tracts of land, nor were they landless. Their history of land ownership was confirmed by a cadastral survey performed in the early 1800s. In 1983 they owned 1.17 hectares of land. Household F, discussed in case 2, likewise was a moderate-ranking household. In 1983 their landholdings included 2.1 hectares. Their *kaimyo* compared:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total=11</td>
<td>total=9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>=4</td>
<td>in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koji</td>
<td>=3</td>
<td>koji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taishi</td>
<td>=2</td>
<td>taishi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinshi</td>
<td>=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinnyo</td>
<td>=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>=1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>=8.36</td>
<td>average=8.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Comparison of households – households of various economic statuses: middle ranking

K and F were examples of moderate ranking *kaimyo*. Although K had fewer instances of *in* and a number of lower-ranked endings, the overall length was average. F on the other hand, had higher levels of *in* and high status endings, as well as a higher overall average length. F owned more land than K, and this
may be indicated in the overall levels of kaimyo. F's rate of high status characters was similar to those in case #4 (high ranking households), but the overall length was shorter, which is significant.

Case 6: Test of Households of Various Economic Statuses: Low Ranking

To complete the study of the relationship between economic status and kaimyo, I decided to examine low ranking families as well. The following households were of relatively low rank in the region. S owned no land in 1948, and after land reforms, owned a modest .58 hectares in 1983. L owned .27 in 1948 and 1.3 in 1983. M owned no land in 1948 or 1983. Land ownership figures for N were unavailable, but the family was known to be poor. N formerly resided in a low status hamlet that was destroyed when the town built flood levies. Their kaimyo compared:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total=2</td>
<td>total=7</td>
<td>total=3</td>
<td>total=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in =0</td>
<td>in =5</td>
<td>in =3</td>
<td>in =3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinshi</td>
<td>=1</td>
<td>koji =2</td>
<td>koji =2</td>
<td>koji =2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinnyo</td>
<td>=1</td>
<td>taishi =3</td>
<td>taishi =1</td>
<td>taishi =1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>=6</td>
<td>shinshi =1</td>
<td>average=7.66</td>
<td>average=9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shinnyo =1</td>
<td>shinnyo =1</td>
<td>shinshi =1</td>
<td>shinshi =1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>average=8.28</td>
<td>average=8.28</td>
<td>average=8.28</td>
<td>average=8.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14: Comparison of households – households of various economic statuses: low ranking
The number of individuals for comparison was low, making analysis difficult and statistically insupportable. However, with the exception of N, which had high rates of both status characters and average kaimyo length, the others demonstrated low status characteristics. Overall, the average length of the kaimyo was shorter, ranging from 6 to 8.28, which was lower than middle ranking households. Additionally, S and L had lower rates of high status characters and a higher percentage of low ones. The case of N was interesting, in that although it was known to have low status, its kaimyo indicated relatively high status. One possible explanation is that of the households in the comparison, N's kaimyo were the most recent, the oldest dating to 1974, and the newest to 2001. As a general trend, modern kaimyo tend to be longer and have higher status characters. Additionally, the amount of money or service the family donated to the temple may have been reflected in the higher status kaimyo.

Case 7: Households with Cadastral Survey Rankings

In case 7, I compared households with long histories in the area. Each of these households were registered on the cadastral surveys dating to at least the early 1800s. Household O was the first branch of a wealthy main household. In 1948 O owned 3.89 hectares of land, and 1.77 in 1983. K, as discussed previously, was a first branch household (the main household was in a different hamlet), with average holdings. Household P was a main household of modest
means. In 1948 P owned .33 hectares, which it increased to 1.55 by 1983. A
and E, as noted earlier, were both wealthy, high status main households with a
history of significant land ownership. Their *kaimyo*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>O</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Bunke</strong></td>
<td><strong>First Bunke</strong></td>
<td><strong>Honke</strong></td>
<td><strong>Honke</strong></td>
<td><strong>Honke</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total=10</td>
<td>total=11</td>
<td>total=10</td>
<td>total=8</td>
<td>total=28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in =9</td>
<td>in =4</td>
<td>in =10</td>
<td>in =7</td>
<td>in =16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koji =5</td>
<td>koji =3</td>
<td>koji =5</td>
<td>koji =4</td>
<td>koji =10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taishi =5</td>
<td>taishi =2</td>
<td>taishi =4</td>
<td>taishi =4</td>
<td>taishi =10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinshi =2</td>
<td>shinshi =1</td>
<td>shinshi =1</td>
<td>shinshi =1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinnyo =3</td>
<td>average=9</td>
<td>average=10.25</td>
<td>average=9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other=1</td>
<td>average=8.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>shinnyo =5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15: Comparison of households – households with cadastral survey
rankings

The figures for case 7 showed some variation, but for the most part, they ranged
on the high end of status characters and length. Again, it should be noted that
E's *kaimyo* represented a longer period of time than the others, and that no
average number of characters was available.

**Case 8: Households with Remote Gravesites within the Local Cemetery**

In Nakada, the graves of people residing in the same hamlet were
commonly grouped together within the cemeteries. However, there were cases
where hamlet dwellers' gravesites were in isolated or remote areas within a
cemetery. This may indicate low status within the community. This next case compared the kaimyo of 5 households with isolated or remotely located graves. Their kaimyo:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>P</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Q</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koji</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taishi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shinshi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>average=8.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>average=7.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>average</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16: Comparison of households – households with remote gravesites within the local cemetery

The majority of these had high to moderate kaimyo, both in the inclusion of status characters and length. This suggested that position within the cemetery had little effect on kaimyo status.

SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS

Interviews with Priests

I interviewed a number of priests from different sects in Nakada. Additionally, I spoke with a number of Soto priests at a Zen retreat, as well as a very knowledgeable priest from the head Date temple Chusonji. Interestingly, every priest I spoke with gave the same answers to my questions. When asked about the kaimyo writing process, they replied that it was customary for them to
receive the donation (ofusei) before writing the kaimyo. The donation could be monetary, a physical gift such as an air-conditioner or furniture, or the performance of service to the temple such as gardening or polishing woodwork.

After the priests received the donation, they would consider what characters to use in the kaimyo. Personality traits and occupation were often taken into consideration. Kaimyo dictionaries were often used, though many of the priests said that they were making use of kaimyo-selecting software that allowed them to choose from a variety of character pairings. Additionally, as each Japanese character had multiple meanings and nuances, the priests said that only they knew the true reading of the kaimyo. They denied that there were "good" or "bad" kaimyo. I believe that this is one way that priests try to discourage people's speculation as to the relative worth of the kaimyo. The priests I asked actually said that kaimyo were free, that they would write them for anyone. Writing a kaimyo is considered a duty and an act of compassion. If a person's family could not afford a donation, a kaimyo would still be given. Most of the priests said that they did not use price lists. One younger priest said that while he did not use one, his predecessor had.

With regard to pre-death kaimyo, most of the priests agreed that this was part of an emerging trend, for people to have a hand in choosing their own kaimyo, but few of them had personal experience with this phenomenon. A few priests suggested that this was primarily an urban practice, and had yet to spread to the rural areas.
None of the priests provided specifics on typical donation amounts, but said that with the declining number of parishioners and less tithing, *kaimyo* and funeral fees were making up a progressively larger portion of temple budgets.

**Interviews with Townspeople**

My informants, through formal and informal interviews as well as the questionnaires, concurred on a number of points:

First, the average lay person knew little about *kaimyo*, other than that they were a traditional part of the funeral and memorial service. People, both in my fieldsite and elsewhere, were generally unsure what *kaimyo* were or why they were used. One constant was that the older the person, the more likely they were to understand what *kaimyo* were and their basic mechanics. I imagined the reason for this was two-fold: older people were more likely to have experience with funerals and memorial rites, and also, as they reflected on their own mortality, they began to take an interest in these rituals.

A second common finding from the survey could be categorized as the "*kaimyo* sure are expensive" response. Although this answer showed up in all of the above mentioned situations, it was in informal interviews when things became very interesting. As mentioned in Chapter 1, a man told me he was really bothered by what he perceived as the rising prices of *kaimyo*. He said that they were so expensive that they "had literally become status symbols." Another informant complained that most priests (he did not include his own family’s priest
in this category) were “nothing but benz (from Mercedes Benz) priests in
business just to make money.” A woman told me that kaimyo were just for show
and that she did not need one. She said that if they needed to write something
on her tombstone, “they could just put A or B, because I just don’t care.” Unlike
the priests, lay people were very vocal about the link between money and
kaimyo. The perception among the laity was very explicit: the more money
given, the “better” the kaimyo. This belief was widespread, including among
friends and acquaintances from different parts of Japan.

Third, people agreed that there were desirable and undesirable
characters, and you could tell status just by looking at the characters. Many
people pointed to the character tai 大 (great) as being a very good one to have.
All said that in 院 (mansion) showed really high status. A few said that tono 賢
(lord) conveyed high status. Undesirable characters include kaku 革, boku 僕,
boku 朴, kemono 獸 and any character with a negative meaning. Additionally,
informants pointed to the length of kaimyo—longer is better and more
prestigious.

Survey Results

Surveys offered an interesting supplement to interviews in Japan:
questions could be directly asked without rudeness, and the anonymity allowed
a higher degree of freedom in answering. Using surveys, I questioned people
on their knowledge of kaimyo, status, and financial costs (Figs. 39, 40). Of the
124
ones I sent out, 82 were returned. The majority of the surveys were completed by members of the local government, the local department of education, the local agricultural cooperative, and coworkers of my host family.

I designed portions of the survey to help a local priest who greatly assisted me in my research and permitted me to go with him on his visits to parishioners. He asked if I could include a few general questions, and I did. Therefore, some questions were not particularly relevant to my study and were not be included in the analysis. It is relevant to note that of the surveys distributed by the priest to his parishioners, none were returned. Additionally, the sum totals of certain questions added up to more than 82, due to the fact that a number of people wrote multiple responses which were cataloged separately.

Questions 1 and 2 asked participants what sects (Buddhist) they belonged to, and why. The breakdown was as follows:

Q. 1 What is your sect?

- Soto  48
- Shingon  14
- Nichiren  4
- Nichiren Soshu  1
- Tendai  1
- Jodo  1
- Blank/None  11
- Buddhist (non-specific)  2
Q. 2. Why did you decide on this sect?

Ancestors/Family affiliation 56
Where the family gravesite is 5
Temple is nearby 4
In the temple's district 1
Temple of in-laws 1
Recommended by friend 1
I like the sect's founder 2
I think the sect's ideas are best 1
Blank/None 11

The answers to questions 1 and 2 followed expected patterns. In

Nakada, as half the temples were Soto, it logically followed that the highest percentage of respondents would be Soto-affiliated. Moreover, as the Shingon temple increased in power and influence over the years, it made sense that it would be the second most common sect. Also, due to the centuries of mandatory affiliation with local temples, and the importance of funeral and memorial rituals, I expected that the overwhelming response to question 2 would focus on family membership and ancestral traditions.

Question 6 initiated the *kaimyo* portion of the survey. It asked, "When you think about *kaimyo*, what comes to mind?" I was purposely vague, in that I wanted to see what the respondents' first reaction was to the topic. As expected with such a broad question, the answers covered a broad spectrum, and half the respondents did not answer. The most frequent answer, 10 out of 41, was that *kaimyo* were the names of dead people (or variants such as names received after death, name one receives upon becoming a buddha, and names in the next world). The second most common reply, 6 of 41, was they are
unnecessary ("I don't need one," "doesn't matter"). Other responses included "very expensive," "not entirely sure what they are," "kind of like/same as Christian names," and "hard to read."

Questions 8 and 9 worked together, with 8 asking, "Do you know what the highest rank (位) of kaimyo is?" and 9 requesting an example.

