

Name and Fame

Material Objects as Authority, Security, and Legacy

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In 1603 the reigning emperor elevated Tokugawa Ieyasu to the office of shogun, confirming his decisive military victory over opponents in 1600 and his subsequent, and far-reaching, assumption of governing prerogatives (from assigning landholdings to minting coins). Preceded by a fulsome courtship of imperial favor with gifts and ritual deference, the appointment led to both the amplified administrative initiatives and ceremonial performances that might secure a fragile peace. Ieyasu tacked back and forth between the imperial capital of Kyoto and his shogunal headquarters in Edo, working all political channels to build support for his regime. Backing mattered, particularly because the teenage heir of his former lord—Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who first brought union to the warring states—remained with his mother at Osaka castle as a rallying point for doubters and the disaffected. A potential division in fealty compounded the dangers of a nascent rule. Ieyasu took the precaution, consequently, of resigning the office of shogun in 1605. Surprising for a hungry ruler still establishing his mandate, the decision was prudent for a would-be dynast.

Succession tormented the houses of the warring states (1467–1603). Indeed, it was contests over the headship of three leading families that had provoked the opening hostilities of the Ōnin war in Kyoto and then tangled all provinces in violence. And, again and again, throughout the ordeals upending the Ashikaga shogunate and the very premises of medieval rule, problems over heirs shaped the course of conflict. Not least in Ieyasu's immediate memory. The ascendancy of the Oda house, abetted by Nobunaga's manipulation of yet another claimant to Ashikaga headship, came to a close when a turncoat eliminated both Nobunaga and his designated successor in 1582. The ascendancy of the Toyotomi house, abetted by Hideyoshi's manipulation of the infant he instated as Oda head, stalled

when the unifier's death in 1598 left an only son, age five, in the care of Ieyasu and fellow guardians.

In the years immediately thereafter, Ieyasu's seizure of power announced a presumption of leadership even as his finesse in diplomacy appeared to quiet, or at least to defer, competition with the child. His appointment as shogun forced no reckoning, since the Toyotomi relied on courtly rather than military titles to legitimate authority, nor did his resignation of that office alter the relationship overtly. It nonetheless enabled a crucial transition with a resonant message. In the near term, Ieyasu's retirement cleared the way to establish an adult successor, tried by experience, as the new Tokugawa head and, thus, to stage a compelling transfer of household authority. In the longer term, it intimated a default solution to the Toyotomi problem: the sheer momentum of a Tokugawa regime, managed adroitly across generations, might erase pretenders.

With characteristic pageantry, Ieyasu prepared to relinquish his post during the fourth month of 1605 by receiving the heir Hidetada, accompanied by an awesome entourage of some 100,000 soldiers, at Fushimi castle. The two visited the court and, in a series of fancy gatherings, received the leaders of military, aristocratic, and religious society. Ieyasu then formally submitted his resignation; Hidetada immediately received shogunal appointment from the emperor. As a sort of surety of concord, Ieyasu lingered in Kyoto for another five months.

But the work of guaranteeing future successions was hardly complete. Three strategic relocations signaled a multipronged approach to household survival. In 1607 Ieyasu moved his ninth son from Kofu castle in Kai Province to Kiyosu castle in Owari Province, a key point along the Tōkaidō highway.¹ In 1609 he moved his tenth son from Mito to a domain double the size in Suruga and Tōtōmi, with a headquarters in Sunpu. At the same time, he moved his eleventh son from Shimotsuma to Mito.² Major construction accompanied the moves, particularly in Owari. There, Ieyasu dismantled Kiyosu castle in order to launch, in 1610, the building of a huge new fortress in Nagoya that required tens of thousands of laborers recruited by daimyo across the country.³ The ninth son became lord of Nagoya.

Created through these flamboyant and enriching allocations were three cadet branches of the Tokugawa house that could provide shogunal successors in the event the main line in Edo failed to produce an heir (as would occur several times). The three—the Owari branch, the Mito branch, and the Kii branch (as it was known after the tenth son received a further transfer)—remained the wealthiest, most prestigious, most advantageously situated, and most influential of all the collateral branches established over time by the Tokugawa. Their role in succession politics, moreover, was compound. If they guaranteed a pool of heirs, they simultaneously expanded the pool of intimate allies with a stake in Tokugawa survival. A complementary consideration, especially during the shogunate's formative years, was the deflection of tension: placing young sons in powerful but scattered domains suppressed sibling conflict, a solution to what Conrad Totman called the

problem of “how to appease or disempower those offspring not destined to succeed to one’s own position.”⁴

