“Caste”, a word normally used in relation to the Indian subcontinent, is rarely associated with Japan in contemporary scholarship. This has not always been the case, and the term was often used among earlier generations of scholars, who introduced the Buraku problem to Western audiences. Amos argues that time for reappraisal is well overdue and that a combination of ideas, beliefs, and practices rooted in Confucian, Buddhist, Shinto, and military traditions were brought together from the late 16th century in ways that influenced the development of institutions and social structures on the Japanese archipelago. These influences brought the social structures closer in form and substance to certain caste formations found in the Indian subcontinent during the same period.

Specifically, Amos analyses the evolution of the so-called Danzaemon out-caste order. This order was a 17th century caste configuration produced as a consequence of early modern Tokugawa rulers’ decisions to engage in a state-building project rooted in military logic and built on the back of existing manorial and tribal-class arrangements. He further examines the history behind the primary duties expected of outcastes within the Danzaemon order: notably execution and policing, as well as leather procurement. Reinterpreting Japan as a caste society, this book propels us to engage in fuller comparisons of how out-caste communities’ histories and challenges have diverged and converged over time and space, and to consider how better to eradicate discrimination based on caste logic.

This book will appeal to anyone interested in Japanese History, Culture and Society.

Timothy D. Amos is Associate Professor in the Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore.
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Acknowledgements

My hope is that the current volume will illuminate the history of Danzaemon as well as generate a larger discussion about the nature of caste in Asia and beyond.

While grateful to everyone who has helped me complete this book, any mistakes found within are of course mine.
Japanese words have been placed in italics in the first instance that they appear in the book using the Hepburn system for Romanization. Macrons have been applied wherever appropriate. Exceptions to this rule include instances when the words cited are in commonplace use in English (like Tokyo or Kyoto) and when the words contained in passages are taken in direct quotation from other authors and macrons and italics have not been applied in the original usage.

Japanese place names are generally Romanized in full with designations of places such as *kuni* and *mura* translated into their respective English equivalents: province and village. In the case where the meaning of a place name would be lost with a direct transliteration, an English equivalent has been used (for example, the *shimo* in Shimowana village has been translated as “Lower Wana”).

Japanese names are written in the body of the text with the family name preceding the given name as per common convention. The exceptions are when the author’s name appears in the opposite order in the source cited or the author is more commonly known by names (or has published work) in the conventional English language order. Standard Anglophone citation methods are followed for footnotes and the bibliography.

Pre-Meiji dates have not been converted into the Gregorian calendar equivalents unless otherwise stated, so that the Japanese date *Bunsei ninen nigatsu futsuka*, which would normally be read as February 2, 1819, is, in fact, February 25, 1819. Dates have been listed, moreover, in traditional Japanese order of year, month, and day: 1819.2.2.

Original currency units are also preserved in the text. Gold, silver, and copper all functioned as independent currency units during the early modern period, and although rates changed according to time and place, one gold *ryō* generally bought about 60 *monme* of silver and 4,000 copper coins (*mon*).
Introduction

Travelling in a car from Ubud to Denpasar in late 2014, a friendly young man by the name of Dewa informed me quite matter-of-factly: “Bali is a caste society. It is reflected even in our names and the language we use.” A month later, sitting in a hotel lobby in the Malayalam-speaking Indian city of Kottayam, a scholar by the name of Yesudasan informed me that: “Caste is reflected in the names we have, our facial features, our skin colour, language, and even the ways we comport ourselves in front of others.” Heading to Hyderabad a week later, a Telugu-speaking scholar informed me of the caste problem in his family and village, where his father would refuse to sit down in the presence of a person of a higher caste even if it was in his own house. Much later, visiting the Seung-dong Presbyterian Church in the old Seoul district, I learned of the attempts of a group known as the Baekjeong to liberate themselves from discrimination by converting to Christianity.

These experiences, and many others like them, have arisen out of my sustained engagement to try to better understand the history and contemporary plight of Burakumin in Japan. My comparative engagement with the histories of these groups has led me to conclude that caste is a term that can and should be applied to Japan. Caste is a useful shorthand to describe a particular way people are characterized, categorized, and/or identified in their local contexts across Asia and beyond. It is also an important term for linking the experiences of the people or groups mentioned above, whose existence has in important ways been determined by a “caste system” and notions of “pollution” and “untouchability”. Throughout the wider Asian region, moreover, there is a sense in which subcontinental forms of caste have impacted the region, whether directly through transmission of ideas and practices, or indirectly through acting as a kind of template through which local conditions have been understood.

At the same time, each instantiation of the word “caste” in relation to Asian societies must be carefully scrutinized, for it carries unique, culturally specific, semantic baggage. Distinct practices of translation and various regionally specific traditions and contexts play a role in determining particular localized understandings and structural realities of caste. Neither, moreover, do terms such as caste necessarily carry for each interlocutor the same kind of emotive load. For Dewa, there was no such thing as an untouchable class in Bali; for Yesudasan,
the word conjured up a long history of violence and oppression linked to a system akin to slavery. The dominance of the use of the English term in my work is, of course, a sad reflection of my inability to speak the local languages of many of the areas I have visited in doing broader research for this study on Danzaemon, as well as perhaps a disquieting indication of the hegemonic reach of the English language throughout large stretches of Asia. The fact that caste is actually derived from the Portuguese language, moreover, further reminds us of the long history of European imperialism that has helped shape the ways we have come to understand complex systems of stratification across Asia and the reason why caste is now a dominant word to explain a variety of forms of social difference rooted in practices of endogamy, commensality, and the like.

Despite these sizeable barriers to understanding that threaten to capsize any meaningful study of the broader phenomenon of caste across Asia and beyond, “outcasteness” – a sub-categorical analytical term within studies of caste – none-theless remains both a conceptual glue and an ontological reality eminently capable of binding both scholars and activists together. Time and again the figure of the “outcaste” has served as a sturdy and politically meaningful platform for cross-cultural engagement, comparative study, and potent activism. It can do this because the term reflects not only a historical, but also a contemporary reality. While it is ultimately my goal to produce a study of “caste” and the “outcasteness” produced by such social systems rooted in a firmer understanding of the specificities of local and regional histories across the Asia-Pacific region, the present volume simply aims to engage in a deeper empirical investigation of a particular regional variation of caste and outcasteness in Japan as an attempt to better understand the points at which it converged on and diverged from other caste formations.

It does this for three primary reasons: first, in the hope of identifying common mechanisms for excluding peoples from groups and societies around the region as well as pinpointing the various forms of agitation that have helped achieve a modicum of liberation from these practices; second, to demonstrate the ways different hegemonic power formations exercise dominating spheres of influence over particular people, spaces, and places over time that contain both important commonalities and points of divergence; and third, to gain a better understanding of how particular forms of exclusion usually associated with “out-casting” change over time, in particular during the transitional phase from older, feudalistic patterns to modern societal forms.

I do not have reservations about calling Japan a caste society for a number of reasons that will be outlined in this book, but in the beginning it will perhaps suffice to say that none is more compelling than the fact that doing so places me in some rather good company within Japanese scholarship. One of the leading Japanese scholars on Danzaemon – the early modern institution at the heart of this book – used the words “caste form” (kasoteki keitai) when referring to at least one of its important components. The work of this scholar, Minegishi Kentarō, was the first I read in Japanese as a young graduate student and it has remained an important source of inspiration for me throughout my research.
And as the reader will discover in this volume, Minegishi is but one of a number of scholars who have made the association.

Danzaemon is the main focus of this book because it is a particularly interesting instance of an extremely organized and localized form of outcaste social management which has been carefully studied by several generations of scholars; and because it is the system that I have come to know best. But while focusing on the history of Danzaemon and the outcastes who came under his rule, I have had the privilege of living, researching, and working in other parts of Japan and Asia. Consequently, while simultaneously making a careful examination of Danzaemon governance practices within the system of status rule in early modern Japan, I have tried to make useful comparisons with other localized caste formations across Japan and Asia, and beyond. This book cannot claim to be comparative in any straightforward sense, but it nonetheless can and does make comparative observations using the work of scholars from India and other regions to both clarify the nature of Danzaemon rule and to help begin to build a platform for a fuller understanding of caste and untouchability across the region.

My earlier monograph also arose primarily out of my study of Danzaemon and the outcaste communities he ruled over. This research led me to the conviction that the history that I was discovering in the records appeared quite different to those narratives found in the expansive Japanese language literature on Burakumin which was then uncritically adopted in the sparse English language literature on the topic. I decided that before I could really begin to write my history of Danzaemon and the early modern villages and communities I was studying, I needing to spend more time unpacking the history behind how contemporary understandings of the Buraku problem came about. That book became a historical account of the contingent nature of Buraku identity in Japan. Based on original archival materials, ethnographical research, and critical historiographical work, I argued that it was perhaps more profitable to see Burakumin as a kind of 20th century discourse which subsumed many different bodies of people under the same label for a variety of different reasons, which need to be analysed historically.

