

The Meirinkan School Temple in Hagi Domain: Ritual Forms and their Purpose in Confucian Education in Eighteenth Century Japan

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Introduction

This study considers certain aspects of the Confucius temple inside the Meirinkan 明倫館 school in Hagi 萩 (or Chōshū 長州) domain. It follows on from a previous study of the Confucius temple in Taku sub-domain (Taku yū 多久邑) in Saga, which opened in 1708, eleven years before its Meirinkan equivalent.⁽¹⁾ The proximity in time aside, there are striking differences between the two. These differences illustrate a shift away from how Confucian ritual forms were expressed in the seventeenth century, when the emphasis tended to be on visible, material display, and toward a pattern more typical of the eighteenth century, when the ritual forms, now increasingly familiar and conventional, were integrated into the wider project of education and moral transformation. This is of course something of a generalization, but understanding the function of the Confucius temple from such a perspective helps explain its persistence as an institution through eighteenth and early nineteenth century Japan. This can be viewed as an example of transculturation, which helps explain the implementation in Japan of a cultural form based on a model from the very different environment

1 Robert Chard, "Visual Power and Moral Influence: The Taku Confucius Temple and its Chinese Counterparts," *Tōyō Bunka Kenkyūjo Kiyō* 170 (December 2016), pp. 450–422 (1–29). See also Zenan Shu, "Interpreting the Establishment of the Confucius Temple and School at Taku in Saga Domain," *Chiba Shōdai Kiyō* 千葉商大紀要 53.1 (2015), pp. 7–21.

of China. The specific example examined in this study is intended to contribute to the wider question of how to understand Confucianism in East Asia as a culture, one capable of being reproduced in multiple societies, introduced through material vectors such as rituals, temples, clothing, schools, and texts.

Direct comparison of the Taku and Hagi temples is hampered by significant differences between the two cases. Taku was a small and isolated sub-domain of Saga, and its ruler Taku Shigefumi 多久 茂文 (1669–1711; r. 1686–1711), not subject to the *sankin kōtai* system, never went to Edo, despite being a member of the Nabeshima 鍋島 family, the natural son of Nabeshima Mitsushige 光茂 (1632–1700, r. 1657–1700), second lord of Saga. Hagi was a major *tozama* domain of 369,000 *koku*, ruled by the Mōri 毛利 family, who prided themselves as being one branch of the aristocratic Ōe 大江 family, and claimed a long history of achievement at both the imperial court and in the Kamakura Bakufu administration. Their recent power derived from the Sengoku warlord Mōri Motonari 元就 (1497–1571), who in the sixteenth century established control over most of the Chūgoku region. Mōri Yoshimoto 吉元 (1677–1731, r. 1707–1731), the fifth lord of Hagi who founded the Meirinkan school, spent much of his childhood in Edo; he and his father personally attended Tsunayoshi's lectures on Confucian texts, were familiar with the Yushima Seidō temple and school, and interacted with the head of the school, Hayashi Hōkō 林 鳳岡 (or Nobuatsu 信篤, 1644–1732). In particular, the Meirinkan as a school shows the direct influence of the educational policies of the Shōgun Yoshimune, who had assumed power in 1716, not long before the Hagi school was founded.

Another comparative issue between Taku and Hagi is the very different nature of the documentary record on the founding of the two temples. In the case of Taku, we have the personal voice of Shigefumi himself, who composed a document describing the effect he hoped his temple would inspire in the people who viewed it.⁽²⁾ In the case of Hagi, there is a collection of official records related to the founding of the school, but in this study we will concentrate on

2 See Chard and Shu cited in the previous note for more detailed descriptions of this document.

documents by Yamagata Shūnan 山県 周南 (1687–1752), a prominent Confucian and gifted man of letters who was closely involved in the founding of the Meirinkan, and who in 1737 became its second head. Some of these writings were composed when the school opened in 1719, others were more than two decades later. What these sources do not give is any direct window on what Yoshimoto himself was thinking, which leaves us no option but to extrapolate as best we can on the motivations for founding the school and temple on the basis of external sources and events.

Despite these drawbacks, some echoes of discourse surrounding the Meirinkan temple can be detected in Yamagata Shūnan's *kanbun* writings on it, from which we can get a sense of what the Confucians under Yoshimoto were hoping to achieve, which in turn sheds light on how, and why, Confucian ritual forms were being implemented in so many of the domain schools founded in the eighteenth century.