Q. 8
Yes 25
No 57

Q. 9
院殿大居士 (indonotaikoji) 16
院殿 (indono) 3
院 (in) 2
清 (sei) 2
上座 (joza) 1
Number of characters included 3
Blank/Don't know 57

Questions 10 and 11 similarly work together, with 10 asking, "Do you know what the lowest rank (位) of kaimyo is?" and 11 requesting an example.

Q. 10
Yes 11
No 71
Q. 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters with bad meanings</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short (few characters)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank/Don't know</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question 12 asked, "How do you know that these kaimyo are high or low ranked?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By the number of characters</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By the characters</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heard from others</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes specific characters</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>院 (in) (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>院殿大居士 (indonodaikoji) (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>院殿 (indono) (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>院号 (ingo) (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank/Don't know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although many people claimed in interviews that there were differences between kaimyo ranks, the answers to questions 8 through 12 suggested that the majority of people do not know what these differences are. Of those who responded to question 9, it is interesting that all of their answers except joza, were recognized in the literature as conferring high status. Additionally, of the answers to question 11 neither doko nor an were associated with low status. In fact, in the literature an was associated with high status. Perhaps these responses reflected the fact that Nakada was relatively egalitarian, and that
outcaste problems were less common than in other areas of Japan. If residents of Nakada saw few examples of stratification and discrimination, people would have little basis for status comparison.

**Question 13** asked, "Among your ancestors, what is the highest ranked kaimyo?"

Those with an *ingo* (院号 – contain the character *in*) 4
Specific family examples given 7

Include:

- 院 (*in*) (7)
- 居士 (*koji*) (3)
- 清居士 (*seikoji*) (2)
- 大居士 (*taikoji*) (1)
- 信士 (*shinshi*) (1)

The low percentage of responses to this question indicated that either most people did not have or know of ancestors with high ranking kaimyo, or that, in this area, the elite were very small in number. In fact, historically in Nakada there were very few elites as indicated in the *Shumon Aratame Cho*.

Finally, **Question 15** asked, "What do you think about the cost of kaimyo?"

Expensive/Too expensive 33
Unnecessary 4
Some temples are expensive, some cheap 3
The temples decide the cost 2
The cost depends upon the person 1
I should choose the amount myself 1
Cost doesn’t matter 1
Don’t know/blank 37
Unsurprisingly, the topic of cost elicited a high number of responses. As discussed earlier, money was one of the most frequently mentioned aspects of kaimyo in interviews. The general feeling, both in interviews and surveys, was that kaimyo were not merely a religious concern, but very much a financial one.

Interpretation of the Results

As noted above, there were statistical differences between the three temples, as well as between the various households selected for comparison. However, it is likely that the social significance of kaimyo were of secondary importance to temple affiliation itself. Additionally, the fact that some households had dual affiliation in two of the temples could be considered an additional status marker—differentiating “new” and “old” families in the community.

If the literature, interviews, and survey results all indicated a link between social status and kaimyo, why was there not more significant differentiation in those of Nakada? A number of possible explanations exist, and will be briefly considered.

First, as Neary (1989) discussed, there was historically less discrimination in northern Japan. The Tohoku region was considered a “frontier” area and little status accrued to living in the northern areas in general. Moreover, ample land was available for farming in the north. Compared to the central regions, the north was sparsely populated and provided room for immigrants to settle and
farm. This was certainly true in Nakada. During the feudal era, the local lord promised land to anyone who would drain and work it. He actively encouraged immigrants to settle the swampy area and reclaim the land. Perhaps the lack of competition for land and resources lessened the public's fear and dislike of the outcastes.

It is also important to consider a problem with sampling: it is just that – a sample. It is possible that the sampling did not reflect the entire picture. The samples may have missed tombstones that included very high status, or conversely, very low status or discriminatory kaimyo.

Some issues also must be raised regarding Cemetery O. First, as mentioned above, it is possible that my sample missed tombstones with low status or discriminatory kaimyo. Second, as the cemetery was relatively new, it is possible that it only offers newer kaimyo, ones written after the problems with discriminatory names were publicized. It is also quite likely that when families consolidated their graves into the new cemetery, they selectively omitted anything that could have been viewed as derogatory or questionable. Particularly, at Cemetery O there was an area of old tombstones that were piled on top of each other and it was impossible to go through these samples. Moreover, if Soto Zen priests wrote the death names, these may have been changed in the late 1980s during the sect's drive to find and replace discriminatory kaimyo.
It is worth examining the fact that the three cemeteries have very similar percentages of the \textit{in} character, as well as status endings. With regard to the very close percentages between males and females for these characters, similar percentages make sense. Instead of isolated individuals, these are family lineages composed of spousal pairs. As the wife assumes her husband's status in life, so does she in death. Moreover, as family members share the same status within the community, all those buried in the grave should have relatively equal status. I think an exception to this might be household heads and/or eldest sons or daughters within a family. It is logical, though perhaps not represented in my study, to consider that the high status accorded to these individuals in life might also be reflected after death.

The multiple and logistic regressions showed that date of death was a significant factor in status rankings. The more recent the date of death, the higher the status of the \textit{kaimyo}. This was true for all three cemeteries, and may suggest that newer \textit{kaimyo} were less dependent upon historical family status than economics.

Perhaps the similar percentages between the three cemeteries portrayed the social climate within the particular temple or community. That is, within an outcaste or former outcaste community, some individuals or families had higher or lower status than others. Conversely, in cemeteries with historical associations with the elite or families of high status, it is possible to find lower ranking \textit{kaimyo}. 132
Kaimyo are normally written vertically, and in this examination I will follow this form. As each character may have multiple meanings, I have included a selection of various interpretations.


The values for cemetery O are suppressed, according to standard statistical procedure.

In his article *Kaimyo Kaidoku Monogatari* (Tales of Fun to Read Kaimyo) Murakoshi Eiyuu (1993:214) discusses a kaimyo written for Marilyn Monroe by a Tokyo Buddhist priest who was a fan:

| 麻 | mari | mari + ri + in = Marilyn |
| 利 | ri |
| 院 | in |
| 不 | fu |
| 減 | metsu |
| 美 | bi |
| 色 | shoku |
| 関 | mon |
| 漫 | ro |
| 大 | tai |
| 姫 | shi |

The priest crafted this kaimyo as more than just a posthumous name. He chose characters that not only reflected traits of Marilyn Monroe, but also spelled out her name. In was cleverly incorporated into the name, and she was given the igo of taishi, the higher status rank ending.

Honke are main, lineal households. Non-inheriting sons have the option of splitting off from the honke, forming semi-independent branch households called bunke. Bunke must acknowledge both lineal and lateral ties, and acknowledge the superiority of the main household. See Appendices B and C for further explanation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Household Rank</th>
<th>1948 Land (ha²)</th>
<th>1983 Land (ha²)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>6.68</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Old, wealthy, politically active, many branches; high status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>First branch of A</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Fictive branch of A</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Fictive branch of A</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>Old, wealthy, historically one of the largest landowners; high status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>First branch of E</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Mid-level agricultural leader; moderate status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Second branch of E's second branch</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Third branch of E's second branch</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Branch of I</td>
<td>20.91</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Wealthiest pre-war landlord; still wealthy, politically active; high status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Branch</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>Mid-level agricultural leader; moderate status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Lower status; grave in isolated part of cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Lower status; grave in isolated part of cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Lower status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>First branch of I</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Main</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>Grave in isolated part of cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>Grave in isolated part of cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>Grave in isolated part of cemetery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>Lower status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17: Specific households for comparison, including household status and land ownership figures.
Cadastral surveys are maps detailing the location and amount of land households own, as a basis of taxation.

It is common for those who died after the age of 15, but before marriage or reaching their mid-20s, to receive the lower status shinshi/shinnyo. This suggests that age plays a role in the assignment of status endings, even among high ranking families.

Due to the deteriorated condition of household E's tombstone, I was unable to determine accurately the number of characters in the names, and therefore unable to calculate an average number of characters for the household. I have therefore left this out as a variable for some comparisons that include household E.

"buddha" refers to a state in the process of becoming an ancestor after death. Immediately following death, the spirit is referred to as a shiryo, and later during the same years as a nii-botoke, new buddha. After the first Obon, the nii-botoke joins the ancestors, becoming an hotoke, buddha. The final stage occurs after the 33rd anniversary of the death, when the spirit becomes a senzo, ancestor (Hamabata 1990).

Shumon Aratame Cho is a cadastral survey.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

I sat with Mr. A, the elderly priest of a local Zen temple in Nakada, sipping tea, eating yokan, and discussing the weather. The heat that year was truly oppressive, and with air-conditioning being more a luxury than the norm, many elderly townspeople had died during the summer. An electric fan combined with the steep ceiling of the main temple hall kept the temperature at least bearable.

Mr. A discussed kaimyo at length with me, having prepared for my visit by looking up important terms in an English dictionary (though we spoke only in Japanese). He discussed the purpose of kaimyo, their composition, and the factors he considered when creating one. He said that he reflects on the person’s personality, occupation, hobbies, and so forth.

When I asked him about financial concerns, he smiled and said, “Well, you know kaimyo are free. I don’t charge for them. Sure, it’s customary for families to give donations, but it’s not required.” He elaborated that he sees writing kaimyo as a religious and spiritual duty. Even if a family had no money, he would still write one.

“But,” I asked, “would it be a ‘good’ kaimyo?”
He thought for a moment and said that in reality, all *kaimyo* were “good” *kaimyo*, the difference was in peoples’ perceptions. People could misread a character, or interpret the meaning incorrectly. And as characters have many multiple meanings and nuances, only he really knew the true meaning of the name.

I pondered his answer for the duration of my fieldwork. I asked all other priests I met the same question, and I received almost identical responses. However, Mr. A’s sincerity impressed me, and I found him credible. It was an impression that most of the other priests did not convey.

This led me to question my conviction that *kaimyo* today are solely influenced by economic factors. While the literature and my interviews suggested that the laity view death names as commodities, and believe priests are motivated by money, rather than religion, I believe this is an oversimplification. There are priests who are truly concerned about religious and spiritual affairs, and who take the responsibility of *kaimyo* writing very seriously.

Summary of findings

*Kaimyo* are a useful case study for understanding the interaction between social structure and religion. The Japanese have a long history of adopting and adapting cultural traits, and religion follows the same pattern:
the egalitarian ideals of traditional Buddhism were altered to fit the hierarchical structure of Japanese society. Buddhism both mirrored and supported the Japanese social organization.

Kaimyo, as religious articles, reflect this correlation between religion and social structure. They demonstrate the connection between religion and social status, that is, one's place within the social structure. Historically, status was based on hereditary feudal castes; in modern times it is based primarily on wealth, as in most other industrialized nations.

Kaimyo, through their very composition demonstrate status consciousness. The ingo, or inclusion of the mansion character, denotes high status. Other characters can be added to increase or decrease status. Moreover, there are varying levels of status indicated by the igo rank endings.

The literature and results of my interviews and surveys illustrate the laity's belief that kaimyo convey status and that there are differences between kaimyo - they can be ordinary, prestigious or discriminatory. Conversely, Buddhist priests, regardless of sect, insist that kaimyo are neutral, neither good nor bad. When I compared samples of kaimyo from three local cemeteries, they showed a small, but statistically significant correlation between kaimyo and status. The laity would appear to be correct.

The literature suggests however, that the differences should be greater. As discussed previously, there are a number of possible explanations for why the differentiation is relatively small. Perhaps my sample was skewed, not
accurately reflecting the situation in Nakada. Additionally, the fact that my site was located in northeastern Japan, which was traditionally more egalitarian, may have played a role.

**Importance of the Study**

Despite the small scale of this investigation, it is still significant. It serves to further examine the relationship between social structure and religion. This relationship is important not only for the study of religion, but also cultures in larger contexts. As discussed in chapter 2, religion mirrors society and reflects its social norms. Recently, for example, the Episcopal Church in the US grappled with questions of homosexual unions and homosexual clergy. Meanwhile, the Episcopal (also known as Anglican) Church in parts of Africa struggled with issues such as the proper number of wives a man may take with Church approval. The same denomination is dealing with culturally (and structurally) based problems. Polygyny is not an issue for the majority of Americans, just as gay rights are not a major concern in many areas of Africa. In the Japanese case, this study underscores the continued relationship between structure, status and religion.