My earlier work helped me to develop sensitivity to the regional and geographical complexities of caste in Japan and across Asia. It provided a building block that permitted me to return to my earlier study of Danzaemon and begin to better understand the historical dynamics that underpinned the emergence of the outcaste order in eastern Japan in the early modern period. It also permitted me to widen my historical scope and begin to join with other interested scholars in undertaking more comparative research on caste in Asia. It has also led to an engagement with a number of scholars’ works that have similarly argued that premodern Japan was a caste society. Caste is, of course, a word used primarily, but not exclusively, in relation to the subcontinent, and is still seldom meaningfully associated with Japan in contemporary scholarship. But this was not the case among earlier generations of scholars who first introduced Western audiences to detailed analysis of the Buraku problem, nor has it been the case among
well-regarded historians of Japan’s premodern status system. Some intriguing comparative work in recent years suggests, moreover, that the time for reappraisal is well overdue.\(^5\)

Whether someone will subscribe to the case for classifying Japan as a caste society, or as a society with clear caste-like formations, will largely hinge upon whether they can agree with how it is being defined in this book and whether or not they agree that those definitional features can indeed be identified on the Japanese archipelago. A comparison of caste (a term of course derived from the Portuguese notion of *casta* and commonly used to reflect the Sanskrit ideas of *varna* and *jāti*) in parts of India and other places around the world, and status (*mibun*) in the Japanese context, and a clear demonstration of the strong convergence between the definitional markers scholars have highlighted in relation to both kinds of social systems during the early modern period, is therefore essential to the success of this project. That said, however, this book’s primary objective is to reveal common ground between social groups who have been severely marginalized (i.e. made “outcastes”) by caste-based logic across Asia. It does this in the hope that such research might provide a sturdier platform for comparative scholarship that can generate deeper understanding of this phenomenon, as well as enhance collaboration in the realms of cross-cultural interaction, historical engagement, and political activism.

With the above in mind, this book focuses on the historical evolution and transformations around Japan’s largest formalized outcaste community during the early modern period (1600–1868), the so-called outcaste system centring on the intriguing institutional leader who went by the title Danzaemon (an office rendered by the Tokugawa authorities usually as “chief of *eta*”).\(^6\) The book argues that this order was a caste-like configuration rooted in the idea and practice of mibun established in the 17th century as a result of early modern Tokugawa rulers’ decisions to engage in a state-building project rooted in military logic that built on the back of pre-existing social and political structures which included manorial, kinship, and historic regional social arrangements, which can be explained as comprising part of a larger history of caste in Japan.

Extant historical documents only enable a partial reconstruction of the eastern Japanese outcaste system due to the fact that they contain serious limitations. Documents pertaining to Danzaemon tend to be post-17th century reproductions of original sources captured by the Tokugawa shogunate for judicial purposes, or a combination of originals and copies contained in the family records of regional sub-chiefs who came under Danzaemon rule. For this reason, any book attempting to capture the historical realities of Danzaemon and the outcaste order will necessarily focus to a considerable extent on issues of governance. That said, however, the records permit a reasonably detailed reconstruction of some of the main primary duties expected of outcastes within the Danzaemon outcaste order. This book chooses three – executing criminals, policing unregistered peoples, and procuring and supplying leather – and shows through a historical investigation of the evolution of these duties (and the
Introduction

privileges that came with performing them) that early modern outcastes clearly experienced Japan as a kind of caste society.

As scholars such as Tsukada Takashi have clearly and consistently demonstrated, “status” (mibun) was the predominant “mode of existence” in premodern Japanese society. Early modern subjects, according to Tsukada, were publicly affirmed in their political and social positions through performing official duties for a particular lord (okami) in their respective “status-based groups” (mibunteki shūdan). Tsukada demonstrates that early modern society was slowly reorganized through the formation and legitimization of status-based groups during the first half of the 17th century (becoming particularly pronounced from the 1660s). These groups entered into official relationships (goyō kankei) with the Tokugawa authorities to ensure their survival. An earlier division of labour coupled with various late medieval and early Tokugawa policies saw numerous so-called outcaste groups such as the eta (chōri) and hinin enter into various official relationships with authorities. They received official acknowledgment and economic privileges in relation to begging and leather production in return for accepting officially prescribed duties often pertaining to certain stigmatized industries (execution duties, burial, etc.).

The argument

Early modern Japan was also built on a unique system of social status with an earlier pedigree which also operated according to its own peculiar regional logics. This system of status, moreover, was further defined by birth, occupation, marriage, hierarchy, pollution ideology, and religious practice. Danzaemon and his subjects, moreover, also clearly came to fulfil a scapegoat function within this system where their social existence was constantly transformed by evolving ideas of pollution and redefined by their own attempts to use status system logic to improve their own position within the overall sociopolitical hierarchy. Understanding the foundations of and various transformative influences on Japan’s early modern system of sociopolitical hierarchy enables us to better understand the comparative ease with which the outcaste system was eventually dismantled in eastern Japan after the Meiji Restoration as well as the subsequent problems facing people commonly understood today to be Burakumin. Understanding the caste-like nature of the early modern social order also propels us to engage in fuller comparisons of how outcaste communities’ histories and challenges have diverged and converged over time and space, and encourages us to consider how better to establish global platforms for eradicating discrimination based on caste logic, structure, and practices.

English language writing on Burakumin for much of the postwar period generally suffered from a combination of poor contextualization, lack of empirical research, and orientalist sensationalism. Scholars matter-of-factly referred to the group as one of Japan’s main taboos, usually making mention of the “invisibility” of Burakumin, and regularly drew a conceptual parallel to Indian Dalits by invoking words such as “untouchability”. Despite these constant allusions
Introduction

to the caste-like nature of the problem, only a handful of writers attempted to take the comparison seriously. And apart from a few outliers, moreover, subsequent English language literature tended to be largely derivative in nature, subscribing uncritically to the literature produced by Japan’s largest postwar Buraku liberation organization, the Buraku Liberation League (BLL). Much of this literature became enamoured of the “political origins” of Burakumin, arguing that while ancient and medieval outcast groups existed in Japan, it was only around the time of the creation of the early modern Japanese feudal state that we could definitely claim an origin for Buraku communities that can be demonstrably shown to have persisted right through to the present.

In this commonplace interpretation, the warrior class – for various reasons including the desire to secure a monopoly on leather production and the need to create a class of people who would bear the brunt of social frustration at the establishment of a tiered sociopolitical system – forced outcast communities to live in certain segregated places and to become the bearers of an outcast status that over time became increasingly immutable and characterized by certain kinds of socially stigmatized labour and duties. In this common conceptualization, outcasts at the commencement of the early modern period became outcastes. Subsequent modern attempts at liberation were argued to be largely devoid of substance, mostly working against members of these communities by destroying their early modern monopolies. It was only when the members of these communities took matters into their own hands and started to engage in grassroots struggles for emancipation that real changes began to happen. The movement was quashed as a result of the rise of Japanese militarism, however, and the Japanese state really only officially assumed some responsibility for their role in the creation of a pseudo-caste system in the late 1960s.

While this interpretative position still tends to dominate some contemporary reflections on Buraku history even today, subsequent critical perspectives nonetheless offered significant reinterpretations or correctives in relation to how to relate the history of Burakumin and the nature of the Buraku problem. Scholars pointed, for example, to the medieval and even in some cases post-Meiji origins of some of the communities declared to be Buraku communities today as evidence of the unsuitability and unsustainability of the early modern political origins thesis. They also pointed to the ways in which the logic of status (mibun) pervaded all aspects of early modern Japanese society, challenging the notion that early modern outcaste groups were somehow deliberately singled out as specific targets of discriminatory state policy. Perhaps most tellingly, however, they sought to understand the ways in which status systems were generated and transformed locally, forged into a seemingly universal category in the modern period through the forces of capital, but in reality becoming a product of the ways in which local communities instituted systems of modern land ownership and legislated systems of participation and belonging as Japan attempted to join the comity of modern nations.

This book builds on the key insights of such critical scholarship, while at the same time attempting to synthesize such critiques with a considerably revamped
early modern political origins literature which itself has reached new levels of sophistication in the last decade or so. This book argues that early modern Japan was a caste society, a solid mixture of inherited and created elements, but that the ultimate form the social system took needs to be understood primarily through a careful investigation of local conditions and considerations. This book offers the first book-length manuscript on the history of Danzaemon in English, building on the insights of scholars who have in recent decades thought critically about the history of outcastes in Japan and who have refused to toe the simple ideological line of outcaste victim in their historical narratives. But it also takes seriously the insistence by large numbers of evolving “political origins” theory scholars about the importance of the role of the early modern state in the creation and ideological justification of a system of status that proved definitional in relation to the making of a fixed system of early modern outcastes who are commonly considered to be the ancestors of today’s Burakumin.

Such a synthesis is made possible in part by bringing together the insights of scholars working on premodern Japan from diverse methodological perspectives. The comparative sociologist S.N. Eisenstadt has noted, for example, that Japanese feudalism adopted the form it did because of the peculiar relationship between the disintegration of tribal-class and state formation. Placing Danzaemon history within the larger historical context of the breakdown of clans, and the emergence of new occupational and kinship groups in eastern Japan during the medieval period, is an important aid in understanding Japanese caste formation and early modern status dynamics. Considering Danzaemon, moreover, as Mark Ravina once pointed out, as a newly created “feudal agent” in the early modern period, someone who became a reasonably independent authority incorporated into the early modern “compound state”, is also an important insight that has helped with the conceptual development that underpins this study. Danzaemon and the eastern Japanese outcaste system can be understood as one particular loose caste configuration defined by pre-existing medieval kinship, occupational, community, and belief structures that were reconstituted and bound together through Tokugawa state-building processes.

In the early part of the Tokugawa period, the shogunate built on the earlier medieval logic of monopolizing the labour of groups considered essential for maintenance of warrior rule. The Tokugawa authorities inherited a society with various strong social divisions, formed primarily as a result of a historical division of labour, but which was also clearly shaped by kinship-based organizational structures. The occupational group community, originating in localized kinship structures that were further shaped by medieval socioeconomic and political forces, became one of the primary units for the effective and efficient undertaking of official duty (along with villages and town block associations) in early modern Japan. Such groups became one of the central units through which order could be maintained and the performance of duty enforced.