In the end, Ieyasu’s dual approach to succession—transferring title to his heir and building a deep bench around him—did not erase the Toyotomi problem. Provoked alike by Toyotomi intransigence and Tokugawa impatience, a military showdown occurred in 1614–15. Notably, however, it came late and adventitiously. It brought no single daimyo to a Toyotomi side supported solely by the dispossessed “men of the waves” whose lords had been lost in the battles of 1600. And it resulted in a humiliating defeat of the Toyotomi partisans and the suicide of their head, Hideyoshi’s now-twenty-two-year-old son, who left no heir of his own. In effect, if Ieyasu’s succession provisions could not preclude threats, they so strongly positioned supporters of a coherent leadership against atavistic challengers without household organization that the disposition of hereditary power became all the clearer as one imperative of survival.

And the work continued. The politics of lineage extended for Ieyasu beyond succession itself to the protection and management of resources—not just landed revenue but the polymorphous arsenal of prestige that could be deployed to signify rightful authority and secure reputation. It included the generation of distinguished (if artful) genealogies, the construction of grand mortuary monuments, and the observation of ritual calendars centered on family anniversaries and passages. It also, and critically, included the assembly of material objects that were imbued with meaning, employed ceremonially, and passed on as visible depositories of honor to the heads of successive generations.

These practices and the variously tangible and intangible resources they animated form the subject of this chapter. They loomed large for Ieyasu in his tireless campaign to seal the Tokugawa purchase on the future. More than this, they proved precious to ambitious houses across the social spectrum, thus inviting a comparative vantage on the shared strategies that helped sustain the *ie* in early modern Japan. I begin with martial lineages, for which the transfer of property to maintain the family line is well established; and I continue with commercial lineages to demonstrate that these practices extended into the world of elite commoners and played a major role in steadying family succession over multiple generations while also shaping the materials that historians and art historians use to study the past.

WARRIOR THINGS: MATERIAL INHERITANCE IN THE TOKUGAWA AND HOSOKAWA HOUSES

From the beginning of warrior rule in Japan, great martial houses linked property with authority. The legitimacy of rule was predicated on the management of resources: not just the income from landholdings and the labor of subordinates but the heirlooms conveying righteousness. Consider the early medieval narrative

of the Soga brothers, which equates patrimony with symbolically potent swords. Only when the swords are recovered from imposters by their proper inheritors is legitimate succession possible.⁵ Examples proliferate of material witness to rightful authority—from banquets with luxury foodstuffs (testifying to faithful stewardship of nature's harvests) to ancestral mansions and ornaments (testifying to power made manifest through hereditary wealth).⁶

In the age of warring states, material mattered more, since the currency of rank and title that once underlay authority decayed with the institutions that granted them. Fortresses and conquered lands, arms and armor became the core claims on position—together, and increasingly, with more intimate symbols of household trust.⁷ When Oda Nobunaga identified his eldest son as heir in 1575, he vested him with authority over Mino and Owari Provinces and installed him in Gifu castle. He also bestowed on the young man “the great sword Hishikiri” and most of “the priceless implements he had collected” (holding back “only his tea ceremony implements for himself”).⁸ Then, having tested the heir's suitability to rule over the course of two years,⁹ Nobunaga finally relinquished his finest tea utensils in 1577, a perhaps ultimate symbol of confidence.¹⁰ The treasure did not avert treachery (by an Oda vassal who steered an army of 13,000 into Kyoto to attack both Nobunaga and his heir in 1582).¹¹ Nor did it become dispensable as a medium of social influence, cultural capital, and political standing to other aspiring warlords.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi transferred to his child heir not only the largest and best-defended castle in Japan but also an opulent collection of Chinese art, Japanese tea utensils, heirloom arms and armor, and European objects of many varieties.¹² If they, too, were inadequate insurance against a martial reckoning between the Toyotomi and the Tokugawa in 1615, they nevertheless remained powerful lures to Ieyasu. Following the destruction by fire of the Toyotomi fortress at Osaka, Ieyasu sent deputies into the ashes to rescue key items from the Toyotomi collection, notably swords and Chinese ceramics. He then ordered master craftsmen to repair these pieces and added them to the already significant Tokugawa collection that he intended to bequeath to his descendants.¹³ The authenticity of rule was coupled with the custody of fabled objects connecting both generations and regimes.