This study also adds to existing ethnographic literature on Nakada, as well as other studies of “average” rural farming communities in Japan.

Perhaps most importantly, this investigation provides a starting point in English for the study of kairmyo. During my research, I encountered a dearth of
information on this topic. There are no books on this subject in English, and only a very few make mention of kaimyo in passing. There are a number of books in Japanese on kaimyo, ranging from histories to create-your-own manuals. Interestingly, though, most of these books were published between the late 1970s/early 1990s. Perhaps this corresponds to Japanese economic conditions. The internet is also an important source of information on kaimyo, but as with books, the overwhelming majority of kaimyo-related websites are in Japanese. This research is the first substantive English examination, and anthropological treatment of kaimyo.

Future Research Needs

As this is the first English study of kaimyo, there are many avenues open for future research.

Methodologically, this research was small in scale and in scope. Time constraints limited my ability to conduct as many in-depth interviews as I would have liked. A longer residence would allow greater familiarity with the townspeople, and would presumably foster closer relationships for data-gathering purposes.

I also see a need for regional studies of kaimyo in Japan. It would be useful to compare samples from similar-sized areas in different parts of Japan to better understand rural status/religion dynamics. A good starting point for comparison might be John Cornell’s research on rural villages in Okayama.
prefecture. An urban/rural comparison would be beneficial as well, comparing
the kaimyo of city-dwellers, who often have even less contact with Buddhist
clergy, with their rural counterparts.

Further investigation into the subject of discriminatory names is merited,
both inside and outside of Nakada. The problem of discriminatory kaimyo
should be fully researched, perhaps starting with an area such as Nakada with
small, but historically recognized outcaste communities. Once this is completed,
comparisons could be made to areas with histories of outcaste discrimination
and conflict, such as Osaka or Kyoto. Additional studies could also focus on
Korean Japanese. Many families of Korean descent have lived in Japan for
generations. Yet, they continue to face both societal and institutional
discrimination. It would be interesting to check for evidence of sectarian
discrimination against people of Korean descent.

Finally, this study was limited temporally. Comparing kaimyo over
specific time periods could lead to the recognition of trends in the popularity of
characters, frequency of endings, changes in length, etc.

Kaimyo in Context: Beyond the Grave

Kaimyo perhaps serve as a bellwether for social and economic
conditions. When Japanese society depended upon the maintenance of distinct
social classes or castes, kaimyo reflected this by being restricted to the elite.
Later, specific characters were added to create distinctions. As Japan modernized and industrialized, old feudal categories gave way to wealth as a more significant factor in status determination.

During the “bubble,” the economic boom of the 1980s, people had much greater disposable income, and were ready to pay greater and greater amounts of money for goods and services. Conspicuous consumption was found in all areas, including *kaimyo*. During this time *kaimyo* costs doubled, tripled, and in some areas quadrupled or higher. As people told me, *kaimyo* had now entered the realm of the status symbol.

But the “bubble” soon popped, and Japan today is in a deep recession, with unemployment rates higher than at any other time in the post-war period. Lifetime employment is no longer a guarantee, and many middle-aged salarymen now spend their days in coffee shops reading comic books. In Nakada, the trend of young people leaving to find employment in cities such as Sendai and Tokyo has reversed. In fact, many people are moving back to the countryside to live near or with their agriculturally-based families, having lost their jobs in the city and unable to afford the astronomical costs of living. Rural areas do offer lower living costs, but at the same time, are not immune from the effects of the economic downturn. In Nakada, many families depended upon the small local factories (that made parts for companies such as Sony) for full, part-
time, or seasonal work. With the recession, these jobs were quickly eliminated, and rural families now must rely on different sources, if they can find them, to supplement their income.

What effect has the recession had on status? Fewer people have the disposable income to spend on consumer and status goods. And those who do appear more reluctant to spend extravagantly. The precariousness of employment and the job market mean that status based on wealth or position is also uncertain. The failure of large corporations and established businesses such as Sogo department stores suggests that no one is immune.

*Kaimyo* are perhaps reflective of this socio-economic instability. Fewer people are willing to spend large amounts of money on *kaimyo*, and a small, but increasing segment of the population sees them as unnecessary. These people are either willing to take whatever *kaimyo* they are given for a modest amount of money, or have asked their families not have one written for them. The mother of one of my informants embodied this sentiment when she told me, "They could just write A or B on my tombstone because I don't care."

The priests in my fieldsite are aware of the growing discontent among the laity, but have not yet found a satisfactory answer to the problem.

In other parts of Japan, temples and associations are taking a more active role. One temple in Hiroshima has introduced a $500 flat-rate funeral, which includes the *kaimyo*. Another in Tokyo performs memorial rites and
scatters the ashes into the ocean, dispensing with *kaimyo* altogether. Internet websites now offer pre-death *kaimyo* (*seizenkaimyo*) at the bargain price of $300, telling web surfers that:

> the largest problem surrounding the issue is that in most cases, families leave everything up to the mortuary to handle the funeral, therefore the fees associated with each process, especially those associated with receiving a *kaimyo* can be unbelievably high. (Seizenkaimyo Fukyukai)

Visitors to the site are exhorted to “not become a victim to these outrageous costs.”

It appears that as the economy worsens, the backlash against costs associated with *kaimyo* escalates. Despite these changes, I doubt that *kaimyo* will disappear or become less important. I believe that they will continue to reflect socio-economic changes and trends.

Although E.B. Tylor would undoubtedly label *kaimyo* as survivals, unnecessary in this day and age, I believe that they are more properly *représentations* in the Durkheimian sense. That is, symbolic of the complex and dynamic relationship between Japanese social structure, status, and religion.

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1 *Yokan* is a smooth, thick paste made of sweetened beans. It is a popular snack served with green tea.

2 The Anglican Church in Africa endorses monogamy, though in more traditional areas, Anglican men occasionally have up to 4 wives. The number 4 may be significant, as it is the number of wives permitted under Q’uranic law.
GLOSSARY

ane-katoku 姊家督— inheritance by the eldest child, regardless of sex
bondana 盆幡— an altar constructed on behalf of the ancestors for Obon
bun 分— part
bunke 分家— branch household, household that has split from the main household
Burakumin 部落民— the Japanese outcaste group
buppo 仏法— Buddhist law
bushidō 武士道— “way of the warrior,” the chivalric code of the samurai class
butsudan 仏壇— home Buddhist altar
candala— Sanskrit term for outcastes, the lowest caste of people in India
chōnan 長男— eldest son
chōjo 長女— eldest daughter
chūhonji 中本寺— semi-main temple
daímō 大名— feudal lord (general term)
danka 権家— member/patron of a Buddhist temple
danka-seido 権家制度— mandate requiring Buddhist registration and patronage for all Japanese
dōgo 道号— section of a kaimyo marking “personal” traits
dōryō 同僚 – colleague, fellow worker of the same rank

dōzoku 同族 - a group of patrilineally related stem families ranked into a segmentary lineage; a group of patrilineally related families recognizing their lineal and lateral ties

eta 稲多 - “abundant filth,” historic term for outcastes, particularly those engaged in “unclean” or “polluting” professions

eta-dera 稲多寺 – “outcaste temple,” the temples outcastes were required to attend to separate them from the general population

fudai 藩代 – feudal lords who were allies of Tokugawa Ieyasu before the Battle of Sekigahara

fumie 神光照 – copper crucifix or tablet bearing an engraving of Jesus that was used to test whether people were Christian, and therefore breaking the law.

gonin-gumi 五人組 – “5 person groups,” village-level associations used for taxation, local control, and information dissemination

gorin-no-to 五輪の都 – a five-level pagoda-shaped tombstone, signifying elite status

haniwa 墓輪 – clay figurines placed in and around ancient burial mounds

heimin 平民 – commoners, term established by the Meiji government

hinin 非人 – “non-person,” historic term for outcastes, particularly beggars and criminals

hōgō 法号 – another term for kaimyo

hōmyō 法名 – another term for kaimyo

honji 本寺 – main temple

honke 本家 – main family, the family from which branch families split

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honzan 本山—central temple

hotoke 仏—"buddha;" can refer to the Buddha or an ancestral spirit

icchantika — Sanskrit term for one who has no goodness in their nature and is therefore incapable of becoming a buddha

ie 家—household. Typically, a vertical unit composed of one married couple per generation and their unmarried children.

iemoto 家本—"root family structure," social hierarchies patterned after dozoku and based on oyabun/kobun relations

igō 位号—"rank indicator," the status portion of the kaimyo

ihai 位牌—memorial tablet

in 院—"mansion," a high-status character

ingō 院号— the section of a kaimyo that incorporates in

indono 院殿—"mansion" + "feudal lord," a high-status kaimyo character combination

issendai 陰提—Japanization of icchantika (see "Icchantika")

jiki-matsuji 直末寺—direct branch temple

jiriki 自力—"self power," having the power to reach enlightenment/salvation within oneself

juku 塾—"cram school," after school private academic lessons

kaimyō 戒名—posthumous Buddhist name

kakochō 過去帳—family's register of death memorial dates

kami 神—gods/spirits, a Shinto term

kanji 漢字—Chinese characters that form the Japanese writing system
karma — accounting and effects of good and bad actions throughout one’s past (and current) lives

kazoku — the aristocracy, term established by the Meiji government

kobun — "child-part," the junior member of a relationship

kofun — large mound graves

kohai — a junior member of a relationship

koseki — temple register of family information including address, births, deaths, marriages, relocations, etc.

kumi — association

magatama — ancient comma-shaped jewels

matsuji — branch temple

meishi — business or calling cards

mukoyōshi — a man who marries into a family and is adopted as its heir

nanushi — village headman

nembutsu — "thought of Buddha," Buddhist meditation through the recitation of Amida’s name

ohaka — grave, tomb

ohaka-mairi — visiting graves during obon

Obon — Japanese Festival of the Dead, held in mid-August

ofuse — donation given to a Buddhist priest in exchange for a kaimyo

okurina — Shinto posthumous name
oyabun 親分 - "parent-part," the senior member in a relationship

oyabun/kobun 親分子分 - patron/client relationship

rōnin 浪人 - "masterless samurai," samurai without the patronage of a feudal lord or other high ranking official

ryōmin 良民 - "good people," an old social distinction denoting people of good social standing regardless of rank; included the aristocracy and peasants

sabetsu 差別 - discrimination, discriminatory

sabetsu kaimyo 差別戒名 - discriminatory posthumous names

sakoku 鎖国 - national isolationism, cutting off relations with other nations

seizen-kaimyo 生前戒名 - kaimyo written or granted before an individual's death

sempai 先輩 - senior member of a relationship

sendara 旗陀羅 - Japanization of Candala (see "Candala")

senmin 貧民 - "base people," an old social distinction marking people outside of normal social categories such as beggars, thieves, marginal groups, etc.

senzo 頼祖 - ancestor(s)

seppuku 切腹 - suicide through disembowelment

Shakugō 駄号 - The inclusion of Shaku 駄 (for men) and Shakuni 駄尼 (for women) in Jodo Shin-shu kaimyo

shimpan 親藩 - feudal lords who were members of the Tokugawa clan

shinheimin 新平民 - "new commoners," the appellation given to former outcastes by the Meiji government

Shintō 神道 - "Way of the Kami," the indigenous animistic religion of Japan
shizoku 士族 - warrior class, term established by the Meiji government

shōgun 将軍 - military general

son-matsuji そん末寺 - branch temple once removed

Tanabata 七夕 - festival held in August, when the stars Vega and Altair appear closest together, elaborate paper and ribbon decorations called tanabata are constructed and hung around the central parts of town

tariki 他力 - "other power," relying on an outside source for salvation/enlightenment

tokonoma 床の間 - decorative alcove in Japanese-style rooms

tomuraiage 弔いあげ - the final memorial service for an individual, normally held on the 33rd or 50th anniversary of the death

Tozama 外様 - feudal lords who submitted to Tokugawa leyasu after the Battle of Sekigahara

yogo 誉号 - addition of the character yo (honor/praise) to Jodo-shu kaimyo
Figure 14: Map of Japan
(www.engr.arizona.edu/newsletters/MSE2Fall99/japan.html)
Figure 15: Map of regions in Japan (Izumi 1984:190)
Figure 16: Map of Nakada Township. Letters represent the cemeteries in this study. The dark line on the right is the Kitakami river.
APPENDIX B

OVERVIEW OF STRUCTURE AND STATUS IN JAPAN AS IT APPLIES TO THIS STUDY
STRUCTURE AND STATUS: JAPAN - A CASE STUDY

Japan is one of the most hierarchical societies in the world, and also one of the world's most status conscious societies. One's status is defined not merely in the realm of one's own ascribed and achieved status, but also through relationships with others. To this end, when two Japanese meet, they rely on a number of factors, such as age or company affiliation, to determine their relative rank so that interaction runs smoothly.