Danzaemon rule came to be superimposed over a large number of eta (chōri) village communities, in a good many cases already in existence for some time (how long, exactly, is a difficult question to answer). Pre-existing villages with
reasonably unique local arrangements of exchange, trade, and in some cases servitude with nearby peasant communities, religious institutions, and townships became incorporated into an early modern system of governance in which leaders were geographically anchored to communities characterized by a shared geography and occupational and familial proximity. Where such an arrangement was already in clear operation in the later medieval period, such as in some rural villages and townships, minimal effort was needed to restructure communities to conform to the group expectations of warrior elites. Where such an arrangement was far from being realized, however, entry into the early modern social order proved more problematic. Policy measures such as cadastral surveys and population registers also proved critically important in further helping shape such processes.

Danzaemon and the immediate community over which he ruled in the latter half of the 17th century were moved to their Asakusa location on the outskirts of Edo and offered special privileges in exchange for loyal service to the shogun. Permitted to retain some autonomy in relation to the matter of how he ruled over members of his own group, Danzaemon was in turn required to serve in an official capacity in relation to numerous shogunal duties. Because of this strong connection to the shogunate, successive Danzaemon heads came to govern their subjects ostensibly according to a military-style organizational logic, largely conforming to what Herman Ooms once called a “fundamental hierarchizing ‘imaginary’

17. The early Tokugawa shoguns had further flirted with hierarchical cosmologies in various combinations drawing heavily from Confucian/Neo-Confucian, Buddhist, and warrior discursive practices that would justify their imposition of warrior rule and social container-based prejudice upon the rest of society while simultaneously restricting access to other ideas and inspirations such as Christianity or militant, exclusivist Buddhist sectarianism which might help local populations see ways of overcoming these imposed constraints.18

“Pollution” (kegare) ideology was central to this endeavour, and Danzaemon and the outcaste system that subsequent heads presided over were deeply affected by such developments.

Gerald Groemer has labelled the entire system of rule that grew up around Danzaemon the “Edo Outcaste Order”.19 Building upon such a conceptualization, this book argues that early modern Japanese society was founded on the conceptualization of a unique system of social status (mibun) which was in essence a reconstituted caste form which operated according to its own peculiar regional logics and was defined by local conditions and pre-existing practices, but that regardless of region produced a category of scapegoated persons who were repeatedly linked to ever-evolving ideas of pollution and normality.20 Despite the interpretative difficulties of locating pollution and understanding how it necessitated the existence of a societal scapegoat, this book nonetheless takes seriously the marginalized nature of Danzaemon and his subordinates, pushing for the larger conclusion that essentially what one is witnessing in Japan during this period is a reenergized caste system, however “loose” it may appear in comparative terms.21
Caste, whatever the origins of the term and the historical baggage it contains, can be envisaged as a social system with certain distinctive features, and its presence is clearly evident in eastern Japan between the 17th and 19th centuries. That the term caste can be applicable to premodern Japan becomes readily apparent, for example, if we theorize it along the lines of Irfan Habib, who has argued that caste contains the following six features: a universalizing division based on birth; endogamy; hierarchy/ranking; occupational fixity; a purity/impurity imaginary; and affective religious duty. The experiences of Danzaemon and those who were subject to his rule, as well as many of the main features of the Edo outcaste order, fit neatly inside such a definition, albeit with some important caveats that will be explored in the following chapter.

Danzaemon and the outcaste order from the 17th century onwards assumed official responsibility for an ever-increasing series of overlapping stigmatized duties which worked together to establish a compounded form of outcasteness with shifting definitional contours. In undertaking official duties in relation to religious festivals, flaying skins and procuring leather, performing crucifixions and other execution duties, and policing and caring for itinerant vagabonds, Danzaemon and his subjects came to function as societal scapegoats. In the second half of the 18th century, as Tokugawa society entered a phase in which much of the original foundational logic of the early modern status system was little understood and losing traction, as ideological influences that had at one time proved quite potent were losing their veneer, and as the economic benefits able to be accrued through economic monopolies based on certain forms of stigmatized labour became more conspicuous, the shogunal authorities embarked upon a process of drastic reinforcement of the caste system. This was an act that necessarily involved re-policing caste divisions, reenergizing earlier polarizing notions of pollution and stigma, and recreating an outcaste subject again capable of fully functioning as a scapegoat in the face of rapid change rendered by economic transformation. The important restorative act was signalled by documents such as the An’ei Edict of 1778, a law that among other things worked to police outcaste practices. At the same time, however, discourses on pollution from the late 18th century onwards also had to rely on a new kind of logic, as older foundational logics no longer retained the same kind of rhetorical hold and normative effect, and the reality of blurred caste lines was increasingly visible for all to see.

Yet also somewhat paradoxically, outcastes under the rule of Danzaemon simultaneously became increasingly mobilized as instruments of Tokugawa power at around this time. In 1772, for example, the shogunate ordered eta to arrest those caught gambling in their respective areas. Such a move, however, needed to be underpinned by a more expansive interpretation of outcaste social function and accompanied by a considerable shrinking of actual social distance between outcaste and sovereign (while of course maintaining the fiction of vast social difference in terms of perception). This was achieved in three ways: by placing Danzaemon and his outcastes more directly under Tokugawa rule and encouraging a reorganization of their social group along more militarized lines; mobilizing a specialized “pathos of distance” for outcasts which would
function to further separate them from the world of commoners; and adopting an official position towards them which tended to recognize and affirm that of all the social groups under Tokugawa rule they had a particular duty to absorb and assimilate an ever-expanding number of functions and duties. What resulted from this system was an outcaste order under Danzaemon that became a highly bureaucratic punitive arm of the Tokugawa shogunate, able to project the sovereign’s power throughout all of his territories, but sufficiently set apart from the world of men that socio-religious stigmas and popular discontent could also be directed at it with comparative ease.

Methodology and structure

The chapters of the book are arranged as follows. Chapter 1 establishes the grounds for the argument outlined above, introducing the reader to some of the core issues involved in thinking about the early modern Japanese status system as a form of caste, and some of the specificities of the Edo outcaste order under the leadership of Danzaemon that reveal core similarities between caste forms, predominantly in subcontinental Asia and Japan. Chapter 2 then outlines the construction of the Edo outcaste order at a macro-historical level, showing how the system was forged out of the ruins of older social arrangements and economic systems and transformed over time through logic and practices that reveal considerable overlap with other similar caste systems in Asia.

Chapter 3 focuses on how the discursive and ideological dimension of outcaste existence was transformed over time through ever-evolving ideas of pollution and normative ideals pertaining to “normality”. It also reveals how an overarching military logic came to underpin the artifice of Danzaemon governance and how this might in fact be interpreted as a form of social mobility/resistance akin to Sanskritization in the subcontinental context. Chapter 4 analyses outcaste duties involved in punishment, with a particular focus on official execution duties pertaining to crucifixion at the place of the crime. The chapter demonstrates how Danzaemon and his subordinates were increasingly mobilized over time to effect these punishments, while at the same time they were nonetheless forced to maintain strict practices of social separation. Elaborate ritual symbolism was increasingly employed in the latter part of the Tokugawa period to inscribe status lines in new ways which simultaneously scapegoated the outcaste while projecting the authority of the shogunate.

Chapter 5 examines the history and development of Danzaemon’s official duty of policing unregistered members of the population and shows how poverty issued a constant and serious challenge to the early modern status system. Through an examination of the Tenpō famine and the relief measures proposed by the Tokugawa shogunate, and by following the role of Danzaemon and members of the Edo outcaste order in their prescribed roles during that period, the chapter further shows how the logic of status was reaffirmed and inscribed with new elements during one of the most tumultuous periods that potentially undermined the authority of the shogun.
Chapter 6 deals with outcaste space, focusing particularly on the history of the main residential area of Danzaemon, Asakusa “Newtown”. This chapter demonstrates that historical processes of urbanization, status group consolidation, labour specialization, capital accumulation, and inter-status group network creation, formed an elite stratum of neighbourhood residents in Asakusa which was reasonably well-integrated into the broader social and economic landscape of Edo by the late Tokugawa period. The stratification of the neighbourhood over time, moreover, created numerous internal tensions within the neighbourhood as well as throughout the Edo outcaste order, which affected both how outcaste status in eastern Japan was imagined, and how regional outcaste communities imagined their relationship to the centre.

The final chapter of the book then moves on to examine a core outcaste commodity: leather. Because status and human existence in early modern Japan were so closely tied to particular forms of production, following the goods and services outcasts produced and provided reveals how their activities/actions were constrained by, and helped add shape to, the caste order. While much is made of leather production in relation to outcasts, surprisingly little has been written about the mechanics, logistics, and economics of production in relation to the outcaste order in eastern Japan. Through an investigation of the economic aspects of outcaste existence, the chapter demonstrates how economic forces undercut the caste structure in important ways, creating tensions both within and outside the Edo outcaste order and multiple attempts to uphold the old status order.

This book does not assert that the above structure offers a complete or finalized view of early modern caste in Japan. But by examining some of the core ideas, events, people, spaces, and goods that helped define Danzaemon and the Edo outcaste order, the hope is that the book will offer a reasonably comprehensive examination of one particular kind of caste formation in early modern Japan. Comparative references are made to other outcaste communities around the Japanese archipelago, and in relation to other societal contexts, when such comparisons are deemed useful or when referencing situations in other regions is thought to help fill gaps in the analysis. And as I hope becomes abundantly clear throughout the following pages, this book is written with the conviction that a good history of Danzaemon and his direct subordinates should ideally help us to understand the mechanics of the entire system and offer insights about the historical processes involved in its dismantling in order to better illuminate the modern mechanics of caste and to develop potential strategies for its complete annihilation.