Although we do not know exactly how Ieyasu divided his material goods, evidence indicates that he wanted specific objects and amounts of cash to pass to the main Tokugawa house in Edo,¹⁴ as well as to each of the three branch houses. It is likely, too, that he assigned items to his intended mortuary site on Mt. Kunō. The critical document concerning the transfer is preserved by the Owari branch of the Tokugawa: *The Record of Utensils Inherited from Sunpu Castle (Sunpu owakemono odōgū chō)*.¹⁵ Compiled between 1616 and 1618 at Sunpu in accord with Ieyasu's instructions, the record lists objects in eleven registers, including swords, sword-handle ornaments, clothing, medicine, and horse fittings.

Subsequent documents concerning the objects illuminate a remarkable pattern of circulation as their holders used them to reaffirm connections with the

Tokugawa founder. The main and cadet branches of the family repeatedly donated inherited items to the proliferating sanctuaries where Ieyasu's deified spirit was honored, the Tōshōgū (especially the principal shrine at Nikkō and the shrines in the branch domains of Owari, Kii, and Mito). Such donations occasioned a kind of reunion between the ancestral spirit and his treasure even as they transformed the objects into ritual goods with new social lives. Thus, for example, when Ieyasu's tenth son established a Tōshōgū during 1621 in Wakayama, home to the Kii branch of the family, he materialized the sacred presence with gifts—effectively, with relics—passed down by his father. To take just one category of object, military items still held by the shrine today, the donation included four long swords, a set of European armor with a helmet, a set of “body round” armor, lacquered saddles and stirrups, and several conch shells that had been blown in battle.¹⁶ Similar offerings were made by almost every subsequent head of the Kii Tokugawa. Long swords, particularly popular, came to the shrine from the third-, fifth-, sixth-, seventh-, eighth-, ninth-, tenth-, eleventh-, twelfth-, and fourteenth-generation heads. This continuing circulation of Ieyasu's heirlooms through ceremony-rich endowments consecrated the lineage and renewed the links of donors to the founder and to one another.

Many warrior houses catalogued the treasures they bequeathed across generations, creating in the process documents of passage that served as family histories. Prominent among them is the Hosokawa house, which occupied high office in the Ashikaga shogunate, prospered under Toyotomi Hideyoshi, and became one of the wealthiest daimyo houses of the Tokugawa regime as castellans of Kumamoto in Kyushu. Their best-known heads in the early modern period—Hosokawa Fujitaka (1534–1610, also known as Yūsai) and his son Hosokawa Tadaoki (1563–1646, also known as Sansai)—were celebrated both as warriors and as men of culture, the father as a poet, the son as a tea connoisseur.

The Summary of the Famous Objects of this Honorable House is a ledger of the family heirlooms, compiled in its extant form in the eighteenth century, which offers revealing insights into the types of objects that families endeavored to preserve and their motives for doing so.¹⁷ The catalog opens with swords, defining from the outset the house's martial status. Listed first are swords received by Hosokawa Tadaoki from the Tokugawa: one from Ieyasu; two from the second shogun, Hidetada; a fourth from the third shogun, Iemitsu. They testify to the meritorious service of Tadaoki to the Tokugawa founder and his ongoing intimacy with the successors (uncommon for a daimyo outside the circle of immediate Tokugawa allies). Listed next are swords variously acquired by Tadaoki and his father, including one received from the Toyotomi at the time of the Siege of Odawara Castle in 1590. Acknowledged here is the family's lustrous pre-Tokugawa pedigree as well as the father's role in its ascent. In effect, the ledger constructs a genealogy of authority and legitimacy not through objects themselves but through their provenance. How they were deployed remains obscure in the Hosokawa case, although

voluminous evidence attests to the display of swords, armor, and other heirlooms at most warrior rituals of the period.

After the list of swords, the Hosokawa ledger continues with the martial trappings essential to such rituals—spears, saddles, arrows, battle surcoats (*ojinbaori*)—and then proceeds to hanging scrolls. Like the catalog of blades, the catalog of paintings includes references to the political notables who bestowed them on the house (chiefly the shoguns Hidetada and Iemitsu) as well as the cultural luminaries critical to the family history. Noted prominently is the tea master Sen no Rikyū, Tadaoki's teacher, who not only gave paintings by others to his disciple but sometimes brushed them personally. The same story of prestigious connection unfolds in the ledger's subsequent and heroic lists of additional items, most of them related to the practice of tea: tea caddies, tea bowls, tea scoops, kettles, water containers, wastewater containers, lid rests, tea whisk rests, incense containers, flower containers, tea jars, poetry manuals, folding screens, incense burners, lacquer dishes, water basins, and braziers. Rikyū and the Sen circle remain conspicuous in the attributions, together with a group of daimyo tea masters, as authenticators of the legitimate practice and authoritative knowledge they passed to the Hosokawa house. Thus we find, for example, a kettle once owned by Rikyū and a water container used by Hosokawa Tadaoki when he was invited to participate in Hideyoshi's Great Kitano Tea Gathering. Most telling, we find entries for objects lost to fire, confirmation that the ledger is no simple catalog of holdings but a chronicle of political and cultural power.