Background of the Meirinkan

The Meirinkan, founded by Yoshimoto in 1718–1719, is one of the more prominent domain schools of the Edo period. Its founding date makes it relatively early among the approximately 250 domain schools of the period; one source lists thirteen domain schools clearly founded before it, one more in the same year, and three others in the same Kyōhō 享保 reign period (1716–1736).⁽³⁾ The

3 Based on a tabulation of the listings in Ōishi Manabu 大石 学 comp., *Kinsei hansei hankō daijiten* 近世藩制・藩校大事典 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2006), pp. 968–992. A different figure of 26 schools before the Seitoku 正徳 period (1711–1716) out of a total of 235 is given in Sudō Toshio 須藤 敏夫, *Kinsei Nihon Sekiten no kenkyū* 近世日本積奠の研究 (Kyōto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2001), pp. 214–15. The discrepancies may derive in part from different understandings of what constituted an official domain school.

Meirinkan is also noted for its large size, 3102 square metres.⁽⁴⁾ The school has been studied from various perspectives, for example as part of the local history of the region, its place in the history of education in early modern Japan, and its significance in Japanese intellectual history.⁽⁵⁾ The Sekisai ceremony to Confucius in the Meirinkan temple has been studied in detail by Sudō Toshio.⁽⁶⁾ What has not been considered in so much detail is the Confucius temple itself, why it was there, and what function its builders intended it to fulfil. This is the question to be addressed in this article, using the contrasts with the Taku temple as a basis of comparison, and investigating the discourse associated with the Meirinkan temple as reflected in Yamagata Shūnan's *kanbun* documents.

The circumstances leading up to the actual founding of the school and temple have been covered in considerable detail elsewhere. Here we will summarize a few points of particular relevance to the current study.

First is the legacy of Confucian learning in the Mōri family, which is frequently claimed in the documents related to the Meirinkan founding. The Mōri family was descended from one branch of the Ōe 大江 family, which they

4 Hagishi shi Hensan Inkaï 萩市史編纂委員会, *Hagishi shi* 萩市史 vol. 1 (Hagi: Hagishi, 1983), p. 422.

5 For local history, see for example *Hagishishi* vol. 1 and Ogawa Kuniharu 小川 國治, "Kyōhōki Chōshū-han no bunkyō to hankō Meirinkan: Meirinkan sōsetsu no saihyōka ni tsuite 享保期長州藩の文教政策と藩校明倫館——明倫館創設の再評価について," *Nihon rekishi* 1997:6 (1997), pp. 1–16. For the history of education, see Ogawa Kuniharu 小川 國治 and Ogawa Ayako 小川 亜弥子, *Yamaguchiken no kyōikushi* 山口県 県の教育史 (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2000). For an example of intellectual history, specifically the influence of Ogyū Sorai on his pupil Yamagata Shūnan, see Ushimi Masahiro 牛見 真博, *Chōshūhan kyōiku no genryū: Sorai gakusha Yamagata Shūnan to hankō Meirinkan* 長州藩教育の源流: 徂徠学者・山県周南と藩校明倫館 (Hiroshima: Keisuisha, 2013).

6 Sudō, *Kinsei Nihon Sekiten no kenkyū*, pp. 214–34. This study provides much useful historical background, and good technical detail on the Sekisai ceremony and participants, but sometimes gives insufficiently precise citations of primary sources.

traced back to the early Heian court official, Confucian scholar, and poet Ōe no Otondo 大江音人 (811–877). This ancestry is alluded to in various writings related to Mōri family members, placing the family in what was often described as a golden age when Confucianism and Confucian scholars thrived in Japan no less than they did in China, before vanishing completely in the disorder of the Sengoku period.⁽⁷⁾ As will be described below, Yoshimoto identifies himself as “Ōe Yoshimoto” in the invocation used in the first Sekisai ceremony to Confucius at the Meirinkan temple in 1719, which was composed by Yamagata Shūnan in *kanbun*.⁽⁸⁾ Another document by Shūnan, also analyzed below, makes the claim that Mōri rulers since the sixteenth-century warlord Motonari studied with Confucian teachers.⁽⁹⁾ More verifiable records of Confucian scholars in Hagi begin with the appointment in 1679 of the noted *kanshi* poet and Confucian Yamada Genkin 山田 原欽 (1666–1693) by the second Hagi lord Mōri Tsunahiro 毛利 綱広 (1639–1689, r. 1651–1682) to teach his son and heir, the future third lord of Hagi, Yoshinari 吉就 (1668–1694, r. 1682–1694). Genkin took his own life at the age of 28 in 1693 in protest at Yoshinari’s insistence on constructing an Ōbaku Buddhist temple, which Genkin adamantly opposed. Before then, the Hagi domain Confucian Ogura Shōsai 小倉 尚斎 (1677–1737), the first head of the Meirinkan school, had studied with Genkin.⁽¹⁰⁾ Other prominent Confucians