Note on Danzaemon and terminology

Danzaemon, frequently written about as a single, nameless institutional figure in Anglophone literature, was actually the title assumed by successive individuals who ruled over Edo outcaste groups and who understood and articulated their particular places in the Tokugawa socio-political order in markedly different
ways. The proper names for Danzaemon and the dates surrounding individual births, deaths, and reigns are incomplete and open to serious contestation, particularly for the first five leaders who are said to have assumed the title. The most comprehensive list of individual Danzaemon to date and the one relied upon in this book can be found in the work of Uramato Yoshifumi.25

1. Danzaemon Chikafusa (Shukai) (r.1590–1617)
2. Danzaemon Chikasue (r.1617–1640)
3. Danzaemon Chikanobu/Chikaharu (r.1640–1669)
4. Danzaemon Chikahisa (r.1669–1709)
5. Kichijirō (r.1709)
6. Danzaemon Chikamura (r.1709–1748)
7. Danzaemon Chikasono (r.1748–1775)
8. Danzaemon Chikamasu (r.1775–1790)
9. Danzaemon Chikashige (r.1793–1804)
10. Danzaemon Chikamasa (r.1804–1821)
11. Danzaemon Chikatami (r.1822–1828)
12. Danzaemon Chikamori (r.1829–1838)
13. Danzaemon Chikayasu/Naiki/Dan Naoki (r.1840–1871)

To reflect the considerable ambiguity surrounding the earliest Danzaemon leadership, and the almost complete absence of biographical information in relation to the early generations of leaders who purportedly assumed the title, this book simply uses the term Danzaemon to refer to all leaders who emerge prior to Danzaemon Chikamura. From the period of rule of Chikamura, however, certain biographical data becomes available for subsequent leaders who assume the title Danzaemon, making it somewhat easier, when source materials permit, to offer an examination of the various transformations of rule in each period as led by certain individuals with peculiarities and defining characteristics. Nonetheless, considerable caution must still be exercised on this point, for while the materials left to us to recreate this history are rich in comparative terms, the materials were not often originally created for that purpose, and there are considerable issues pertaining to the reliability of certain documents. In an important sense, what we know biographically about various Danzaemon rulers is sometimes ascertained by reading against the grain of the intended purpose of the original source. This book, moreover, also occasionally utilizes the term Danzaemon in a more general sense, to refer to the institutional dimension of the Edo outcaste order with an established bureaucratic centre in Asakusa.

This book also uses the terms eta, chōri, and kawata largely interchangeably. While it is my belief that Danzaemon and his subordinates clearly preferred the term chōri to refer to themselves in eastern Japan, eta was the term that came to be used most often in relation to them by other groups. Indeed it probably became the most prevalent term used in relation to them in official documentation and literary writing in the second half of the Tokugawa period. The term kawata is more prevalent in other parts of Japan, particularly in central Japan,
and will be utilized when it is more accurate to do so or when previous scholarship has preferred to use the term. Where possible, however, this book will use the term chōri, and depending on the context eta, or even sometimes a combination of the two: chōri (eta) or eta (chōri).

Notes

1 The medieval historian Ōyama Kyōhei agrees, noting that the Indian version of caste is certainly “classical” and “severe”, but that caste should not be considered solely a product of the subcontinent. Kyōhei Ōyama, *Yuruyakana Kāsuto Shakai: Chūsei Nihon* (Tokyo: Hasekura Shobō, 2003), 12–13.
4 A case in point would be the following work by June A. Gordon, “Caste in Japan: The Burakumin”, *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* 40, no. 1 (2017).
6 Eta was a word usually written with Chinese ideographs meaning “much pollution”, For more on outcaste labels, see the introductory chapter of Amos, *Embodying Difference: The Making of Burakumin in Modern Japan*.
8 *Kinsei Mibunsei Shakai No Torackata: Tamakawa Shuppansha Kōkō Nihonshi Kyōkasho Wo Tōshite* (Kyoto: Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo, 2010), 5–36.
10 This point was demonstrated at length in my first book, Amos, *Embodying Difference: The Making of Burakumin in Modern Japan*.
11 The best coverage of this topic in Japanese is found in Tsukada, *Kinsei Mibunsei Shakai No Torackata: Yamakawa Shuppansha Kōkō Nihonshi Kyōkasho Wo Tōshite*.
12 See, for example, Toshiyuki Hatanaka, “Kawata” To Heijin: *Kinsei Mibun Shakai Ron* (Kyoto: Kamogawa Shuppan, 1997); Mibun/Sabetsu/Aidentitii: “Burakushi” Wa Hakajirushi To Naruka (Kyoto: Kamogawa Shuppan, 2004); Ryō Suzuki, *Suiheisha Sōritsu No Kenkyū* (Kyoto: Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo, 2005); Tsukada, *Kinsei Nihon Mibunsei No Kenkyū*.
14 See, for example, some of the ways in which discussions of political origins have deepened in the multiple volume series on both Osaka and Wakayama in recent years.
Introduction


20 In my discussions of the scapegoat here, I draw loosely on the work of Rene Girard. See, for example, Rene Girard, *The Scapegoat* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

21 “Loose caste” is an idea borrowed directly from the medieval historian, Ōyama, *Yuruyakana Kōsuto Shakai: Chūsei Nihon*. The idea of the early modern outcaste functioning as a kind of scapegoat has not been absent from prior historical writing on Burakumin. Scholars from a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds and theoretical convictions have in the past made reference to such a phenomenon. Writing half a century ago, George de Vos, for example, noted: “The scapegoat functioning of an outcaste group is dependent upon historical events ... in the earliest period majority group farmers frequently turned on the Burakumin neighbours, venting their frustrations over the ill-understood social processes of change into which they had been swept. It is difficult for the outcaste to escape his role as scapegoat, since being of the lowest status he finds it difficult to strike back politically, economically, or by use of force.” De Vos, “Toward a Cross-Cultural Pyschology of Caste Behavior”, 375.


but they also have a homologous component. Sanskrit influence, while never approximating the significance of Sinological presence in Japan, nonetheless still exerted a strong impact over Japan’s cultural and social practices, in particular its understandings of societal and moral structures. India also provided a kind of template through which Japan attempted to understand features of its own society. Core historical processes related to a particular kind of historical division of labour, moreover, provide a firm basis for considering the nature of the caste formations that emerge in both the Indian and Japanese contexts. And while the religious bases of both countries witness strong deviation, notions of pollution and purity that combine with hierarchical social and political structures to produce practices of outcasting and scapegoating are clearly not the unique preserve of subcontinental thought and belief, but are also present in other religious world views such as Buddhism.

Notes
1 A good many of the details in this section can be found in Timothy D. Amos, “Portrait of a Tokugawa Outcaste Village”, East Asian History 32/33 (June 2006/December 2007).
4 See, for example, 1784.2 Copy of Chōri Statutes, with Seal, of the Various Provinces, Article 18. Higashi Nihon Buraku Kaihō Kenkyūjo, ed., Gunma-ken Hisabetsu Buraku Shiryou: Kogashira Saburoemon-Ke Monjo (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2007), 40–44.
8 Why did Danzaemon envisage his territory as Kanhashū or “the eight eastern states”? In 1871, Dan Naoki (previously Danzaemon Chikayasu/Dan Naiki, r.1840–1871) stated that his rule over outcastes in Kanhashū stretched back “700 years or so”. But the first reference to “Kanhashū” probably only dates back to the time of Danzaemon Chikamura (r.1709–1748). There is a book of military tales called the Kanhashū Kōsenroku, which was purportedly written in the period of warring states but edited by Makishima Akitake (nativist scholar) in 1726. Chikamatsu Monzaemon also authored a play on Taira no Masakado entitled Kanhashū Tsunagiuma (Tethered Steed and the Eight Provinces of Kantō) dated 1724, so it may well be the case that Danzaemon Chikamura began to use this term as it became popularized through the literature and plays of the period. Monzaemon Chikamatsu, Chikamatsu: Five Late Plays, trans. Andrew C. Gerstle (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 325–427; Terutake Makishima and Enji Shimokawa, eds., Kanhashū Kōsenroku, 2 vols., Genpon Gendaiyaku, 28–29 (Higashi Murayama: Kyōkusha, 1981).
9 Amos, “Portrait of a Tokugawa Outcaste Village”, 84.
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12 Takashi Tsukada, Kinsei Mibunsei Shakai No Torakata: Yamakawa Shuppansha Kōkō Nihonshi Kyōkasho Wo Tōshite (Kyoto: Buraku Mondai Kenkyū, 2010), 48. In his earlier work, Tsukada strongly emphasized the continued importance of the term outcaste in relation to work on this subject. For his earlier statement, see “Ajia Ni Okeru Ryō to Sen: Gyūkawa Ryūtsū Wo Tegakari Toshite”, in Ajia No Naka No Nihonshi, ed. Yasunori Arano, Masatoshi Ishii, and Shōsuke Murai (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1992), 249–250. Also, Groemer, 2001.


14 Seiko Sugiyama, “Kinsei Kantō Ni Okeru ‘Hisabetsu Buraku’ No Mibun Kōshō Ni Tsuite: Suzuki-Ke Monjo Yori”, Minshūshi Kenkyū, no. 26 (1984). The first mention of this term in English language scholarship as far as I can ascertain is found in Lafcadio Hearn’s writings. He states: “Outside of the three classes of commoners, and hopelessly below the lowest of them, large classes of persons existed who were not reckoned as Japanese, and scarcely accounted human beings. Officially they were mentioned generically as chori, and were counted with the peculiar numerals used in counting animals: ippiki, nihiki, sambiki, etc. Even today they are commonly referred to, not as persons (hito), but as ‘things’ (mono). To English readers (chiefly through Mr. Mitford’s yet unrivelled Tales of Old Japan) they are known as Eta; but their appellations varied according to their callings. They were pariah-people ….” Lafcadio Hearn, Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation (New York: Macmillan, 1905), 271–272. Okada Asako states that the 1728 document referenced in this section is probably a draft statement of a letter sent by the local chōri chief Dan’emon (referred to in later documents through the hereditary title Hachirōbe) requesting that the term chōri be used instead of the more pejorative eta. Asako Okada, “Kinsei Kantō Ni Okeru Chōri No Ichikaiini To Dannabe”, Kokushigaku, 177, no. 5 (2002): 66.