It is, however, an arrestingly focused chronicle. Although it was compiled well into the early modern period, Hosokawa Tadaoki remains the defining collector in a ledger that all but effaces the activity of his successors. Like Tokugawa Ieyasu, he becomes the prime ancestor—securer of the family fortunes in the wars of unification, witness to the legendary tea events that established the tradition—and a metonym for the house itself. Memory surpasses the labor of generations of heads as the font of legitimacy. The phenomenon would not be limited to warriors, and in fact appears across status groups as one stream in a larger shift to family-based identity.

COMMERCE AND THE FAMILY: MATERIAL LEGACY IN THE RAKU AND THE SEN HOUSES

As the market and cultural networks of Kyoto grew rapidly during the early modern period, the imperial capital became a center of “the arts of play” (*yūgei*) and the primary locus of such ritualized cultural activity as *noh*, tea, and related refinements. The family businesses at the core of the arts industry needed to manage their reputations every bit as avidly as the great martial houses, but their resources were different. Lacking the swords and armor of bygone glory, most lacked large, multigenerational collections of heirlooms as well. They nonetheless

developed equivalent arsenals of prestige that variously recall and depart from martial models.

The two families I examine here worked in tea culture, an expensive and rarified world with a particularly strong presence in what is now Kamigyō ward, the area to the west of the imperial palace that was home to many elite artisans, merchants, and teachers. The kiln and workshop of the Raku family was here. The masters of the Sen tea school lived and worked nearby, as did Hon'ami Kōetsu, the fabled sword polisher, calligrapher, and amateur Raku potter. Networks both social and economic developed among such houses as they collaborated in projects and supported one another's businesses. Because their reputations were entwined, they frequently acted in mutually fortifying ways.

Their neighborhood boomed in the late sixteenth century, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi undertook reconstruction of the courtly complexes and erected for himself a palatial castle—Jurakudai, completed in 1587—to signify his authority in the capital.¹⁸ Indeed, frenetic building across the city announced Kyoto's reemergence as Japan's cultural and political center after decades of turmoil. New enterprises, such as the Raku kiln, which may have been started by a Chinese ceramist well known for his sculptural roof tiles and three-color wares, found a foothold in the expanding marketplace. And the kiln thrived in the salon culture of the early seventeenth century by serving the resurgent Sen family, collaborating with the polymath Hon'ami Kōetsu, and selling tea bowls to an increasingly wide consumer base of urban warriors as well as the savvy merchants who pursued tea practice to advance their business interests.

By the latter half of the seventeenth century, however, the Kyoto market was too competitive for comfort. Gazetteers such as the *Kyoto Youth* (*Kyō warabe*, 1658), the *Kyoto Sparrow* (*Kyō suzume*, 1665), and the *Kyoto Silk* (*Kyō habutae*, 1685) guided readers through myriad shops, entertainment quarters, and studios of every sort (not to mention the countless famous places that linked the commercial present to the historical past).¹⁹ New kilns emerged in and around Kyoto; ceramic traditions proliferated throughout Japan (including two with direct connections to the Raku workshop). If tea practitioners were mounting steadily in number, their options when considering a purchase were multiplying faster. They could buy utensils from a range of specialty retailers or from the kilns themselves. They could choose among wares produced locally or brought in from the provinces. They could find imports from Korea and, if they were affluent, the particularly prized antiques from China. Hence patrons of the small Raku workshop, which now produced ceramics exclusively for the tea ceremony, had to go there for good reason—perhaps a personal connection, a strong aesthetic preference, even a desire for something produced in the neighborhood.

The Raku responded to the challenge by promoting a single, direct line of house heads and obscuring the collaborative nature of their work. They embraced new naming practices and exalted a founder. They made replication of legacy

objects a business model. Appearing to mimic some of the strategies of warrior houses for cementing authority, the response may also reflect, as the legal historian Mizubayashi Takeshi argued, a shift in social identity during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Once founded on individual accomplishment, identity increasingly derived from household membership.²⁰

In 1688, seemingly for the first time, the Raku potters began to compose a genealogy that would trace a clean and uncomplicated succession from fathers to sons over eight generations, culminating in the present. The resulting story of continuity is inspirational; it is also aspirational. The strain is apparent in two privately preserved documents full of errors and corrections and written in at least two hands, particularly in a 1695 text titled *Memorandum*, which resembles the Buddhist registers of deaths used to keep track of family memorial days when prayers were to be offered at a household altar or local temple.²¹ The *Memorandum* lists dozens of relatives—mothers, brothers, sisters—who, though surely key contributors to the enterprise, disappear from the official version of the Raku history. Simple and streamlined genealogy, innocent of collaborators, was an indispensable art form.