Religion is also part of the structure/status equation. Religion in Japan has been used for centuries as a means of justifying imperial rule and the creation and maintenance of social hierarchies. It was also a mechanism for gaining socio-political power and influence. And sometimes, it was simply a way of being modern or fashionable. As religion is interconnected with structure and status, it is possible to postulate that kaimyo, posthumous Buddhist names, reflect this relationship.

This appendix will explore the areas of structure and status in Japan.
STRUCTURE IN JAPAN

Japan is a highly vertical society in which relative position and rank are of great importance. Ascribed and achieved factors both play a role in status determination.

I have separated Japanese social organization into two levels for the purpose of this study: kin, which encompasses actual and fictive kinship relations; and the non-kin, or relations outside the familial unit. The structure of the family and kin-based organizations will be examined in depth, as they are the models for all succeeding levels of Japanese social structure. These hierarchical relationships also form the basis of the Japanese ecclesiastic structure.

Kin Structure

An examination of the /e

No discussion of Japanese social organization would be complete without some reference to the /e. (Lebra 1992: 15).

The /e has long been referred to as the fundamental unit of Japanese social organization and social status. While there is no exact English translation of /e, most authors use the terms "household" or "family system" to distinguish it from a strict kin-based family group such as the nuclear family.

The pattern of the /e is typically that of a stem family, that is, a vertical multigenerational unit comprised of one married couple per generation and
their unmarried children (Fig. 17). For example, a typical stem family would include a grandmother and grandfather, their heir (normally male) and his wife, and the heir's children. Sometimes, unmarried siblings of differing generational levels are included in the household, but not married ones.

Structure of the ie: Chonan, Chojo, and Heads of Households

The ie has its own hierarchical structure, with vertical relationships such as parent-child and head-heir as the most important. Kinship itself is less important at the horizontal level. That is, husband-wife or sibling relations are considered less significant. This is especially true for siblings who have married out of the ie; their ties to their siblings are rather weak in comparison with cultures such as the US (Nakane 1970). The internal structure of the ie reflects the combination of Confucian ethics and centuries of feudalism.

The most important figure is the household head, who is normally male, although exceptions do occur. The position of household head was historically one of significant authority: he was the sole decision-maker in all matters relating to the family property, was the primary figure in religious rituals to honor the ancestors, and supervised all family members and family business. Although his authority within the family was unquestioned, the head's powers and privileges on a day-to-day basis were more mundane, such as the right to eat or bathe first (Fukutake 1980).
"One to sell, one to follow, one in reserve"

Japanese folk saying (Fukutake 1980: 32)

The above folk saying describes the traditional desired birth order of children among rural peasants. The firstborn child should be a daughter, one who can be married off ("sold") to create alliances.1 The second child should be a boy, the heir who will follow. And due to the prevalence of disease or the possibility of accidents, a third child, a son in reserve, was of course desired.

The traditional hierarchy of the Japanese family held the family head and his wife in the highest and second highest positions. Next came the eldest son or daughter, and the younger siblings in their respective birth orders. Chonan (eldest son) and chojo (eldest daughter) are first, followed by their siblings labeled as second, third, fourth girls or boys, and so on, as the case may be.

For centuries, most parts of Japan practiced unigeniture inheritance, passing land, money, or titles to a single heir.2 The most common form was primogeniture inheritance in which only the eldest son inherited land, money, or titles. Samurai stipends could only be transferred in this manner. Although primogeniture was by far the most prevalent pattern, it was more a matter of custom than law. The Meiji Civil Code set guidelines that gave preference to age and sex, but did not mandate any particular form of succession or inheritance (Thurn 1995). Other forms of unigeniture inheritance continued to
be practiced. For example, in the Tohoku region, it was common for the eldest child, regardless of sex, to inherit in a practice known as *ane-katoku*.

Moreover, in Kyushu, youngest child succession was practiced, and in other parts of Japan, families decided which child would become the heir (Thurn 1995, Izumi et al. 1984).³

The firstborn son, the *chonan*, was under normal circumstances destined to become his family's household head. The position of *chonan* was one of both privilege and obligation. As the eldest, and inheriting, son, the *chonan* was raised with the knowledge that one day he would wield power within his family; but this came with the heavy responsibility of duties to family, neighbors, ancestors, and the external hierarchy such as the village headman. The *chonan* was treated differently from his siblings due to his position.

According to Fukutake (1980: 32), the eldest son in some areas was called *oyakata*, roughly translated as "the boss" or "the parent," while younger brothers were known as *hiyameshigui*, the "eaters of cold rice."

A firstborn daughter is called *chojo*, and although in many parts of Japan she could not inherit until 1947 due to local customs, her position also comes with advantages and duties (Thurn 1995). In families without sons, it often falls to the *chojo* to take on the obligations normally met by the *chonan*. A common occurrence in such families without male heirs is to bring in an adopted son through marriage, a *mukoyoshi*. That is, the *chojo* marries a man, he takes her family name, and becomes the de facto head of household.
To become a *mukoyoshi* was often an attractive option for a non-inheriting second or third son (Bellah 1957). Interestingly enough, it is not uncommon that even with a married-in son, the *chojo* often runs the household (Walthall 1991).

“Parents are irreplaceable but brides can be changed at will”
Japanese folk saying (Fukutake 1980:35)

The lowest ranked member of the family was the bride who married into a family. Other than cases of *mukoyoshi*, residence was primarily patrilocal (virilocal), and young brides went to live with or near their husbands’ families. As an outsider, and a woman (both low ascribed status), the bride was at the mercy of her husband’s family. She was the first to rise in the morning to prepare the meals and begin chores. She was the last to eat, and the last to use the bath, the water of which, being used for the entire family, was usually cold and not as clean. Not only was her status within the family low, she was also easily replaced.

It was common for families to seek out marriage partners from the same basic status level, though families looking for brides often desired them to come from families of slightly lower status (hypogamy). It was thought that this would increase the bride’s dependence, thereby making her less willing to complain or cause problems within the family (Fukutake 1980).
Due to the fact that vertical ties were stronger than horizontal ones, the husband-wife relationship was not viewed as the primary family bond, and was subordinate to parent-child ties. Therefore, a bride could not count on her husband to side with her against his mother or other family members in disputes. In addition to the harsh conditions, the bride was under the threat of a speedy divorce if she did not become pregnant with an heir in a timely fashion, normally within a few years after marriage. Only after her first child was born was the new wife’s position raised and more secure. Over time, her power and rank increased, and eventually, when her father- and mother-in-law stepped down from headship, the once lowly bride assumed her position as wife of the family head (Fukutake 1980).

Dozoku

Each member of a Japanese family knows how he or she fits into the complex framework of ie, and its larger level, the dozoku. Dozoku is a sociological term for a group of patrilineally related stem families ranked into a segmentary lineage (Fig. 18). The families in a dozoku acknowledge both their lineal and lateral ties (Fukutake 1980). The main family, or honke, carries the most prestige, and commands the most power and respect. The honke is the main lineage from which the branch families (bunke) split. The branch families must acknowledge the authority of the main family, and defer to its wishes when necessary (Hsu 1975).
As property and wealth could only be passed to the eldest son, this left the question of what was to become of the younger sons. Non-inheriting sons had the options of staying within the ie, unmarried, or breaking away and forming their own households. A branch family was established when a man was permitted to split off from the main family, and given a small portion of the main family’s property. Yanagita (1970) divides branch families into two types: ones which came about, sometimes through retirement, and could not feasibly be independent; and those who lived apart or took up other work and had the power to be independent of the honke.

In the later Tokugawa era (1600-1868), village masters (nanushi) were often given grants of land to develop. The nanushi would then bring in reliable peasant families to work his land, establishing these families as non-kin branch households (bunke), and himself as the head of the main family (honke). Families would sometimes immigrate to “frontier” areas such as the Tohoku region, and establish new communities, the founding families of which became honke. As families accumulated wealth, it became possible to give younger, non-inheriting sons enough money or land for them to create branch households (bunke).

As noted above, branch families, or bunke, owe their allegiance to the honke, and must maintain interaction that clearly demonstrates the superior/inferior lineage distinctions. Bunke are not entirely independent from their honke, but there are ample cases of bunke becoming better-off financially.
than their *honke*. The *honke*’s approval is often needed for major decisions such as weddings or large financial considerations. Additionally, the *honke* must be recognized as the primary power in ritual functions such as ancestor memorial rites (Fukutake 1980, Yanagita 1970).

**NON-KIN STRUCTURE**

As seen above, Japanese family life is vertical in nature. The family is the building block of Japanese society, and the external structures from neighborhood to nation reflect this pattern. Horizontal or lateral ties are weak, vertical ones, strong.

On one level, the Japanese historically viewed themselves as one large, extended family, headed by the emperor. In the eyes of the average Japanese, "the imperial ‘Holy Family’ stands at the apex of the social hierarchy" (Kurihara 1990: 322). According to Shinto mythology, all Japanese are of divine descent, and Japan is the "land of the gods." The emperor was viewed (prior to WWII) as a direct lineal descendant of the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu, and as such was the divinely appointed ruler of Japan (Earhart 1982). Shinto mythology describes the creation of Japan by the deities Izanami and Izanagi, and the birth of their daughter Amaterasu, the Great Sun Goddess. Amaterasu’s grandson, Ninigi descended from the heavens to the earth to form a nation under his family’s rule. The current emperor, Akihito (imperial name: Heisei), is said to be the 125th in direct descent.
Levels of Organization

Japan's socio-political organization reflects these patterns of hierarchy and familism. Even a megalopolis such as Tokyo is broken down into such small, well-defined and controlled segments that one forgets that the neighborhood contains thousands of people in an urban setting. Houses and apartments are organized into blocks, blocks into neighborhoods, neighborhoods into wards, and so on, with leaders at each level responsible for the actions of those below them. Vertical, hierarchical relationships are a central feature of the social structure.

Senior/Junior Relationships

The emphasis on vertical relationships is ego-centered, that is, one must determine one's position relative to others. Nakane (1970) describes the Japanese world as being divided into *sempai* (seniors), *kohai* (juniors) and *doryo* (colleagues). *Sempai* are members of one's group (school, club, business, etc.) with more seniority, often acting in an adversarial or mentorship role. *Kohai* are the newer group members, and *doryo*, members at the same level.
Oyabun/kobun Relations and the Iemoto

After WWII, the feudalistic family system was legally abolished, leading to the disintegration of the ie. Yet, Fukutake (1989) and Bennett and Ishino (1972) counter, the ie lives on in senior/junior oyabun/kobun relations and the larger iemoto system. This fictive kin system creates a hierarchy of vertical subordinate/superior relationships with corresponding levels of duties and obligations (Fig. 19). Superiors, the oyabun ("parent-part") are expected to behave much in the manner of parents, while subordinates, kobun ("child-part"), must reciprocate with duty and loyalty. These individual relationships form the basis of larger non-familial social structures. An oyabun may have one or multiple subordinates. At the top of the hierarchy is the o-oyabun, the "chief parent-part." This system, with its mutual obligations and responsibilities, promotes solidarity. (Ishino and Bennett 1972).