16 Groemer, Street Performers and Society in Urban Japan, 1600–1900: The Beggar’s Gift, 52.

17 Takashi Tsukada, Kinsei Nihon Mibunsei No Kenkyū (Kobe: Hyōgo Buraku Mondai Kenkyū, 1987), 51.


20 Herman Ooms, Tokugawa Village Practice: Class, Status, Power, Law (University of California Press, 1996), 247.


22 Teraki Nobuaki’s work on Danzaemon, for example, highlighted the construction of cadastral surveys that distinguished the landholdings of peasants from leatherworkers, the construction of separate population registers for the same purpose, and the creation of discriminatory laws and regulations that legislated the lives of eta in ways that distinguished them from the rest of the commoner population, as all evidences of the political construction of outcaste status. Nobuaki Teraki, Kinsei Buraku No Seiritsu To Tenkai (Osaka: Kaim branch, 1986); Kinsei Mibun To Hisabetsumin No Shosō: “Burakushi No Minaosshi” No Tojō Kara (Osaka: Kaim branch, 2000).

Tsukada Takashi’s work on Danzaemon (as well as more generally) has been less about highlighting the nature of discrimination “outcaste communities” faced in early modern Japan, but more about bringing to light the ways in which such an early modern social system neatly conformed to the broader logic of status rule which existed in “layers and pockets”, or more technically, “compositely and stratification-ally” (fukugō to jūsō), throughout early modern Japanese society and took on a myriad of intriguing regional forms underpinned by localized differences. The last section of this chapter can be understood as an attempt to flesh out the features of “stratification” suggested by Tsukada. See, for example, Takashi Tsukada, “Stratification and Compositeness of Social Groups in Tokugawa Japan: A Perspective on Early Modern Society”, *Acta Asiatica*, no. 87 (2004); “The Urban History of Osaka”, *City, Culture and Society* 3, no. 1 (2012). For the last point, see Kinsei Mibunsei Shakai No Torakata: Yamakawa Shuppansha Kōkō Nihonshi Kyōkasho Wo Tōshite, 8.


Leatherworkers were also stigmatized in early modern Germany, although the nature of pollution ideology and the geographical locus of stigma seem to have differed significantly from that found in Japan and the subcontinent. Kathy Stuart, *Defiled Trades and Social Outcasts: Honor and Ritual Pollution in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 8–9.


Ibid., 580, 587.


Read, for example, Weber’s discussion of the “Japanese status structure”. Ibid., 270–282. Weber did not deal with the issue of a Japanese outcaste per se in this volume, but he provided an explanatory framework for their existence when he wrote: “ritual impurity meant blood guilt and incest as well as bodily defects. Very strict prescriptions for ritual impurity compensated for the lack of a religious ‘ethic.’ Any sort of compensation in the beyond was lacking. The dead live, as among the Greeks, in Hades.” Ibid., 276. Moreover, Weber’s description of Indian outcastes as a “stratum comprised of services which Hinduism had to consider ritually impure: tanning, leatherwork, and some industries in the hands of itinerant workers” provided a striking parallel to the Japanese case. Ibid., 100.


Ibid., 164–165.

Ibid., 169, 172.

Ibid., 169.

Ibid., 177.


There are obviously serious limits to such an observation, such as those that can be observed in places such as Punjab. See, for example, Toru Takahashi, “‘Rajput’, Local Deities and Discrimination: Tracing Caste Formation in Jammu”, in *Mapping Social Exclusion in India: Caste, Religion and Borderlands*, ed. Paramjit S. Judge (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).


61 Ibid., 50.

62 Hiroyuki Kotani, Indo No Fukashokumin: Sono Rekishi To Genzai (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1997), 44.

63 The following caveat about how things changed over time for the feudal lord should also be noted here: “First under the feudal lords, organs of administration and control were established so that they could then make legislation. The lord’s participation in legislation decreases; at the same time, on rare occasions, the legislation binds the lord himself.” Yoshiro Hiramatsu, “Tokugawa Law”, Law in Japan: An Annual 14, no. 1 (1981): 5.

64 Tsukada has observed that Tokugawa law predominantly fell into the sphere of administration (gyōsei) and not judicial affairs (shihō). Takashi Tsukada, Mibunsei Shakai To Shimin Shakai: Kinsei Nihon No Shakai To Hō (Tokyo: Kashiwa Shobō, 1992), 148. Another way of stating this distinction might be that Tokugawa law tended to only be retributive in the sense that state authority (kōgi) had been affronted by a particular act. Retributive acts were initially defined in the 17th century Tokugawa system according to status with some of the lowest status groups permitted to take responsibility for the maintenance of their own systems of justice. Once these laws were laid down, however, legal debates generally took place within a utilitarian framework which tried to assess the weight of a respective punishment based on a calculation that took into account historical legal precedent and desired a socio-legal outcome.

65 This basic argument has been developed to a high level of sophistication in Luke S. Roberts, Performing the Great Peace: Political Space and Open Secrets in Tokugawa Japan (University of Hawai’i Press, 2012).

practices of these occupational communities by a centralizing state, and the economic and political demands of the Tokugawa shogunate heavily impacted the decision to create an order of outcastes.

Despite the real lack of material to help with the rebuilding of the early history of the establishment of the Edo outcaste order, it is nonetheless clear that it came into existence with Danzaemon at its apex by the end of the 17th century, and that the order comprised an important part of an emerging social status system in eastern Japan in territories dominated by shogunate rule. Beggar settlements in Edo transformed into the headquarters of a quite formalized network of hinin status groups with distinct hierarchies by about the third quarter of the 17th century. Extant materials reveal that these outcastes became an important part of Tokugawa shogunate social policy aimed at dealing with issues such as poverty, disaster, and homelessness. How these groups came to be associated with Danzaemon in the 17th century and how a relationship of subservience emerged between eta and hinin community heads is difficult to ascertain, although it clearly involved some kind of transference of begging rights in relation to the workplace. These status groups incorporated a number of hinin huts (hinin goya) governed by leaders with hereditary titles who would play a pivotal role in the later establishment and maintenance of beggar camps and prison infirmaries.

Danzaemon and the communities directly subordinated to his rule were at some point in the 17th century moved to their location on the outskirts of Edo and offered special privileges in exchange for loyal service to the shogun. Permitted to retain some autonomy in relation to the matter of how he ruled over members of his own group, Danzaemon was in turn required to serve in an official capacity in relation to numerous duties including torture and execution. The rule that Danzaemon was able to extend to chōri communities throughout the eastern Japanese provinces was predicated upon the networks between leatherworker groups that had already developed prior to the 17th century. Cadastral land surveys and registration practices worked in ways to legally affirm the position of chōri within their wider communities, but considerable differences existed between those that were eventually incorporated into the Edo outcaste order. What tied these groups together was the need of the shogunate to secure a steady supply of leather and an Edo-based community that could be relied upon to handle that task, as well as communities that could also handle the outsourcing of a variety of duties that the ruling authorities themselves increasingly wished to avoid.

Notes


2 Shigeyuki Makihara, “Kita Kantō No Chōri Kogashira To Shokuba/Yuisho”, Buraku Mondai Kenkyū 185 (2008); “Kawata Mura To Chiiki Shakai: Bushū Shimowana To


6 Ibid.


14 The literature on dōzoku is unfortunately quite dated, but further research on the historical development of older kinship patterns across regions in eastern Japan will further illuminate important aspects of the Edo outcaste order. For an old but useful discussion of dōzoku by a scholar who also wrote on outcaste groups, see John B. Cornell, “Dozoku: An Example of Evolution and Transition in Japanese Village Society”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 6, no. 4 (1964).

15 I will continue to follow here the labelling practice advocated by Gerald Groemer of listing medieval groups as outcasts and early modern groups as outcastes. I have explained the rationale for his decision in Timothy D. Amos, *Embodying Difference: The Making of Burakumin in Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2011), 8.


17 Ibid., 298.


20 Ibid., 129.

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30 Ibid., 300–301.
31 Ibid., 301–302.
32 Tetsuo Okuma, “Danzaemon Taiseika Ni Okeru Chōri Dannaba”, in *Danzaemon: Kinsei Hisabetsumin No Katsudō Ryōiki*, ed. Tetsuo Okuma, et al. (Tokyo: Gendai Shokan, 2011), 55. At this point the “affective religious duties” of outcastes come into closer view. While this was primarily evidenced in their involvement in the offering of blessings in exchange for alms within their various workplaces discussed in this section, it was also evidenced in the various demands and constraints placed on them in relation to participation in local religious festivals. Regarding the latter point, for example, the sub-chief of an eta community in Inubushi township noted in 1728 that “from the beginning of the market in Inubushi Township, as an eta, I have not been able to participate in the festival of the market God.” Participation in guard duties was, however, often seen as an acceptable form of participation in local festivals in many regions throughout the archipelago. Gunma Burakuken Tomo Chiku Kinsei-shi Gakushūkai, ed., *Shimotsuke-No-Kuni Tarŏbē Monjo* (Ota: Gunma Burakuken Tomo Chiku Kinsei-shi Gakushūkai, 1987), 582. Asako Okada, “Kintō Ni Okeru Chōri No Ichikainai Ken To Dannaba”, *Kokusigaku* 177, no. 5 (2002): 66.
33 Okuma, “Danzaemon Taiseika Ni Okeru Chōri Dannaba”, 47.
44 Ibid., 270.
48 Ibid., 220.
49 Ibid., 223–234.
52 Ibid., 17.
62 This point was also made in Asao, *Asao Naohiro Choakushū*, 7, 19–20.
63 For these points, see for example Edo town circulars from the 1640s and 1650s. Kinsei Shiryō Kenkyūkai, ed., *Edo Machibure Shūsei*, 22 vols., vol. 1 (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1994), 3–89, especially 7, 55, 58, 70.
64 Minegishi, *Kinsei Hisabetsuminshi No Kenkyū*, 32.
65 Ibid., 37–38.
70 Minegishi, *Kinsei Hisabetsuminshi No Kenkyū*, 28. Interestingly, Danzaemon’s name, written throughout most of the 18th century as 弾左衛門, is recorded in this merchant diary entry of 1642 as 談左衛門, suggesting the possibility that it may even have been a different person.
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71 Ibid., 33–35. Kawata is placed in parentheses here because Minegishi Kentarō notes that this word may have been penned in next to Danzaemon’s name at a later date.