To affirm the primacy and continuity of the headship, the Raku also introduced naming practices that identified the successors to the main lineage. Beginning in 1691, each Raku head took the name Kichizaemon during his incumbency (a practice that continues to this day). The name had appeared in an earlier generation, but its routine use commenced only after the completion of the genealogical documents. When they retired, moreover, former heads took Buddhist names ending with the character *nyū* to signal the transfer of authority. Thus, the (putative) fourth-generation head of the Raku house took the retirement name of Ichinyū in 1691, when his (adopted) son became Kichizaemon. That head took the retirement name of Sōnyū in 1708, when his son became Kichizaemon.²²

These stories of family continuity were repeated in the production strategies of the Raku kiln, which summoned the fame and authority of the designated founder, the sixteenth-century potter Chōjirō. The workshop began to concentrate on styles that evoked his aesthetic: matte-black and matte-red glazes and simple, half-cylinder shapes. Going further, the workshop apparently sold ceramics named and modeled after Chōjirō's most famous tea bowls. When, for example, the influential tea master Sen Bunshuku wrote to Sōnyū with a commission, he requested two "Tōyōbō" tea bowls, two "Kimamori" tea bowls, and one "Kengyō" tea bowl—in each case using names made famous by Chōjirō and well known throughout the tea community.²³ The request was not for fakes but "respectful reproductions" (*utsushi*). And, indeed, a text attributed to Sōnyū's son implies that respectful reproduction became the primary business model for the kiln. "The Catalogue of Raku Vessels" ("Raku utsuwa mokuroku"), an inventory of the ceramics that could be ordered from the workshop, identifies current offerings by the names of Chōjirō's fabled tea bowls ("Ōguro," "Hayabune," "Kenkō," "Kimamori"). It also

advertises incense containers, lid rests, and flower containers in Chōjirō's style. In effect, the legacy of the founder became the product line of the kiln.²⁴ Even the eleventh-generation head, who steered the family business through the difficult years of the Meiji Restoration, made reproductions of Chōjirō's work, including a complete series of his so-called "seven bowls" (*Chōjirō shichishu*).²⁵ Fidelity to the founder was the modus operandi of an immortality-seeking enterprise.

The Sen family of tea masters, which collaborated with the Raku kiln and other artisanal workshops enmeshed in the networks of tea practice, also capitalized on the reputation of its founder, Sen no Rikyū (1522–91), the most influential and innovative tea master of the sixteenth century. An important retainer of Toyotomi Hideyoshi as both a cultural advisor and sometime diplomat,²⁶ Rikyū died by suicide, at the command of Hideyoshi, for reasons still unclear. Although his own reputation only grew after death, it was left to his grandson Sōtan to establish the fortunes of the house in the expanding tea culture of the early seventeenth century. Success hinged in good part on constructing brilliant circuits of patronage, for Sōtan was able to place three of his sons as tea masters to exceptionally distinguished daimyo families. Kōshin Sōsa went to work for the powerful branch family of the Tokugawa at Wakayama castle in Kii.²⁷ Sensō Sōshitsu served the Maeda of Kanazawa, who controlled by far the largest daimyo domain in Japan. His brother Ichiō Sōshu served the Matsudaira of Takamatsu, collaterals of the Tokugawa. Each used his prestigious connections to found a school of tea practice based in Kyoto.

The essential connection was nonetheless to Rikyū, whom the extended Sen house began to put at the center of a mythohistory that it staged with particular pomp during the rituals commemorating his death.²⁸ Documented in detail are the services marking the 3rd, 20th, 50th, 100th, 150th, 200th, 300th, and 350th anniversaries. While the earlier services appear to have been simple mortuary rituals held by a family still recovering from Rikyū's suicide and the temporary confiscation of Sen holdings by the Toyotomi regime, the later anniversaries became occasions for lavish tea ceremonies incorporating objects tied to the founder.²⁹ Especially with the 100th anniversary in 1690, the family embarked on an essentially hagiographic celebration of an ancestor who, symbolic of tea's glorious past, was fully fused with its future.³⁰ So aggressively did the Sen imbue Rikyū (and the utensils, persons, and events associated with him) with a sacrosanct aura that scholars refer to his "sanctification" through a sedulous campaign of "revival."³¹