The resulting non-kin hierarchy is the iemoto or "family root" structure (Fig. 20). It resembles the dozoku, and is based on oyabun/kobun (senior/junior or master/pupil) relations combined with mutual dependence and ritual behavior (Hsu 1975). The iemoto is found in all spheres of life, economic, political, educational and religious. Iemoto are primarily found in urban areas, which account for more than 70% of the Japanese population. It appears that as the country industrialized and urbanized, iemoto filled the void
left by moving away from dozoku and traditional patterns of village hierarchy. In essence, iemoto is the structure through which most Japanese live and interact with each other.

Rural Structure

In rural areas, groups of families are organized into hamlets, groups of hamlets into villages, groups of villages into towns, and so on. Each level of organization has a head, which often rotates between member households.

In Japan, farmhouses tend to be clustered together in a central location, with farmers traveling out to their fields. Groups of farmhouses, around 50 or so, are organized into hamlets (mura or buraku), one of the fundamental units of rural organization. During the feudal era, hamlets were the basic units of taxation. Taxes were assessed by the total amount of cultivated land found within the hamlet’s boundaries, and farmers had a collective responsibility to pay. Because of the alliances and interdependence this produced within the community, relationships with neighbors were very important, falling only behind the ie and dozoku (Fukutake 1980, Bellah 1957).

Within the hamlet, subgroups known as kumi are found, although they are not administrative units. During the Tokugawa era, gonin-gumi, five household groups, were set up to enforce collective responsibility on hamlets. The head of the gonin-gumi was often the wealthiest man or the man with the highest prestige among the five households (Bellah 1957). The kumi also
reinforced the values of hard work and frugality, so that the ever-increasing tax quotas could be met. In reality the *kumi* further strengthened bonds of cooperation between hamlet members. In 1940 *kumi* were used to disseminate information and news to rural regions.

The Occupation government outlawed *kumi*, but the practice persisted in the countryside. Today *kumi* serve as a unit of cooperative labor in rural areas. *Kumi* members assist with road repair, dredging irrigation ditches, and so forth. They are also used as mutual aid groups that help members during stressful times such as birth, marriage, and death (Fukutake 1980, Moore 1990). Multiple *kumi* can be found within a hamlet, and multiple hamlets comprise a village.

**STATUS**

*Status in Japan*

With hierarchy comes status and ranking. Status is an important element of Japanese social hierarchy. Holders of statuses go to great lengths to behave according to their rank, which encompasses everything from language usage to seating arrangements.

Business and social interactions are governed by status awareness. The levels of politeness in Japanese speech, marked mostly by prefixes and verb tenses, vary widely, and it is just as improper to use too honorific a speech level as too informal. In business, as well as in families, people are
often referred to by their titles rather than names. For example, in a company, titles such as "section chief," or "department head," are common. Each title fits into a minutely detailed hierarchy.

When determining status, factors such as company size, type, and location, as well as occupational title, age, sex, and education are taken into account. Age in particular is often given significant weight in status determination. In addition to language politeness levels, one must carefully gauge such things as the depth of a bow, and seating arrangements. For example, the highest ranked member in a party should be seated at the center of the table, backed by the alcove (tokonoma) which holds flower arrangements and decorative hangings (Nakane 1970).

Business cards (meishi) are one of the most common ways of identifying the relative status of individuals. The business card lists the individual's name, business title, phone numbers, and company address. Although the business title is considered the most important piece of information, the company's address also affects status. Locations in expensive urban districts are considered more prestigious than suburbs or questionable areas (Illustrated Salaryman 1988, Nakane 1970, Lebra 1984).

Among individuals with the same basic status, differences are emphasized, allowing for ranking to be made. Housewives acquire the status of their husband, and when the wives of company co-workers meet, they must act in accordance with their husband's relative rank.
What determines status?

The Japanese word for status is *bun*, which essentially means "part" in English, but often is used to mean both status and role. The implication of *bun* is that every Japanese is a part of the whole, and as such, has distinct roles to play (Lebra 1984).

Historically in Japan, status was based primarily on hereditary rank, followed by factors such as age, and economics. In the countryside, most people belonged to the peasant class, but differentiated between themselves based on economic factors such as the amount of land owned, or the length of household establishment (Fukutake 1980, 1989; Nakane 1970; Bellah 1957).

Distinct status rankings of landlord, owner-farmer, part owner, and tenant developed in villages. The general trend (pre-war) was that within a rural village, 1/3 farmers worked their own land, 1/3 both worked their own land and rented land from landlords, and 1/3 were tenant farmers. Villages typically had one or two major landlords from whom the others rented land (Fukutake 1980, Bellah 1957).

Households in farm villages were ranked annually on rosters (*kotohyo*) compiled by members of the village council. All households were listed in order from highest to lowest, the rankings of which were determined by the length of establishment of the household, wealth, income, and efficiency in handling money (Nakane 1970).
The rise of industry changed the nature of these status rankings. People were no longer tied to the land, and could leave to seek other employment. Landlords lost tenants, and therefore income, as rural peasants flocked to cities and other industrial areas. Families who continued to farm also had members who worked either part-time or seasonally in small factories, thereby increasing their income. Hereditary status had been abandoned for economic status (Fukutake 1980, 1989).

Today, status ranking continues to be important. In addition to wealth and occupation, education is seen as an important factor in status determination. Japanese universities are ranked from the elite public four-year institutions such as Tokyo and Kyoto Universities, to the 2-year colleges which serve as “finishing” schools for young women or trade schools for young men. University affiliation is taken seriously, especially as many institutions have formal or informal alliances with government or private industry.

The emphasis on university affiliation has led to an educational system geared towards the successful completion of entrance exams. Sometimes, families begin grooming their children for this system as early as preschool. In addition, afterschool tutoring at jukus (cram schools) has become the norm for many Japanese students.
Status in the modern business and high-tech era has shifted from the ascribed to achieved, from hereditary prestige and honor to power and wealth (Lebra 1993).

A History of Hierarchy: Caste vs. Class, and the Burakumin

The establishment of a formalized social hierarchy developed over a number of centuries, and its impact was profound. Certain segments of the population found themselves enjoying luxurious living and the pursuit of amusements, living on hereditary stipends. Other groups found themselves branded as sub-human, and forced to live in segregated ghettos.

Chinese Confucianism, introduced in the 5th century CE, heavily influenced Japanese social structure. The patriarchal family system was seen as a reflection of natural order, and society was to be modeled upon it. The emphasis on lineage, respect and obedience shaped the Japanese view of their history as an "unending continuity of a pyramid of families capped by the imperial lineage." (DeVos 1992: 34)

In 604 Prince Shotoku delivered his 17 Article constitution, in an attempt to establish an ethical government based on Chinese principles. It called for ministers to obey imperial commands and behave decorously, and so forth. As earth is subordinate to heaven, so were the people to their ruler. This was to be realized through the cooperative efforts of a benevolent ruler and his
obedient subjects (Earhart 1982, Varley 1973, Hane 1992). Social interactions were to take place in this framework of obligation and respect.

Complex social hierarchies began to develop based on these principles in the Nara (710-784 CE) and Heian periods (794-1185 CE). Society was divided into 2 levels: the "good people" (ryomin) which included upper and lower aristocracy and peasants, and "base people" (senmin) comprised of slaves and marginal groups. Within each group were further class distinctions. Intermarriage between ryomin and senmin was prohibited by law (Neary 1989). Class divisions continued to grow as the society moved increasingly into feudalism.

After hundreds of years of feudal warfare, the country was permanently unified in 1600 by Tokugawa Ieyasu, one of the great shoguns (supreme military general). He instituted many reforms to create stability in the newly united society, one of which was the formation of a 4-tier caste hierarchy modeled after the Chinese Confucian 4-class system. The samurai were to rule at the top, followed in order by farmers, artisans, and finally merchants at the bottom. Submissiveness and obedience were strictly enforced as a means of maintaining social order and cohesion, and samurai were given carte blanche in the use of force to maintain order (Hane 1992).

Within each caste were multiple gradations of rank. For example, feudal lords were classified as shimpan - members of the Tokugawa clan, fudai – lords who had been allies of Ieyasu before the Battle of Sekigahara, or
tozama – those lords who submitted to leyasu after Sekigahara (Hane 1992). However, even the shimpan were ranked according to their lineal proximity. For the feudal lords, house status was important in that it determined appointments to shogunal offices, imperial court ranks and titles, and where the lords lived within the shogunal castle or Edo (present day Tokyo) (Lebra 1993).

Sumptuary laws were instituted prescribing and proscribing behavior. The ruling elite mandated methods of work, what differing ranks of people could eat, drink, and wear, and what types of housing was appropriate. Education was limited to upper classes, as ignorant peasants were thought less likely to rebel (Hane 1992).

The feudal 4-class system was abolished in 1868 as part of Emperor Meiji's plan to modernize Japan quickly. The new system that replaced it, however, did not eliminate social stratification. It created 3 general feudal-like categories: kazoku (aristocrats), shizoku (old warrior class), and heimin (commoners). The terms eta and hinin, used for outcastes, were abolished in 1881, later to be replaced by shinheimin (new commoners). These terms were recorded on census documents and family records. The rapid push towards industrialization also helped create a large working class that widened the gap between the imperial aristocracy and the commoners (Kosaka 1994).
Burakumin and Sabetsu

One result of the feudal caste system was the establishment of a permanent underclass, historically known as *eta* (defilement) and *hinin* (non-people) and called today *Burakumin* (hamlet-people).

Neary (1989) traces the history of this ethnically/racially Japanese, yet discriminated against group. The Japanese, with their native tradition of Shinto, and imported Buddhism, had strong beliefs in ritual purity. The taking of life became taboo, and in 676 CE the first official government proclamation outlawing the eating of certain domestic animals was passed. Those who had prolonged contact with dead people or animals were pushed to the margins of society because of their spiritual pollution (Neary 1989, Namihira 1984).

In the Middle Ages, warlords encouraged leather workers to settle near their castles to help produce goods necessary to the war effort. But over time, the association with death and ritual defilement caused further divisions between leather workers and other groups. Their communities were kept separate from the rest of the villages and towns, and were often relegated to poor or flood-prone land.

The terms *eta* (defilement) and *hinin* (non-people) began to be used (Neary 1989). There were a few distinctions between the two terms: *eta* was originally used to denote those who were outcastes by birth, while *hinin* was the label given to those with unclean occupations, or who had broken laws.
Hinin were often wandering entertainers, beggars, prostitutes, and others considered as social pariahs.

Initially, if a person were designated as hinin, they had the hope of one day rejoining the ranks of ryomin (good people), although soon the status of hinin became hereditary as well (Hane 1992).