79 Ibid., 48.


81 Ibid., 24.

82 Tsukada, *Kinsei Nihon Mibunsei No Kenkyū*, 211.


84 Tsukada, *Kinsei Nihon Mibunsei No Kenkyū*, 216.


86 Ibid., 387.

87 It is difficult to establish these points precisely through Edo town circulars, but some evidence for them can be found in ibid., 77, 150, 297.

88 Ibid., 386.

89 Ibid., 122, 50, 297.


93 These were issued not just in Edo, but also Osaka. See, for example, Takashi Tsukada and Kinsei Osaka Kenkyūkai, eds., *Osaka Oshioki Okakidashi No Utsushi/ Osaka Oshioki Todome* (Osaka: Osaka Shiritsu Daigaku Daigakuin Kenkyūka Toshi Bunka Kenkyū Sentā, 2007), 61.


guarantee for privileges granted. In other words, even for a person of eta (chōri) status, it was in a sense better to be inside the system than marginalized by not conforming to it, and therefore not having one’s official presence acknowledged and a pathway to social existence guaranteed. At the same time, as this chapter has demonstrated, eta were a group that through transforming ideas of pollution came to embody an irredeemable and problematic social difference, even as they usually managed to maintain working relationships with other status groups throughout the early modern period. This was an unenviable position to be in, and the costs of being within an eta community far exceeded the benefits, whether they were concrete ones such as economic privileges or more intangible ones such as high levels of social and political autonomy. In all three periods discussed above, the overarching and overwhelming effect of pollution ideology was to scapegoat the outcaste, to portray him or her as someone who was impure, abnormal, and polluted. One important reaction to scapegoating, in addition to the various other well-documented responses pollution ideology engendered, was a form of samurai mimicry. Although the politics of such a movement is certainly less straightforward than other forms of response and resistance, it was nevertheless an action that still called into question the political and social status quo.

One question that still remains unanswered here is the underlying reason for the transition between the various forms of pollution ideology. Scholars have historically framed this problem as one pertaining to the changing intensity of pollution ideology. Minegishi observed that compared to the medieval period, early modern pollution ideology weakened over time. Although this is an important interpretation within longue durée caste/outcaste history, the view adopted here is that because of the recycling and reinvention of ideological forms over time, attempting to measure the relative strengthening or weakening of an ideology envisaged in a continuum over time is perhaps ultimately unhelpful. Pollution ideology is most fully evidenced when it becomes overdetermined at particular historical junctures and it assumes different forms in response to a range of factors including socio-economic divisions, political expediency, perceived social requirements, and popular perceptions. Each of the dominant forms pollution ideology assumed in early modern Japan – religious, social, humanistic – were historical responses to contradictions and impediments exposed by the faltering structural integrity of the status system.

Notes
Yoshida has a useful, original discussion of the ways in which Takagi Shōsaku, Asao Naohiro, Tsukada Takashi, Fujimoto Seiichirō, and Watanabe Hiroshi all approached the issue of the balancing act between social forces and political power in the construction of outcaste communities in early modern Japan. Tsutomu Yoshida, “Shōhō Fujimoto Seijirō ‘Kinsei Mibun Shakai No Nakama Közō’”, Buraku Kaihō Kenkyū, no. 197 (2013): 70–78.

Hidemasa Maki, Mibun Sabetsu No Seidoka (Kyoto: Aunsha, 2014), 16.


Minegishi notes, however, that the term was used in a 1644 population register from Saraike village. Kentarō Minegishi, Kinsei Hisabetsuminshi No Kenkyū (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 1996), 179.


Ibid., 211–213.


Kentarō Minegishi, “Kegare Kannen To Buraku Sabetsu (Ge): Sono Fukabunsei To Kegare Kannen No Itchi”, Buraku Mondai Kenkyū 162 (2002): 100–101. Minegishi in this same article expressed disagreement with Tsukamoto’s interpretation of Tsunayoshi’s reign (and Yokota Fuyuhiko’s interpretations as well), especially on the question as to the degree to which policies from this period should be understood as the primary catalyst for the increase in discriminatory attitudes towards outcaste groups.


Many texts discuss Danzaemon’s genealogical statement. For my interpretation of these genealogies and the role they played in early modern society, see Timothy D. Amos, “Genealogy and Marginal Status in Early Modern Japan: The Case of Danzaemon”, Japanese Studies 33, no. 2 (2013): 147–159.
The ideological construction of eta

30 Minegishi, “Kegare Kannen To Buraku Sabetsu (Ge): Sono Fukabunsei To Kegare Kannen No Itchi”, 100.
33 Ibid., 36–37.
39 In 1736, for example, outcasts were forbidden to enter the households of commoners in Komoro fief. Harada, Hennen Sabetsushi Shiryō Shūsei, vol. 9, 335–336.
41 Maki, Mibun Sabetsu No Seidoka, 123.
43 Ibid., 378–379.
44 Ibid., 397–400.
46 Ibid., 465–466.
51 Minegishi, Kinsei Hisabetsuminshi No Kenkyū, 89–90.
52 Maki Hidemasa notes that copies of the An’ei Edict have also been found in Kaga, Shinano, Isé, Kumihamana, Nara, Osaka, Kawachi, Ikuno (Hyogo), Okayama, Hiroshima, Tottori, Awa, Tosa, Uwajima, Ogura, Kumamoto, and Kagoshima. Maki, Mibun Sabetsu No Seidoka, 114.
53 Tsukada also makes a similar point. Tsukada, Mibunsei Shakai to Shimin Shakai: Kinsei Nihon No Shakai To Hō, 191–192.
55 Ibid., 386–387, 400–401, 487, 549–552.
57 Numerous scholars have written of status in this way, although admittedly writing on different periods and with different points of emphasis. Herman Ooms argued in an earlier work there were essentially two categories of human distinction in

63 Ibid., 98.
64 Ibid., 207–208.
68 Ibid., 400–401.
69 Ibid., 466–467.
70 Minegishi, “Kegare Kannen To Buraku Sabletsu (Ge): Sono Fukubunsei To Kegare Kannen No Itchi”, 103.
75 Minegishi, “Kegare Kannen To Buraku Sabletsu (Ge): Sono Fukubunsei To Kegare Kannen No Itchi”, 98–99.
82 Ibid., 47.
83 Ibid., 43–44.
84 Ibid., 44–45.
85 Ibid., 48–49.
88 Mikiso Hane, Peasants, Rebels, and Outcastes: The Underside of Modern Japan, 1st ed. (New York: Pantheon, 1982), 142.
90 Ibid., 244.
96 Beifu, Japan: An Anthropological Introduction, 51.
98 Ooms, Tokugawa Village Practice: Class, Status, Power, Law, 338.
100 This was a point made first by Gotō Shinpei when he was governor of Tokyo. Shinpei Gotō, Edo No Jichisei (Tokyo: Nishōdō Shoten, 1922), 172.
104 Minegishi, Kinsei Hisabetsuminshī No Kenkyū, 44.
105 For the original table, see Takashi Tsukada, Kinsei Nihon Mibunsei No Kenkyū (Kobe: Hyōgo Buraku Mondai Kenkyūjo, 1987), 85.
108 I am referring here to the documents entitled ategaijō or chigyōjō. See, for example, Saitama-Ken Dōwa Kyōiku Kyōkai, Suzuki-Ke Monjo, vol. 1, 246.
109 This portrait of Dan Naiki is found, for example, on the cover of Sen’ichirō Shiomı’s Dansaemon To Sono Jidai: Semmin Bunka No Doramatsurugii (Tokyo: Hihyōsha, 1991). The original can be found in Bonsen Takahashi, Buraku Kairō To Dan Naoki No Kāgyō, vol. 1, Shakai Jigyō Kyōkyō Hōkoku (Tokyo: Chuō Shakai Jigyō Kyōkai Shikai Jigyō Kenkyūjo, 1936).


probably never really achieved. Explicit commands to carefully follow the procedures for crucifixion rooted in previous examples became a common order particularly during the early 19th century. 

Being part of an armed procession that acted as a retributive mechanism of justice enacting state vengeance on a variety of bodies (regardless of whether they were alive or dead) marked by different statuses also came with a degree of compensation. At the same time, however, the very state that required an outcaste hand for the execution of this harsh justice went to considerable lengths to dismiss the idea that outcastes were merely functioning as an extension of state power. The collection and transport of the prisoner, the transport and handing over of decorated weapons along with express stipulations about when and how these needed to be concealed or revealed, the selection of the execution site, and the preparations and payment for the crucifixion itself fell on the shoulders of local officials. The fact that Danzaemon officials retained hold of the bloodied spears that would eventually take the life of the convict for the duration of the crucifixion itself is an important reminder that eta and hinin retained the pollution incurred as a result of the taking of the life of the criminal while the shogunal weapons were there merely for magisterial display. Moreover, the tools used to parade the prisoner and guard his or her dead body, revealing the majesty of the shogunate at the execution site, were strictly on loan and had to be concealed outside of the crucifixion dates and returned to non-outcaste officials immediately after the two-night/three-day vigil period expired. Furthermore, the removal and burial of the corpse, the burning of the guard hut, and the disposal of the execution placard and cross fell upon the local outcastes engaged by Danzaemon to execute the punishment.