The campaign endured. The 150th anniversary in 1740 included Buddhist mortuary ceremonies at Kyoto's Daitokuji, as well as tea gatherings that reassembled the founder's programs of utensils. The abbot of Daitokuji appeared at the first, on 1740/9/4, when a portrait of Rikyū hung in the alcove.³² Most of the objects were treasures of the Omotesenke branch previously owned by Rikyū, such as a lacquer *natsume* tea container bearing his signature. The bamboo flower container was an heirloom carved by Sōtan. The second gathering, held on the following day,

brought together elite Omotesenke disciples and more of Rikyū's utensils. And, day after day thereafter, the gatherings continued: eighty-six of them by 12/13 of the year. Each was an opportunity to perform the Sen history before followers of the various Sen schools, artisans who worked closely with them (such as the head of the Raku family), and other allies from the tea world.³³ Although records do not survive from the Urasenke and Mushanokōji branches of the Sen, it is likely that they hosted similar gatherings for this anniversary.

The 200th anniversary in 1790 was better organized, planned cooperatively by the three branch schools, and more fully documented—reflecting an awareness that records themselves are foundations of reputation. It occurred at a trying time of recovery, after the Great Fire of Kyoto, which raged throughout the city for two full days early in 1788,³⁴ had damaged or destroyed many of the objects and sites associated with Rikyū, thus assailing the core stock of Sen authority. The 1790 services required current house leaders to restage their story with a depleted treasure house. They spared neither expense nor imagination.

The first gathering of the series—hosted on 1790/9/14 by the head of the Omotesenke school and including as guests three leaders from Daitokuji—emphatically reaffirmed the continued presence of Rikyū's ghost, as if insisting that the legacy was indestructible. The hanging scroll reproduced Rikyū's death poem. The tea scoop, reputedly carved by his eminent early teacher, Takeno Jōō, had been authenticated by his grandson. The tea bowl, a black Raku piece by Chōjirō, bore a name Rikyū had selected, "Kamuro." Versions of the same gathering were restaged over three days for a variety of Daitokuji luminaries; additional gatherings were staged over the following month by all three Sen schools for relatives, tea masters, artisans, and the Kyoto elite. The utensils were all Rikyū all the time. Some were surviving tea scoops and bamboo flower containers made by him. Others were objects named or "owned" (*Rikyū shoji*) or "liked" by him (*Rikyū konomi*). Lest any guest miss the message of these resourceful attributions, carved statues and painted portraits of Rikyū oversaw all proceedings.

Notably, Edo joined in these celebrations. The Edo Senke school, a kind of branch division of Omotesenke, held commemorative tea gatherings that included both elite commoners and warrior leaders, from the daimyo Ikeda Masanao to Tokugawa bannermen and retainers.³⁵ The lord of Himeji castle, Sakai Tadazane, even organized his own Rikyū commemorations, witness to a Rikyū cult that had extended from the Sen schools to warrior circles.

The 250th commemoration of Rikyū's death, the last major commemoration in the Tokugawa period, occurred during 1839–40. Despite widespread social unrest and a general interdiction on ostentation, the Sen schools celebrated as lavishly as ever. Urasenke took the lead this round, opening with a tea gathering that, unusually, included a guest from the imperial court, Konoe Tadahiro (perhaps in acknowledgment of the contemporary nativist sentiments exalting the imperial tradition). There followed a series of gatherings for Daitokuji priests and no fewer

than eighty other gatherings over the course of six months.³⁶ Until the end of the early modern regime, the Sen mounted the commemorative platform to perform a legitimacy rooted in the authority of the founder and his material legacy. And they did so for ever-expanding audiences of all statuses.

The structure that enabled this expansion, without compromising the authority of house heads, is the so-called family head (*iemoto*) system. It developed in the eighteenth century across a range of cultural disciplines in Japan, including tea, painting, performing arts such as *noh*, and certain styles of poetry, dance, the martial arts, and cookery. While the exaltation of founders and material legacies was common to great martial and commercial houses alike, the “family head system” belonged uniquely to arts practitioners in the marketplace who had to cope with competition not just from rivals but from insiders.