Laws increasingly circumscribed the life of the eta and hinin. Marriage outside of the group (exogamy) was prohibited. Areas of residence were strictly segregated from the population at large. Travel was prohibited. Interaction with non-Burakumin was discouraged as much by custom as by law. In 1715 (Kyoto) and 1719 (Tokyo) surveys of eta and hinin communities were conducted, and their household information registers (koseki) kept separately from the non-outcastes’. These surveys were also used to levy special taxes on the eta and hinin. Clothing and appearance restrictions were instituted between 1715-20. Headgear was forbidden, even during rain or snow. Men were forced to cut their hair short so that they were easily distinguished, and women were prohibited from shaving their eyebrows or blackening their teeth (both popular beauty regimens of the day). Reforms passed between 1830-44 created more restrictive regulations on appearance, mandated that eta and hinin could not cross the threshold of non-outcaste homes, and allowed for searches to seek out eta and hinin who had illegally left their home communities (Neary 1989).
Popular ideology evolved to widen the perceived we/they gap. *Eta* and *hinin* were called "they lowliest of all the people, almost resembling the animals." They were said to be missing a rib, to have a dog's bone in their body, to have distorted sexual organs and a defective excretory system, and as they were animals, dirt did not stick to their bare feet. It was believed that their necks would not cast shadows in the moonlight (Neary 1989: 3; DeVos 1967). Shopkeepers refused to receive their money directly. *Eta* and *hinin* had to place their money in a water-filled box so that their "pollution" could be washed away. Separate schools and work facilities were created. It was believed that their pollution was passed through their blood to their children, and therefore they would contaminate any family lineage they married into (Neary 1989). To this day it is not uncommon for families to run background checks into the lineage histories of potential marriage partners for this purpose.

Religion also played a role in defining the burakumin and legitimizing their low status. Shinto ideas about ritual purity and defilement, as well as Buddhist prohibitions on the taking of life encouraged the separation of this group from the rest of society and provided a theological basis for discrimination.

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1 In the past (pre-WWII), there were occasions when poor families sold their daughters to brothels or geisha-houses. This saying, however, refers to marriage rather than the literal sale of a daughter.

2 Thurn (1995) makes the technical distinction between inheritance and succession, but states that in common practice they go together. I use the terms interchangeably unless specifically noted.
For a thorough examination of this topic, see Nobuko Thurn's *Customary Practice and Legal Codes of Succession and Inheritance in Japan* (1995).

Equal-inheritance laws were passed in 1947 under the Occupational Government.

See Theodore Bestor's *Neighborhood Tokyo* (1969) and Ronald Dore's *City Life in Japan* (1973) for examinations of the structure and daily life in a Tokyo ward.

Although there is growing opposition to *ie* studies, such as the work of Numasaki Ichiro.
APPENDIX C

STRUCTURE CHARTS
Figure 17: /e: Household composed of 1 married couple per generation and their unmarried children. Normally traced through the head of the household and his heir.
Figure 18: *Dozoku* system comprised of *honke* and *bunke*  
(Adapted from Hamabata 1990:89)

Household A is the *honke*
Household B is the first *bunke* and is ranked accordingly
Household C is a more recent *bunke*, but is closely tied to the *honke*
Household D is a *bunke* of household B, and is therefore somewhat more distant in relation to the *honke*
Household E is a new *bunke* of family C
Figure 19: Senior/junior relationship forms (oyabun/kobun, sempai/kohai)
Figure 20: /emoto, a hierarchy of senior/junior relationships patterned after the dozoku system.
Figure 21: Temple hierarchy

1. *Honzan*, central temple
2. *Honji*, main temples
3. *Chuhonji*, semi-main temples
4. *Jiki-matsuji*, direct branch temples
5. *Son-matsuji*, branch temples once removed
APPENDIX D

OVERVIEW OF JAPANESE RELIGION AS IT APPLIES TO THIS STUDY

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OVERVIEW OF JAPANESE RELIGION AS IT APPLIES TO THIS STUDY

In Japan, in addition to its ritual and faith functions, religion has been a tool for political manipulations and machinations, a means of social control, and a measure of status. Religion has been used to legitimate the rule of the imperial family as well as the feudal regime.

Structurally, religions in Japan reflect the reality of the ie and vertical social structure. Administratively, Shinto and Buddhism, in particular, are organized according to ranked hierarchies (Fig. 21). The pattern is essentially that of the earlier described dozoku system, under which branch families (bunke) are subordinate to main households (honke). Hsu (1975) refers to this extra-familial hierarchy as iemoto. For example, Buddhist sects have main temples or monasteries which supervise the activities of lesser ones (Nakane 1970). Central temples (honzan) are at the top of the ecclesiastic hierarchy, followed by main temples (honji), semi-main temples (chuhonji), direct branch temples (jiki-matsuji), and finally at the lowest end of the spectrum, branch temples once removed (son-matsuji) (Kitagawa 1966). Each temple within a sect is ranked according to its date of founding and the
manner in which it was established. Even newer religious groups such as Tenrikyo (Shinto-based) and Soka Gakkai (Buddhist-based) follow this hierarchical pattern (Nakane 1970).

Of particular importance to this study is the association between specific sects of Buddhism and social status. Certain sects have historic ties to either the aristocracy or commoners. These status-religion relationships should be visible in the kaimyo of different sects. Higher status kaimyo, based on elements discussed in the text, should be found with greater frequency in the cemeteries of religions that catered to the elite. Conversely, lower status kaimyo should appear with greater frequency in the cemeteries of sects that ministered to commoners.

This appendix will discuss the general history of the major religions of Japan, indigenous and introduced, and what roles they have played in structure and status. As a result, some will be viewed in greater depth than others.

Shinto

Shinto is the native religion of Japan. Chinese emissaries documented Japanese folk practices as early as the first and second centuries CE, describing a country ruled by Queen Pimiko, a shamaness (Varley 1973).

Shinto is an animistic religion, believing in kami (spiritual forces) that fill the world, permeating living and non-living objects. Unlike Western Judeo-
Christian religion, Shinto has no concept of sin, only pollution and purity. Shinto believers must constantly strive to overcome the pollution of this world with myriads of purification rituals (Varley 1973).

Until 552 CE, Shinto was a loose collection of fertility rites and oral traditions. The advent of Buddhism and Chinese models of organization led the Japanese to give structure to their traditional beliefs. Shinto (way of the kami) was used to distinguish this native tradition from Butsudo (way of the Buddha). Oral tradition was recorded in sacred texts, the Kojiki (712 CE) and the Nihonshoki (720 CE), blending history, mythology and cosmology. The texts, influenced by Chinese sacred writings, illustrate the divine or semi-divine descent of Japan and the Japanese people and show the proliferation of kami intimately related to the land and people (Earhart 1982).

Shinto legitimized the imperial family’s reign through the belief that the imperial family, and indeed all Japanese are believed to be descendants of Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess. The imperial family is seen as being directly descended while the rest of the population is more distantly related. Those closely related to the imperial family also benefited from the divine status, and were ranked accordingly. The emperor serves as both the symbolic head of state and chief priest of Shinto, performing several key rituals such as the planting of the first rice seedling (Kurihara 1990).
Buddhism

In 552 Korean emissaries introduced Buddhism to the Japanese court. This introduction was a formality though, as approximately one third of the Japanese aristocracy was by this time of foreign descent, and doubtlessly familiar with Buddhism (Varley 1973). The formal encounter with Buddhism became part of a debate over national reform. The native religion, as seen earlier, was prompted to adopt the name Shinto and work towards formalizing its organization (Earhart 1982).

Shinto ritualists and the elite imperial guards felt threatened by the new import. They feared not only loss of power and legitimation of imperial rule, but also worried about incurring the wrath of angry kami. On the opposing side, the Soga clan saw Buddhism as an essential quality of higher civilization (Varley 1973). The king from Korea's letter of introduction called Buddhism "the religion of distant India, whose doctrine surpasses even the understanding of the Chinese and whose value is without limit" (Earhart 1982:40). The Japanese much admired China, with its elaborate writing system and centralized government. The adoption of Buddhism was therefore seen as a move towards a higher level of civilization (Varley 1973).

The Soga clan, with its military backing, won the debate and Buddhism was accepted initially by the aristocracy, then the emperor. Buddhism itself had much to do with its own acceptance. First, it was not contradictory but complementary to Shinto. Shinto focused on the love of nature and viewed
death as pollution and defilement. Buddhism, in contrast, was concerned with life's suffering and guidance towards enlightenment (Varley 1973). Second, the emphasis on art, ritual and magic in the form of Buddhism introduced to Japan appealed to the Japanese (Earhart 1982). Additionally, the Buddhist priests themselves had invaluable talents, serving as scribes, architects, and teachers to both court and state. Finally, the priests helped with the importation and implementation of Chinese models of governance (Earhart 1982).

Prince Shotoku, a devout Buddhist, formalized the acceptance of Buddhism. In 604 he provided Japan with its first constitution, the 17 Articles, a formal statement calling for an ethical government in Japan. This constitution was a blend of Buddhist, Shinto, and Chinese ideas which Prince Shotoku felt would provide a sound and rational basis for government and society (Earhart 1982).

Buddhism’s emphasis on death and memorial rites also impacted Japan, as Shinto was ill equipped to deal with death. Although a Shinto oracle declared in 616 that Buddhist priests were the appropriate people to perform funeral rites, the idea was slow to take hold. Death was seen as the ultimate pollution, the ultimate defilement. As a result, the imperial capital was forced to relocate after the death of an emperor, which was thought to taint the entire community (Earhart 1982). Buddhism’s elaborate funeral and memorial rites, as well as the Indic tradition of cremation, were thought to overcome the
pollution associated with death, particularly an imperial death. This led to the establishment of the first permanent Japanese capital in Nara (710 CE) (Reader 1991). This association with death also increased the popularity of butsudan (Buddhist family altars) and ihai (memorial tablets) with the aristocracy. They could now have priests perform memorial rites in their own residences (Earhart 1982, Reader 1991).

Buddhism initially flourished, especially among the elite. During the Nara period (710–784 CE), a number of the temple complexes became extremely rich and influential. Prestigious temples attracted politically ambitious men who might otherwise have been doomed to obscurity. Temple life gave priests and monks access to high levels of learning, lent them public respect, and allowed them to serve as advisors to the aristocracy. The increasing influence of temples disturbed the government, and cycles of temple interference in politics followed by government reaction soon began. For example, this increasing involvement in politics by temples was one reason the government moved the capital from Nara to Kyoto in 794 CE. The government could no longer tolerate the interference of the massive, often corrupt, temple complexes and as a result felt that relocation away from the temples was necessary. Despite the move, the continued growth, wealth and power of Buddhist temples plagued the Japanese government for centuries (Earhart 1982).
During the Heian era (794-1185) Buddhism continued to flourish. Two sects in particular, Tendai and Shingon, became powerful and were patronized by the aristocracy. Additionally, many powerful and wealthy people retired to temples or monasteries in their old age, or commissioned temples to be built. One of the most famous examples of this is Byodoin in Uji. Prominent temples welcomed royal or aristocratic men and women into their ranks, as having such people in leadership positions not only forged alliances, but also increased temple status. Elite families also viewed these relationships as advantageous, and often “used these temples as a dumping ground for their unwanted sons and daughters” (Lebra 1993: 48).

The organizational structure of the Buddhist ecclesiastical hierarchy, unsurprisingly, mirrored that of the court. Positions within the system were ranked, and filled by corresponding levels of aristocrats and nobility. For example, the heads of the temple complexes were usually imperial princes. According to Morris (1964) by the mid-Heian, most of the upper positions in the Buddhist hierarchy were filled by nobles from Third Rank and above. Of the remaining positions, at least half were filled by men of the Fifth Rank and above.

As the temples grew in power and wealth, they became landlords, owning vast amounts of land – and importantly – the taxation rights to it. They were in essence feudal powers in their own right. Peasants were subordinate to the temples, and their labor was seen as service to the Buddha. Likewise,
opposition to authority was viewed as an action likely to invite the Buddha's retribution, which was carried out by the priests or monks (Kuroda 1996). The great temple complexes, such as the Tendai center at Mt. Hiei, even established their own bands of warrior monks. The temple complexes sent their armed priests to riot and protest government actions, and also to attack and destroy rival monasteries (Lebra 1993, Morris 1964).