The use of violence against the state in the 1860s by *shishi* (“men of spirit”) began to further undermine the notion of the absoluteness of Tokugawa authority. Furthermore, with the arrival of Western powers and the emergence of extra-territoriality, there was a widespread recognition that Tokugawa power was rooted in a fundamental ignorance of justice and that punishment had to be adjusted downwards in the majority of cases to fit the crime and practices modified to fit a new economy of efficient enforcement techniques. Significantly, the punishment of crucifixion continued to be applied to cases of regicide and patri- cide until 1870, after which crucifixion was abandoned, signalling an important moment in the dismantling of the Edo outcaste order.

Notes

Danzaemon and crucifixion political economy

4 Tsukada has argued that crucifixion and other forms of capital punishment were relatively unknown outside Edo and executions on the whole were relatively few and far between. *Mibunron Kara Rekishigaku Wo Kangaru* (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2000), 43. Evidence surrounding settlements near barrier checkpoints suggests, however, that this may not necessarily have been the case. Just focusing on crucifixions at barrier points, documentary evidence indicates that these took place in Usui at least during the years 1727, 1733, 1780, 1797, 1799, 1801, 1810, 1820, 1835, and 1846. Tatsuo Kanai, *Nakasendo Usui Sekisho No Kenkyū*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Bunken Shuppan, 1997), 664.


6 Ibid. Unsurprisingly, the assumption was also in operation in China. One observer to a Chinese crucifixion in the 1860s also stated that it was his belief that its introduction to China probably came about after interactions with the Jesuits. James Jones, “On the Punishment of Crucifixion in China”, *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London* 3 (1865): 138–139.

7 Entries for *haritsuke* (磔) can be found for 1370.1.11 in the *Komonjo Furutekisuto* Dētābēsu, and for 1568.10.23 and 1573.9.21 in the *Dainihon Shiryō Sōgō Dētābēsu*, University of Tokyo (1984). Available online at Tokyo Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, wwwap.hi.u-tokyo.ac.jp/ships/db.html (accessed 6 July 2015).


13 For more on these concepts and how they relate to each other, see James Q. Whitman, *Harsh Justice: Criminal Punishment and the Widening Divide between America and Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 27.


16 Although outside of shogunate territory, Nelson remarks in his study of the 17th century Kanazawa daimyo that crucifixion was by far “the most common form of execution” in the second half of the 17th century, noting at least forty-five crucifixions in the domain between 1656 and 1690. David Nelson, “The Consolidation of Place and Punishment in Seventeenth-Century Japan: Kanazawa Prisons and Criminal Justice”, *Southeastern Review of Asian Studies* 30 (2008): 192, 194. Even with its early modern reinvention, the practice looked considerably different to its ancient Roman counterpart. Nelson offers the most succinct description of the quintessential Tokugawa crucifixion scene: “… the criminal was tied, spread-eagle fashion, to a stake with
horizontal beams attached for the arms and legs. Two spearmen then stabbed the body repeatedly, until sufficient pain had been afflicted. The spearmen then gave the victim the coup de grâce by simultaneously stabbing the criminal in either side or the neck, twisting their spears to ensure death.”


18 This proclivity was not restricted to Edo either. Olof Eriksson Willman noted in January 1652 on his trip to Edo the following: “In the Morning at Daybreak we passed 150 Crucified [persons] and 50 Heads which were placed on Iron Rods, who had wanted to betray the Castle Hoosacka [Osaka]; Everyone who has been put to death always has a Board nailed up by him upon which it is written what he has sinned.” Catharina Blomberg, *The Journal of Olof Eriksson Willman* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 37.


21 Ibid., 4–5.

22 Ibid., 247.

23 Ibid., 371.

24 Ibid., 372.


28 Tsukada, *Kinsei Nihon Mibunsei No Kenkyū*, 57.


30 Ibid., 33–35.


34 Cooper, *They Came to Japan: An Anthology of European Reports on Japan, 1543–1640*, 54.


Yamagata-Ken Keizaibu, ed., *Dewa Hyakushō Ikkiroku* (Yamagata: Yamagata-Ken Keizaibu, 1935), 67. I have yet to find any additional information on this group.

Ibid., 526–528.

John C. Hall, “Japanese Feudal Laws III: Tokugawa Legislation, Part IV, the Edict in 100 Sections”, *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan* 51, no. 5 (1913). The “100 Articles” does make direct reference to how to carry out a crucifixion as well as give some actual examples of crucifixion. The 103rd Article, for example, reads as follows: “Ordinarily the punishment of crucifixion is to be carried out either at Asakusa or at Shinagawa; but there may be cases in which the culprit should be sent for punishment to the place where he committed the crime. A placard recording the facts of the crime and the punishment is to be exhibited for three days near to the corpse, which is to be handed over (not to relatives but) to the Eta (pariah) attendants for inhumation. Whether or not the criminal is to be led around for public exposure previous to being crucified depends on the circumstances of the case, and similarly as regards the confiscation of his property” (791). Hall’s translation appears to be in error here, however, because the Japanese refers to “hininban” and not “eta”.


Tsukada, *Kinsei Nihon Minunsei No Kenkyū*, 189.


Ibid., 533.

Ibid., 567.

Ibid., 590.


Article 87 of the 100 Articles refers to the pickling of the bodies of diseased prisoners convicted of serious crimes which included but was not limited to transgressing a barrier. Hall, “Japanese Feudal Laws III: Tokugawa Legislation, Part IV, the Edict in 100 Sections”, 783–784. Kōjirō Arai, “Kinsei Usui Sekisho-Noke/Yamagoe Toganin to Gyōkei Yakunin”, in *Kinsei Kantō No Hisabetsu Buraku*, ed., Ryōsuke Ishii (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1978), 429.


Tsukada, drawing on 19th century documentation, notes that the small group head (kokumigashira) of eta status responsible for the punishment of criminals in Uraga was Kyubē, the hinin hut leader Gobei, and the eta and hinin under the local eta chief Taroemon in Furusawa Village, Aikō County. Tsukada, *Kinsei Nihon Minunsei No Kenkyū*, 189.


Nakao, *Danzaemon Kankei Shiryōshū: Kyūbakufu Hikitsugishō*, vol. 1, 75–76.

For more on this topic, see Tsukada, *Kinsei Nihon Minunsei No Kenkyū*, 187–190.
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63 Kajigaya Village, Sagami Province, the village noted in the transcription of this document, is not listed in the early modern land tenure database *Kyūdaka Kyūryō Torishirabechō Dētābēsu*, National Museum of Japanese History. The only entry that comes close to matching this village name is Kajiya Kaidō village, located in Musashi Province and about 50 kilometres away from the crucifixion site.


66 Quoted in Hōseishi Gakkai, ed., *Tokugawa Kinreikō: Zenshū Dai Yon*, vol. 10 (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1961), 276–277. This section is originally from the *Keibatsu Daidōroku*. This text notes that the cleanup and the spearing itself was the work of six hinin underlings, while the additional labourers used was the same number as for burnings at the stake. It also mentions that the spears for the actual crucifixion were supplied by Danzaemon.


70 For a brief discussion of this history and related documents, see Danieru Botsman and Waka Hirokawa, “Shirō Sanpo: Ichirō Daigaku Shozō No Yamada Asaemon Kyūzō Monjo”, *Nihon Rekishi*, no. 818 (2016).


76 Ibid., 13.
In this sense, the famine and its associated problems can perhaps be said to have served in some respects to challenge the hegemony of commonplace images of official status distinctions; and the new methods designed to combat these problems led to important ways of envisaging the socio-political order in more humanistic terms. Rephrased in more biopolitical language, through this crisis, the Tokugawa shogunate, albeit momentarily, had begun to see the population more in terms of human life containing able-bodied subjects in need of proper numeration and mobilization. At the same time, however, attempts to think of ways out of the problem caused by the crisis and the achievement of a firmer degree of social stability also led to a greater conservative orthodoxy in thinking about the status system, one which resulted both in greater powers for the outcaste groups as well as a growing discriminatory discourse about their place in late Tokugawa society. Impoverished urban immigrants were still being subjected to outcaste surveillance and governance, and status-based relief policies were adopted again after the harsher effects of the famine. Humanity remained an outer garment covering status.

Later records reveal that the last Danzaemon, Chikayasu, also faced a legal challenge from the hinin leader Kuruma Zenshichi. The oral historical record of this account suggests Zenshichi came out very strongly, declaring a desire for independence in a world that was “growing more and more open”. Chikayasu’s defence of his official duty of policing the poor can perhaps be described as lukewarm at best, declaring that he would either retain his position over the hinin community, or happily return his powers to the shogunate if they wished to accede to Zenshichi’s demands. While on the one hand an appeal to this rhetoric was still a calculated attempt to retain his powers because the shogunate was well aware that it could not simply assume direct control over Edo’s hinin, the incident nonetheless also revealed the relative weakness of the Edo outcaste order. Particularly when compared to other caste formations across the Asian region, the organizational structure of the Edo outcaste order contained a relational component that was susceptible to reformulation through contractual logic.

Notes


2 For important work on the status system and the management of poverty during the earlier Tenmei famine, see Maren Ehlers, *Give and Take: Poverty and the Status Order in Early Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2018), Chapter 5.


7 Ibid., 190.
9 Ibid.
14 Ibid., 9–10.
15 Ibid., 11–12.
23 Timothy D. Amos, “Portrait of a Tokugawa Outcaste Village”, *East Asian History* 32/33 (June 2006/December 2007): 98. The incident described here can be found in more detail in this article.
26 Ibid., 687–688.
27 Ibid., 160–162.
28 Ibid., 6.