The system emerged when teachers of various cultural practices found their top disciples defecting from the main lineages to found schools of their own. To prevent such splintering, they elaborated schemes of “secret teachings” that could be passed only from a head to his designated heir. So, too, they increasingly regulated curricular and licensing structures to slow, and restrict, the ascent of students through the ranks. Successful disciples might eventually acquire and teach their own students, but only after rigorous training, the payment of fees, and the routine demonstration of obeisance to the school leader.³⁷ Over time, the privileges of these heads increased impressively: they assumed the rights to control the performance and practice of the art, to determine who could teach and transmit the tradition, to punish or expel members, to dispense names, to manage the material inheritance of the tradition, and to oversee all income from the practice.³⁸

The commotion that led the Sen to adopt the “family head system” came from a number of tea masters who claimed to be true inheritors of the teachings of Rikyū and Sōtan. Sugiki Fusai (1628–1708), for example, a well-known disciple of Sōtan in Kyoto, broke with the Sen over accusations that Sōtan’s sons had lost the art of tea and the spirit of Rikyū’s practice. He identified himself as the orthodox heir in several tea texts that he circulated to his students.³⁹ Another Sōtan disciple, Yamada Sōhen (1627–1708), printed in woodblock one of the earliest commercial publications concerning Rikyū’s practice, *Introductory Selections from the Way of Tea* (*Chadō benmō shō*). There, again denigrating Sōtan’s sons, he claimed to possess the sole pure knowledge of Rikyū’s tradition.⁴⁰ Additional authors, such as Tachibana Jitsuzan and Yabunouchi Chikushin, advanced similar arguments as tea schools multiplied in Kyoto, Edo, and other cities around Japan.

The Sen responded with much stricter control of the tea curriculum and a system of licenses to certify progress. The “Seven Exercises,” created in the early eighteenth century, were primary gatekeepers for the growing population of students.⁴¹ The heads of the schools also worked to standardize the aesthetic preferences of disciples through strategic commissions and gifts. In 1713, for example, the Omotesenke head commissioned two hundred black tea bowls from the Raku

kiln to mark both the fiftieth birthday of the Raku head and the enduring alliance between the twined successors to Sen no Rikyū and Raku Chōjirō.⁴² In 1738 the head of the Raku kiln made 150 red tea bowls, each boxed with an inscription from the Omotesenke head, to mark both the 150th anniversary of Chōjirō's death and the still-twined successors to the two houses. And in 1789 the Raku head made another 200 tea bowls, again boxed with Omotesenke inscriptions. All of these objects were dispersed among disciples, peers, and friends as tangible exemplars of a perduring aesthetic and relationship that was sustained by ever-renewed claims to authenticity.⁴³

CONCLUSION

The elaboration among arts practitioners of the “family head system” draws attention, of course, to a defining difference between martial and commercial families. As Tokugawa rule gained traction, most martial families retained secure patrimonies that were concentrated in largely fixed titles and income rights, which they handed down in a normally orderly fashion through designated heirs. Commercial families had no secure patrimonies. Their income depended on the sale of goods and services to customers in a competitive marketplace that offered no insurance to any heir of survival, let alone prosperity. Contrast that with the case of *hinin*, or “beggar boss,” families examined by Maren Ehlers in this volume, in which ultimogeniture was practiced, perhaps because of these houses’ “relative lack of property.” What links the martial and commercial families examined here is wealth.

Consequently striking in the histories I trace here is the congruence in family values and family practices. In both the martial and commercial examples we find a focus on venerated founders, genealogical prestige, clear linear succession of stem household heads, and material witness to the generational passage of authority. The “family head system” was unique to commercial families as a defense against an unruly market. Crucially, however, it was predicated on the very claim to legitimacy that already animated founders’ cults and genealogical sleight of hand: the claim to authentic custody of exclusive traditions. If the business practices of the system had a new edginess (conveying “secrets” solely from head to head, structuring teaching in taxing modules, licensing progress in slow stages, releasing disciples on costly leashes), they remained the instruments of a household ascendancy lodged in ancestral reputation.

There is much, of course, that separates my examples. Beyond the status issues and the market exposure, neither the heads nor the genealogies were commensurate in historical significance. Indeed, the deified Ieyasu is a case apart from all of Japan's other leaders throughout time. So, too, the material legacies, though serving alike to transmit a virtuous authority across generations, were too various in

volume, content, and deployment to stand close comparison. Above all, the actual experiences of the families over time—the vicissitudes of successive heads and the survival strategies they adopted—are particular and profoundly different.

Yet here, perhaps, we find the deepest similarity among them: their stories occlude the changes that enabled each house to survive for upwards of three centuries. In every case, their remote founders became brand names that concealed innovation under the cover of precedent. Reification was the message of family performances—in ancestor cults, genealogies, heirloom catalogues, death anniversaries, naming conventions, business practices—that so fused (putative) origins with continuing histories as to convert drama into banality.