As discussed above, Buddhism initially appealed to the elite, while the peasants maintained their local folk religions. In the Nara period, as the court nobles were engaging in Buddhist rituals, the State sought to keep the masses ignorant of its teachings, even prohibiting the instruction of Buddhism to commoners (Reader 1987). Additionally, the monastic nature of early Japanese Buddhism discouraged many who could not afford the luxury of abandoning farms and families to live a cloistered existence. Nara, and to some extent, even Heian forms of Buddhism did not focus on commoners and peasants (Morris 1964).

As the power of the court waned, populist sects began to arise. The Kamakura era (1185 – 1333) was one of warfare and increasing feudalism. The golden age of the court and nobility was over, and the combination of these factors was seen as signaling that Buddhist era of Mappo – the last period of Buddhist Dharma – had begun. Pessimism was the tenor of the times, and corruption and natural disasters fueled the feeling that there was no hope of enlightenment. Since everyone suffered together in the era of
Mappo, the entire population was viewed as being in need of salvation. A number of new Buddhist sects arose that espoused *tariki* (other power), that is, salvation can be realized only through the saving grace of Amida Buddha. By putting one’s faith in Amida, and through the proper practice of simplified rituals such as the *nembutsu*, one is assured of salvation. Salvation becomes an external rather than internal matter. This approach was within the reach of the masses and held great appeal. Two traditions to arise from this were Jodo-shu (Pure Land), Jodo Shin-shu (True Pure Land).

Jodo-shu was founded by Honen (1133-1212), who originally trained in the Tendai school of Buddhism. Honen promulgated the belief in a Western Paradise, where souls saved through the grace of Amida Buddha (Sk. Amitabha – the buddha of boundless light, and Amitayus – the buddha of infinite life) may reside in eternal bliss. Recitation of the *nembutsu*, a statement of faith, was the primary practice. The practices and beliefs espoused by Honen grew in popularity among both commoners and elites until both the older Buddhist sects and the government became nervous and disapproving. The government outlawed the teaching of *nembutsu* in 1207, and Honen was exiled to Tosa (Higashi Honganji Visitor Guide).

One of Honen’s disciples, Shinran (1173 – 1262), asserted that absolute faith in Amida was the key to salvation. Shinran made his ideas even more accessible to the people than Honen had. He felt that monastic life was not necessary, and he himself married. When Honen was exiled to Tosa,
Shinran was sent to Echigo (in present day Niigata). Although later pardoned, he did not return to Kyoto until he was in his 60's, preferring to live among and evangelize the peasantry and commoners. Shinran's teachings formed Jodo Shin-shu (often called simply Shin-shu), one of the largest populist movements. (Varley 1973, Reader 1987, Higashi Honganji Visitor Guide)

A third movement to arise from the Kamakura period was Nichiren, named after its charismatic founder. Nichiren (1222 – 82), like Honen and Shinran, was initially a member of Tendai Buddhism. He was highly nationalistic, seeking to create a “true, safe, flourishing country” through absolute faith in the Lotus Sutra, and the chanting of its title.² The problems plaguing Japan – natural disasters, political unrest, and attempted invasions by the Mongols – were due to the spreading of false Buddhist doctrine. He felt that to accomplish the restoration of both Japan and true Buddhism, all other sects of Buddhism must be disbanded, and their members as well as nonbelievers forced to convert. All Japanese must be focused on the quest for salvation and the eradication of social ills through the use of the Lotus Sutra. As a result, Nichiren was not only a zealous sect, but also an all-inclusive one. No groups, including the poor and women, were excluded. Nichiren's primary membership, unsurprisingly, came from urban, lower classes. (Reader 1987, Varley 1973, Earhart 1982).

The Kamakura era also saw the rise of Zen Buddhism. Unlike Jodo-shu and Jodo Shin-shu's emphasis on tariki, Zen was based on the concept 195
enlightenment through one's own actions. Zen promoted the belief that people need to discover their own inherent enlightenment through such practices as meditation, riddles, or focusing on daily activities. Two main schools of Zen arose: Rinzai and Soto. Rinzai, founded by Eisai (1141-1215), focused on enlightenment through the use of rationally unanswerable riddles (koan). Eisai's Rinzai Zen found favor among the military warlords at Kamakura. Rinzai Zen, coupled with Shinto and Chinese beliefs, formed the basis of bushido (Way of the Warrior) the chivalric code of the samurai, and therefore was popular with all levels of the warrior class as well (Reader 1987). Meditation on life and inevitable death as a means for finding one's true self appealed to the samurai (Bellah 1957). In 1338, by shogunal decree, Zen (Rinzai) temples were built in sixty-six parts of the country, thereby increasing its influence (Earhart 1982).

Soto Zen was developed by Dogen (1200 – 53). It centers on finding enlightenment through meditation and the study of scriptures. Unlike Eisai, Dogen did not gain the support of the military leaders. Therefore, while Rinzai became associated with the ruling class, Soto was more popular with peasants and commoners. Soto's funeral and memorial rituals appealed to and gained support from the lower classes (Earhart 1982, Reader 1987, Varley 1973).

The older forms of Buddhism did not collapse under the rising wave of the new Kamakura sects. The aristocracy still patronized the older sects,
which in return used Buddhist teachings (*buppo*) to legitimate and "spiritually protect" the rulers' laws (Kuroda 1996: 301). Temple complexes continued to expand their estates, and in conjunction with other landholders, increased the number of village/estate temples. These branch temples were subservient to the main temple complexes, creating a network of control and authority. To prevent competition, both the Buddhist estates and those of their allies consistently banned from their lands Soto Zen, Jodo-shu, and any other forms they felt threatened their power base (Kuroda 1996).

By the late 1500s the country had experienced years of feudalism and civil war. Warlords battled each other for land and power, and religious centers were not exempt. The warrior monks increasingly interfered with the government, so Oda Nobunaga and his armies razed the temple complexes at Mt. Hiei, the center of Tendai Buddhism. In all, over 1,600 monks, priests, and laypeople (including women and children seeking refuge) were slaughtered, and over 3000 buildings on the mountain were burned to the ground. The atrocities escalated between 1574 and 1575, when Nobunaga sent his men to Osaka to deal with the Ikko sect of Jodo Shin-shu. This militant group lived in a walled fortress-like city and challenged Nobunaga's authority. Nobunaga retaliated, and over 80,000 Ikko members were massacred in the resulting battles (Kitagawa 1966).

The process of civil unification began under Oda Nobunaga and his successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In 1600 Tokugawa Ieyasu succeeded in
bringing the remaining feudal warlords under his command, and his descendants maintained control until the 1860s. To keep peace and maintain control, the Tokugawas instituted a number of wide-ranging policies. To increase stability and reduce foreign influence, the government outlawed Christianity in 1614 and instituted measures to purge any remaining vestiges of it. And in 1639 the government instituted the policy of sakoku, isolationism, effectively cutting Japan off from the outside world.

One of the most important policies for the purpose of this study is the mandatory Buddhist registration and patronage requirement (danka seido) established in 1613. While Ieyasu's predecessors Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi viewed the large Buddhist institutions as rivals and even enemies, Ieyasu took charge of them. The Tokugawa government supervised all Buddhist sects from the top down, essentially turning them into government agencies, and their priests into civil servants (Earhart 1982, Kitagawa 1966).

The Tokugawa's registration act required all households, even Shinto priests, register with their local Buddhist temple. The temples kept records of important events such as births, deaths, marriages, etc. Once registered, families were unable to change temple affiliation, occupation, or move to a new location. The temple records also contained detailed information on families' social statuses, and were instrumental in the implementation and maintenance of the 4-class social hierarchy (Bodiford 1989).
In an effort to wipe out Christianity, the government also required Buddhist temples to test and certify all member families as Buddhists. Every year, temples gathered their members and forced them to step on a copper crucifix (fumie). If members did so, they were awarded their annual official "certificates of belief," but if they did not, they were accused of being Christian and the authorities were sent for (Reader 1987). Some Christians hid their faith and performed the fumie ritual with their neighbors, others refused and suffered the consequences.

Mandatory affiliation both helped and hurt Buddhism. On one hand, it increased temple coffers, gave priests a captive audience, and solidified their role as performers of funerals and memorial rituals (including kaimyo). On the other hand, as agents of the state, Buddhist sects were limited in what they could and could not teach, their influence circumscribed, and suffered the apathy of members who joined solely out of legal obligation (Kitagawa 1987).

Although the membership requirement was rescinded during the Meiji period, the majority of Japanese today still retain at least nominal affiliation with Buddhist temples for the purposes of funerals and memorial services.

Confucianism

Japan also imported Confucianism from China. The Japanese viewed China as the pinnacle of civilization and worthy of emulation. Confucianism was seen as the way of social and political order. The first real attempt at the
implementation of these ideas came during the Taika Reform (645-710), when the government sought an effective means of unifying the country, which was beginning to fall into clan warfare. To remedy the situation, the Japanese adopted the Chinese structure of government, official codes, civil service exams and an educational system based on the Chinese classics (Earhart 1982).

Confucianism played a role in the religious and ethical foundation of government, and influenced general conceptions of social relations. The government tried to adhere to the principle of benevolent rulers / obedient subjects, and encouraged loyalty to family, community and lord. The Confucian idea of a heavenly ordained ruler conflated with the indigenous theory of the divine nature of the Japanese emperor and the Shinto tradition of descent from the Sun Goddess. Yet, unlike the Chinese, the Japanese believed that heaven could not withdraw its mandate (Earhart 1982).

**Christianity**

In 1543 the first contact with Europeans was made. Less than six years later, St. Francis Xavier and a host of Portuguese Jesuit missionaries descended on the port city of Nagasaki, and a yet another new religion was introduced to the Japanese. Christianity (Kirishitan) was eagerly embraced in
its early days. It was viewed much as Buddhism was upon its arrival: something new, exciting, modern, and a symbol of a more advanced culture (Kitagawa 1966). Additionally, government leaders welcomed a challenge to the power held by powerful Buddhist institutions. They felt that the introduction of Christianity might reduce the influence wielded by these temple communities (Earhart 1982, Varley 1973).

As with the other religions, the elites were the first to adopt Christianity, or at least some of its trappings. According to a Jesuit priest’s account of the situation in the late 1590s, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and other “lords of Japan” were often seen wearing Portuguese outfits, complete with rosaries around their necks and crucifixes at their sides. Many of them learned the Pater Noster and Ave Maria, and prayed aloud as they walked about town. The Jesuit priest suggested that this practice was performed out of “gallantry, or because they think it is a good thing, and one which will help them to achieve prosperity in worldly things” (Varley 1973: 104). For Hideyoshi, it appears that his interest in Western items was not related to the acceptance of Christianity, as within a few years, he became one of the forces of its destruction.

Unlike Buddhism and Confucianism, Christianity’s influence was short lived. Less than seventy-five years after its arrival, with hundreds of thousands of followers, the government banned Christianity. Under Toyotomi Hideyoshi’s direction, persecution, harsh taxation, and death sentences were meted out upon Japanese Christians. To make a strong public statement against
Christianity, Hideyoshi ordered the crucifixion of 26 Jesuits, both Japanese and Spanish. The group was marched barefoot from Kyoto to Nagasaki (on the southwestern island of Kyushu) and publicly crucified on February 5, 1597 (Yuki 1993).

Although there a number of reasons for the government's rejection of Christianity, one of the main ones was that the government felt Christianity was a significant threat to the newly achieved internal stability of the nation (Earhart 1982, Kitagawa 1966). Hideyoshi suspected that the Jesuits were part of a plan to colonize Japan, or would supply Western arms to rival warlords. Moreover, Christianity demanded ultimate loyalty to God and the Church, which conflicted with the feudal ethos of ultimate loyalty to the ruling power (the feudal lord) (Earhart 1982).

As discussed earlier, in 1614, Tokugawa Ieyasu signed an edict banning Christianity and demanded the physical deportation of all foreign missionaries. Ieyasu's successors continued to sporadically cleanse Japan of the alien influence of Christianity. Some Christians, especially in Nagasaki, became crypto-Christians, living outwardly as Buddhists. Many others rejected their faith in the face of certain torture or death.