For a reference to the burning down of Danzaemon’s mansion, see Gunma Burakuken Tomo Chiku Kinseishi Kakushûkai, ed., Shimotsuke-No-Kuni Tarôbê Monjo (Ota: Gunma Burakuken Tomo Chiku Kinseishi Kakushûkai, 1987), 9–12.


Ibid., 274.

Ibid., 317.

Ibid., 413–414.

Ibid., 364–366.


Ibid., 229–232.

Ibid., 1: 426–430.


Tsukada, Kinsei Nihon Mibunsei No Kenkyû, 7.


social marginalization. Although this chapter has focused on Edo, there is ample evidence to demonstrate that rural communities also faced similar kinds of marginalizing processes, and that the pathways to modernity for members of the Edo outcaste order were uneven and disparate. Although there is insufficient space to give full treatment to the problem here, modern discourses of difference, in relation to both the external and internal work of construction that transpired to erect ideas of modern Japanese nationality and citizenship, also greatly impacted the spatial and temporal axes of outcaste life, with the latter axis coming to dominate the former in the modern period. Concepts such as race and ethnicity, moreover, built on the back of earlier indigenous practices of racialization, were imported and developed to explain a difference that was imagined to exist geographically between nations and societies, and these ideas then combined with concepts such as civilization that increasingly came to frame difference in terms of historical backwardness.

Early Meiji government policies, focused on strengthening the military, building up industry, and removing potential eyesores that would denigrate the nation in the eyes of foreign observers, determined that both Shinchō and its residents were urban sites to be “normalized”. Shinchō’s leadership stratum in important ways spoke the same language and indeed shared many of the same aspirations as early Meiji leaders, and they generally weathered the transition from feudal to capitalist state well, although some more successfully than others. Through their commercial endeavours, other settlement residents also began to enjoy economic benefits and a slightly enhanced status within the wider Asakusa area, particularly as older notions of pollution began to recede into the past. Shinchō’s rapid transformation was at an important level facilitated by the development and permeation of capitalism, although the benefits of the economic transformations certainly cannot be said to have trickled through to the lowest strata of the neighbourhood. Yet at an important level, capital also worked to alienate the outcaste underclasses as society responded to these changes with a compounded form of stigmatization, which drew on both old and new discriminatory logics.

Notes


8 Takashi Tsukada, Kinsei Mibunsei Shakai No Torakata: Yamakawa Shuppansha Kôkô Nihonshi Kyokasho Wo Tôshite (Kyoto: Buraku Mondai Kenkyûjo, 2010), 10.


11 I wish to thank Takeshi Moriyama for pointing this out to me in a highly thought-provoking email sent some years back.


20 Ibid.


22 Edo Shakai To Danzaemon (Osaka: Kairô Shuppansha, 1992), 170–171.


24 Edo Shakai To Danzaemon, 168.


26 Ibid., 442–443.


29 Nakao, Edo Shakai To Danzaemon, 163–166.


32 Gerald Groemer, Street Performers and Society in Urban Japan, 1600–1900: The Beggar’s Gift (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016), 94.


36 Edo Shakai To Danzaemon, 172–173.
Urban outcaste space in Edo/Tokyo


41 Ibid., 47; Nakao, *Edo Shakai To Danzaemon*, 180–181.


43 Ibid., 258–259.

44 Ibid., 259–261.

45 Ibid., 265–266.


50 *Edo Shakai To Danzaemon*, 188–197.


58 Ibid.


61 *Asakusa Kameoka-Chō Zenkaku Zumen*.

62 Buraku Kahiō Kenkyūjo, *Shiryōshū Meiji Shokki Hisabetsu Buraku*, 467; *Asakusa Kuchō E Kameoka-Chō Chizu No Gi Kaitō*.


permitted to retain their occupations under his rule, variously labelled as “impure industries” (sengyō) and “occupation” (shokugyō). And it was, of course, “occupation” (shokugyō) that found its way into the so-called Emancipation Edict of 1871, mirroring the language of the last Danzaemon’s 1870 request.

Notes

4 Michael Thomas Abele, “Peasants, Skinners, and Dead Cattle: The Transformation of Rural Society in Western Japan, 1600–1890” (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2018), particularly Chapter 5.
6 Olivier Ansart (University of Sydney) raised the issue of privileges and rights with me at a conference in Singapore in September 2018 and then subsequently discussed the issue again with me over Skype in January 2019.
7 Shōji Nobi, Kawa No Rekishi To Minzoku (Osaka: Kaihō Shuppansha, 2009), 30–31.
10 Nobi, Kawa No Rekishi to Minzoku, 32–33.
11 Ibid., 33–39.
14 Ibid., 256.
15 Ibid., 263.
17 Ibid., 149.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid., 148.
20 One record from an eta community in northern Kantō from late Tokugawa/early Meiji does not list even one bovine skin; apparently the community dealt exclusively with horse hides. Lower Wana and Sano, two chōri (eta) villages for which records also exist, indicate that horse skins were the predominant ones acquired in their communities as well. Shūichi Sandō and Tetsuo Ōkuma, “Kita Kantō Ni Okeru Hikaku Wo Chushin to Suru Ichinakagai Shōnin No Katsudō Ni Tsuite: Bakumatsu/Meiji Shoki No Yorozuchō No Bunseki Kara”, in Higashi Nihon No Kinsei Buraku No Seigyo To Yakuwari, ed. Higashi Nihon Buraku Kaihō Kenkyūjo (Tokyo: Akashi Shoten, 1994), 221.
18 Outcaste status and the leather monopoly


22 Ibid., 101–105.

23 Medieval Buddhism had also brought with it particular religious understandings of horses. Hayagrīva, for example, a cult centring on a tutelary deity who was half-man and half-horse, developed in Japan. Damien Kcown, “Hayagrīva”, in *A Dictionary of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 106.


26 For a relatively recent discussion see, for example, Masao Arimoto, *Kinsei Hisabetsumin No Higashi To Nishi* (Osaka: Seibundo Shuppan, 2009), 65. For the first point, Minegishi, *Kinsei Hisabetsuminshi No Kenkyū*, 20–22.


28 Yokoyama, *Edo Tokyo No Meiji Ishin*, 141–142. Arimoto, *Kinsei Hisabetsumin No Higashi to Nishi*, 65. Arimoto, pointing to an example from Sāgami Province at the end of the 18th century, demonstrates that the bridle tax also came to be paid in cash by regional chōri leaders to Danzaemon during the 18th century as well.

29 *Kinsei Hisabetsumin No Higashi to Nishi*, 70.


33 Sec, for example, the reference in Danzaemon’s response to a request for information from the Edo City Magistrate concerning animal carcass rights. Quoted in Minegishi, *Kinsei Hisabetsuminshi No Kenkyū*, 125.


36 Ibid., 161–162.

37 For these examples see ibid., 162–163.


41 Sandō and Ōkuma, “Kita Kantō Ni Okeru Hikaku Wo Chūshin To Suru Ichinakaigai Shōnin No Katsudō Ni Tsuite: Bakumatsu/Meiiji Shoki No Yorozuchō No Bunseki Kara”, 231–232. Sandō and Ōkuma note that a late 18th century regional record in Sano prohibiting the sale of bamboo sheaths for sandal production emphasized the need to eradicate the practice of selling to “other [chōri] groups” (takumi).


Outcaste status and the leather monopoly

49 Arimoto, *Kinsei Hisabetsumin No Higashi To Nishi*, 73, 156.
55 Quoted in Arimoto, *Kinsei Hisabetsumin No Higashi To Nishi*, 68.
62 Ibid.
63 Toriyama, “Kanagawa”, 37.
69 Quoted in Minegishi, “Danzaemon Yakusho No Keizai Shihai To Sono Dōyō”, 75.
Danzaemon and the chōri who lived under his rule can and should be placed within a larger history of outcastes who endured status-based rule within a caste society. They are linked to India’s Dalits, as well as other groups throughout Asia and beyond, not only conceptually, but also through the social tasks and official duties they performed, the privileges they secured, the abuses they endured, and the achievements they celebrated within a larger historical division of labour that was experienced differently according to region and period. These groups were linked in many ways, whether through an emerging international trade of skins or through similarities generated by particularities in caste dynamics. This is more than sufficient ground to inspire renewed efforts to further develop transregional studies and activism among people who have survived this kind of history and who are now struggling to find a more unified path forward in their fight for liberation from the legacies of caste and the tyranny of its remaining bonds.

Notes


2 The work of three scholars in particular can be singled out here. Yokoyama Yuriko has perhaps done more than any other scholar to shed light on the ways in which the Edo outcaste order was dismantled in light of Meiji reforms. Daniel Botsman’s work also continues to illuminate the processes surrounding and complexities underpinning various 19th century transformations that greatly impacted the lives of Japan’s former outcaste communities. The recent work by John Porter has also contributed much to our understanding of the complex continuities and discontinuities that can be witnessed in the ways old and new organizational logics worked to give shape to Edo-based eta and hinin communities in the early years of the Meiji period. See, for example: Yuriko Yokoyama, Edo Tokyo No Meiji Ishin; Meiji Ishin To Kinsei Mibunsei No Kaitai (Tokyo: Yamakawa Shuppankai, 2005); Daniel Botsman, “Flowery Tales: Ōe Taku, Köbe and the Making of Meiji Japan’s ‘Emancipation Moment’”, in Values, Identity, and Equality in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Japan, ed. Peter Nosco, James E. Ketelaar, and Yasunori Kojima (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 262–289; Jon Pōtā, “Kinsei Mibunsei Kaitaiki Ni Okeru Kachiku Densenbyō To Heiju Shori”, Buraku Mondai Kenkyū 229 (2019): 1–23.


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