Even today, the name of Tokugawa Iemitsu, one of the most influential of Tokugawa shoguns, barely survives outside specialist circles. Hosokawa Tsunetoshi (1634–1714), a major patron, poet, and scholar, is consigned to the far fringes of a tradition dominated by Yūsai and Sansai. The attention to Sen no Rikyū and Raku Chōjirō effaces the successors who responded creatively both to new trends in the world of tea and constant social pressure. And quite apart from writing out the dynamic futures of families, the ancestor fixation has distorted the ancestors themselves. So much of the record emerged late, and in ideological and promotional contexts, that the complex lives of founders are effectively hidden beneath their cults. Problems are no less persistent in the treatment of the material culture I have highlighted here. The heirlooms passed down in all four families tend to be addressed (in scholarship and museum exhibitions) solely in terms of their roles in the lives of the Great Men who collected them. Missed, as a result, are their at least equally interesting roles among the lively inheritors who created the cults, renewed and reinvented themselves through the circulation of the objects, and pressed ancestral “name and fame” into immediate service.

But the difficulty of pushing past the ancestors is no small testimony, in the end, to the success of the families that used them so resourcefully to ground their authority and conceal vigilant change. Continuity was a conceit of Tokugawa rule and, indeed, much Tokugawa enterprise. If it can sometimes blend in retrospect with stagnation, that illusion is only that, illusory. Actors across the spectrum made lineage matter through routine affirmation. They hid themselves through routine disguise.

NOTES

1. *Zoku* 1995, 104, entry for Keichō 12/intercalary 4/26.
2. Entry for Keichō 14/12 in *Shiseki* 1986, 61–62; *Zoku* 1995, 159, entry for Keichō 14/12/11. See also separate registers of Tokugawa Yorinobu's and Yoshifusa's vassals and their invested properties in Tokugawa 1983, vol. 1, pp. 400–414.
3. *Zoku* 1995, 160, entry for Keichō 15/2. See also various letters to participants in the construction process, in Nakamura 1958, vol. 33, pp. 619–20, 629–34.

4. Totman 1967, 110.
5. Oyler 2006, 115–37.
6. Selinger 2013, 69–106.
7. Pitelka 2016.
8. Ōta 1991, 205, bk. 8, sec. 14; see also Ōta 2011, 246–47.
9. Takemoto 2006, 30.
10. Ōta 1991, 234–35, bk. 10, sec. 14; see also Ōta 2011, 277.
11. Lamers 2000, 216.
12. Schweizer forthcoming.
13. Pitelka 2016.
14. Totman 1967, 77.
15. Tokyo 1964, 12/24/756–865 and 12/24/652–739.
16. Wakayama 1989, 8–9.
17. *On'ie meibutsu no taigai*, part of the multivolume family record *Collection of Tangled Thoughts* (*Menkō shūroku*, also known as *Hosokawa-ki*; 1778). See the transcription of this document, as well as many extant objects named within, in Yamanashi 2001, 175.
18. Nihonshi Kenkyūkai 2001.
19. Noma 1967.
20. Mizubayashi 1987, 323–25.
21. For translations of these texts, see Pitelka 2001, appendix 6.
22. On the ceramics of each generation of the Raku family, see Hayashiya 1974. For an overview in English, see Hayashiya, Akanuma, and Raku 1997.
23. Sen and Kizu 1983, 86.
24. “Raku utsuwa mokuroku.”
25. Hayashiya 1974, 165–68.
26. On Rikyū's place within late-sixteenth-century Japanese culture, see Pitelka 2005, 14–40.
27. Pitelka 2003.
28. Pitelka 2003.
29. Kumakura and Tsutsui 1989, 671–703.
30. Pitelka 2005, 83.
31. Murai 1985, 45.
32. Kumakura and Tsutsui 1989, 675.
33. Kumakura and Tsutsui 1989, 676.
34. For a discussion of how the same fire afforded “royal authorities” a new opportunity to rethink how they represented themselves, see Screech 2000, 148.
35. Kumakura 1989, 675–83.
36. Kumakura 1989, 683–92.
37. Pitelka 2005, 89–109. See also Morishita 2006, 283–302; Cang 2008, 71–81; Cross 2008, 131–53; and Surak 2012, 91–118.
38. Groemer 1997, 4–5.
39. Kumakura 1985, 128–29. See also Tanihata 1988, 163–70; and Tanihata 1999, 112–17.
40. Kumakura 1985, 127; Aikawa 1977, 199–252.
41. Pitelka 2005, 94–97.
42. Raku 1936, 80.
43. This is a small sampling of the many examples explored in Pitelka 2005, 97–102.

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