The prohibitions on Christianity were dropped during the Meiji period, but it never gained the strength it once had. Even today, after almost a century and a half, less than one percent of the Japanese population is Christian.
Neo-Confucianism

Another philosophical-religious system imported by the Japanese was Neo-Confucianism, which arose in Sung Dynasty China (960-1279) and was brought to Japan by Zen priests. Neo-Confucianism was built on traditional Confucianism, but also borrowed from Daoism and Buddhism to create a comprehensive philosophy for interpreting every aspect of the world and human life. It offered profound understandings of cosmology, humanistic ethics and political ideals in a unified system (Earhart 1982).

Neo-Confucianism appealed to the Tokugawa shogunate for several reasons. The theory of immanent theology found in Neo-Confucianism proposed that the order of heaven is not a transcendental substance, but is inherent in the conditions of human life (Kitagawa 1966). A properly structured society would model this heavenly order, and once achieved, peace and harmony would follow. This provided the rationale for the mandated 4-class social hierarchy, as well as rule by the shogunate (Earhart 1982). Neo-Confucianism's emphasis on relationships based on loyalty was promoted as a stabilizing factor for the nation. Loyalty to the nation, one's lord and one's family became sacred duties to be taken quite seriously by all Japanese. The sacralization of social relationships helped further cohere the Japanese feudal population into a unified, centralized state (Kitagawa 1966).
Religion and the *Burakumin*

The *burakumin*, the Japanese outcaste group, suffered at the hands of religion. Instead of fighting for equality and justice, Shinto and Buddhism often justified discrimination against them, while Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism maintained their position in the social hierarchy. The people who did not fit neatly into the 4-class hierarchy were pushed to the margins of society (Neary 1989).

Many *burakumin* were engaged in occupations, such as leatherwork, that were in ideological conflict with the major religions. Shinto, with its focus on ritual purity and defilement, had no mechanism for dealing with a group that was constantly in contact with pollution such as the hides of dead animals or latrine waste. Likewise, Buddhism's abhorrence of killing and/or being in direct contact with dead humans or animals, also marked the outcasts as ritually impure. The resulting contamination permeated the *burakumin*, rendering them physically as well as spiritually tainted (Neary 1989).

Buddhism in Japan was at times used to sanction the segregation of and discrimination towards the *burakumin*. *Burakumin* were legally required to belong to *eta-dera*, outcaste temples. If there was no local *eta-dera*, the *burakumin* could belong to "mixed" temples, but the temples were not fully integrated. *Burakumin* seating was segregated within the temple, and their temple household registers kept separate from those of non-*burakumin* (DeVos 1967, Ooms 1996). The temples determined which families' temple
registers were kept separately, and therefore subject to discrimination and segregation. They could also threaten or punish non-outcaste families with the addition of their registers to those of the outcastes if certain temple rules were violated. Unfortunately, these temple registers were and still are a prime means of checking for outcaste status in a person's lineage (Bodiford 1996).

Certain sects welcomed the burakumin, particularly Jodo Shin-shu. Shinran's populist and egalitarian message in particular appealed to them (Ooms 1996). Moreover, in the 17th century the government put all buraku temples under the jurisdiction and authority of the Shin-shu sect (DeVos 1967). In western Japan, Jodo Shin-shu is most common, while the eastern and northern regions also include burakumin membership in Nichiren, Rinzai, Soto, Shingon and Tendai (DeVos 1967, Ooms 1996). Today, Jodo Shin-shu continues to have largest number of members of burakumin descent (DeVos 1967).

Some sects actively and overtly engaged in discrimination against the burakumin. Recent media attention highlighted the common practice by Soto temples of giving discriminatory kaimyo (sabetsu kaimyo) to those of outcaste status (or in modern times to their descendents). These discriminatory kaimyo, are discussed in more depth in chapter 4. The burakumin kaimyo typically include kaku革 (leather) or boku僕 (servant). Discriminatory kaimyo allowed for immediate identification of the deceased as outcastes, both in the
cemeteries and temple registers (Ooms 1996, Bodiford 1996). According to Ooms (1996) these names were common especially when burakumin and non-burakumin shared cemeteries. In Nagano, Soto temples commonly included the term sendara (Sk. candala), referring to an outcaste group in India.

Soto manuals, published as recently as the mid-1970s, provided information to clergy on "how to maintain ritual purity while dealing with outcastes" (Bodiford 1996: 4). Additionally, Soto priests regularly permitted private investigators to access temple registers for outcaste background checks (Bodiford 1996).

Religion, Social Structure and Social Status

Hierarchy is both reflected in and supported by Japanese religions. The religions have been used to maintain the social status quo, and justify rule by both the feudal regimes and imperial family. They have been used to keep outcastes separate from society, both in this world and the next. Moreover, the ecclesiastic structure is modeled on the hierarchical family system (ie and dozoku).

It is worth noting that of the major imported religions, only Christianity was completely banned. It was also the only major imported religion that did not justify rule by either the feudal regime or imperial family. It demanded loyalty to God and the Church, first and foremost. This direct conflict with ruling
interests most likely was one of the reasons that led to its persecution and proscription. The ruling powers had difficulties with the other religions from time to time, especially Buddhism, but instead of outlawing them, sought other measure to keep them in line.

1 The *nembutsu* reads: *Namu Amida Butsu*, or "I take refuge in Amida Buddha."

2 The first line of the Lotus Sutra, *Myo Ho Renge Kyo*, is important to a number of sects related to Nichiren, including Soka Gakkai.

3 There is doubt as to whether temples actually performed this ritual on an annual basis, perhaps conducting them only when absolutely necessary such as in the event of visits by government officials.

4 Today on Nishizaka Hill in Nagasaki, where the Jesuits were crucified, are a memorial to the "26 Martyrs," and a museum of Christian documents and objects. Many Christians in Nagasaki, instead of giving up their faith, often went "underground," becoming crypto-Christians. On the surface they fulfilled their Buddhist obligations, but also maintained their Christian faith. Some of the most interesting objects in the 26 Martyrs' museum are Buddhist statues, commissioned or made by the crypto-Christians for their home altars. Although the figurines appear to be standard Buddhist images, on closer examination, one can see the Christian elements worked into the details.

5 It should be noted, however, that Christians in Japan overwhelmingly come from the aristocracy, elites, and upperclass. During the Meiji Restoration, Christianity was viewed as part of the modernization process, and was adopted by those in high positions.
APPENDIX E

KAIMYO ILLUSTRATIONS AND PHOTOS
Figure 22: Family tombstone with kaimyo. White inscriptions on black stone. Shows multiple generations within the family, most of whom are probably buried in the gravesite.
Figure 23: *ihai* (Memorial Tablets, Blank)

Figure 24: Date clan *ihai* (memorial tablets) at Chusonji Temple
Figure 25: *Butsuden*, Buddhist home altar
Figure 26: Post-funeral thank-you card including the deceased's kaimyo.
Ingo: 2 characters + in

Dogo: 2 characters

Kaimyo: 2 characters

Igo: 2 or 3 characters

Figure 27: General kaimyo format used by Tendai, Soto Zen and Rinzai Zen (adapted from e-sogi.com)
Ingo: 2 characters + in

Shakugo: includes shaku character for men, shakuni for women
Homyo: 2 characters

Igo: 2 or 3 characters

Figure 28: Jodo Shin-shu kaimyo pattern (includes Shakugo)
(adapted from e-sogi.com)
Ingo: 2 characters + in

Dogo: 2 characters

Kaimyo: 2 characters

Nichigo: nichi + 1 character for men, 
myo + 1 character for women

Igo: 2 characters

Figure 29: Nichiren kaimyo pattern (includes nichigo) 
(adapted from e-sogi.com)
Ingo: 2 characters + in

Yogo: 1 character + yo

Igo: 2 or 3 characters

Figure 30: Jodo-shu kaimyo pattern (includes yogo) (adapted from e-sogi.com)
This kaimyo includes the Sanskrit mantric character “A,” signifying that the deceased was a follower of Dainichi-nyorai (the Buddha Mahavairocana).
Figure 32: Family tombstone. Black Inscriptions on gray stone. Shows a variety of endings: *koji, shinnyo, doko, taishi.*
Figure 33: Child’s tombstone (female) with 4 character kaimyo
Figure 34: Adult male's grave and kaimyo with shinshi ending
Figure 35: Tombstone for married couple. The kaimyo end in koji (male) and taishi (female).
Figure 36: Temple H
Figure 37: Temple M
Figure 38: Cemetery O
Figure 39: Questionnaire in Japanese
仏教の戒名についてのアンケート

私は、この度仏教の戒名について調べるために、宮城県登米郡中田町のお世話になって
いるエリカ・スワーツ（ERICA SWARTS）です。アメリカオハイオ州立大学
において人類学の研究をしている大学院生です。みなさんから日頃考えているお寺や戒名に
ついてのご意見、ご感想を知りたいと思うのが今回のアンケートのねらいです。
どうぞよろしくお願いします。

Q1 あなたの宗派は？

Q2 どうしてQ1の宗派に決めましたか？

Q3 お寺とのつながりについてどのように感じて（考えて）いますか？

Q4 和尚さんの役目についてどう思いますか？

Q5 お益になると和尚さんが各家々に来るのはなぜですか？

Q6 戒名について思っていることを教えてください

Q7 戒名の位について思っていることを教えてください

Q8 一番高い位の戒名を知っていますか？〇で囲んでください
イ. わかる　　ロ. わからない

Q9 Q8でわかるに〇をした方、それはどのような戒名ですか？

Q10 一番低い位の戒名を知っていますか？〇で囲んでください
イ. わかる　　ロ. わからない

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Q11 Q10でわかるに〇をした方、それはどのような戒名ですか？

Q12 なぜその戒名の位が高いか、低いかわかりますか？

Q13 あなたの先祖で一番高い位の戒名を持っているのは誰ですか？

又、その戒名を教えてください

Q14 あなたはどのような戒名がほしいと思いますか？

Q15 戒名の儀段についてどう思いますか？

Q16 「信じる」という言葉はどういう意味だと思いますか？

敬具

記入者 ○で囲んでください

イ. 祖父 ロ. 祖母 ハ. 父 ニ. 母 ホ. 子供

イ. 本家 ロ. 分家

年齢 （ ）才

1997年（ ）月（ ）日

御協力ありがとうございました


ePrica Swarts

Erica Swarts

The Ohio State University

Columbus OH、USA
My name is Erica Swarts, and I have come to Nakada township in Tome county, Miyagi prefecture, to study Buddhist kaimyo. I am a graduate student at Ohio State University, studying anthropology. I would appreciate your assistance in thinking and giving your opinions about temples and kaimyo. Thank you very much.

Q 1 What sect do you belong to?
Q 2 Why this particular sect?
Q 3 How do you feel about your connection with your temple?
Q 4 What do you think about the role of your priest?
Q 5 Why does the priest come to your house during Obon?
Q 6 Please think about kaimyo.
Q 7 Please think about kaimyo ranks.
Q 8 Do you know the highest kaimyo rank? Please circle your answer.
   I know  I don't know
Q 9 If you circled "I know" in question 8, what kind of kaimyo is it?
Q 10 Do you know the lowest kaimyo rank? Please circle your answer.
   I know  I don't know
Q 11 If you circled "I know" in question 10, what kind of kaimyo is it?
Q 12 How do you know that these kaimyo ranks are high or low?
Q 13 Among your ancestors, what is the highest ranked kaimyo?
Q 14 What kind of kaimyo would you like to have?
Q 15 What do you think about the price of kaimyo?
Q 16 What does the word "believe" mean to you?
Figure 40, Continued

Statistical information, please circle your answers

grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, child

main household, branch household

age ( ) years

1997 ( ) month ( ) day

Thank you very much for your time and effort.
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