7 For the Mōri ancestor Ōe no Otondo see Ogawa, “Kyōhōki Chōshū-han no bunkyō to hankō Meirinkan,” p. 1. See also Hayashi Hōkō’s mention of him in *Hōkō Hayashi sensei zenshū* 鳳岡林先生全集, ed. Tokuda Takeshi 徳田 武 (Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 2013) vol. 3, 88/341. The decline of Confucianism in the Sengoku period is described by Taku Shigefumi, see Chard, “Visual Power and Moral Influence,” pp. 437–6.

8 See the two invocation texts in Yamaguchiken 山口県 comp., *Yamaguchiken shi: shiryō hen (kinsei 5)* 山口県史: 史料編 近世 5 (Yamaguchi: Yamaguchiken, 2010), pp. 197–8. These will be examined in greater detail below.

9 “Nagato no kuni Meirinkan ki 長門國明倫館記,” *Yamaguchiken shi: shiryō hen*, p. 169.

10 See the detailed biography and chronology of Genkin in Watanabe Kenji 渡辺 憲司, *Kinsei daimyō bungeiken kenkyū* 近世大名文芸圏研究 (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 1997), pp.

in Hagi at this time and after were Yamagata Ryōsai 山県 良斎 (1648–1728), who had gone with Ogura Shōsai to study in Kyoto with Itō Tan'an 伊藤 坦庵 (1623–1708) and then in Edo with Hayashi Hōkō before being appointed as domain scholars in Hagi by the fourth lord Yoshihiro. After Yoshimoto succeeded Yoshihiro as the fifth lord of Hagi in 1707, he continued Shōsai and Ryōsai's appointments, and also brought in the latter's son Yamagata Shūnan.⁽¹¹⁾

Individual rulers of Hagi and other Mōri domains are routinely described as “studious” (*tokugaku* 篤学, or *kōgaku* 好学), and while some of them, including Yoshimoto, are explicitly recorded as having studied Confucian texts, in many cases it is difficult to know how much credence to give to this, in particular the depth of their Confucian learning. Unlike Shigefumi of Taku, whose written *kanbun* suggests a high level of Chinese learning, we do not have similar documents from Yoshimoto and his predecessors. Both Tsunamoto and Yoshimoto were keen adherents of Ōbaku Zen Buddhism, though of course this would not have been incompatible with the study of Confucianism.

Yoshimoto was adopted in to succeed Yoshihiro from the Mōri branch domain of Chōfu 長府, where we also find a history of Confucian learning. Yoshimoto's natural father was Mōri Tsunamoto 綱元 (1651–1709, r. 1653–1709), the third lord of the domain; his natural mother was Fusahime 房姫, fourth daughter of Ikeda Mitsumasa 池田 光正, first lord of Okayama 岡山 (1609–1682, r. 1632–1672), who was known for his interest in Confucianism. Tsunamoto, who became ruler at the age of two, founded a domain school in Chōfu in 1665, the Keikojo 稽古所, though it is not entirely clear what was taught there, nor does there seem to be any account of his own Confucian learning.⁽¹²⁾ He was most

254–91.

11 See Sudō, *Kinsei Nihon Sekiten no kenkyū*, pp. 216–17.

12 This school is listed in Ōishi Manabu comp., *Kinsei hansei hankō daijiten*, p. 987, with no information on what was taught there. 'Keikojo' was also a general designation applied to specialist teaching venues for martial and cultural arts of all sorts, including private ones.

noted as a highly accomplished *waka* poet,⁽¹³⁾ and this was the basis for a long friendship with Hayashi Hōkō, though in fact the Chōfu Mōri rulers' relationship with the Hayashis went back two generations to the first ruler Hidemoto 秀元 (1597–1650, r. 1600–1650) and Hayashi Razan 林 羅山 (1583–1657), as will be described in more detail below. From an early age Tsunamoto sent New Year gifts of items such as food and locally-produced paper to Hōkō's father Gahō 鶯峰 (1618–1688), and in 1665 he lent Gahō an unusual version of the *Heike monogatari* from his domain collection that Gahō had long wanted to see.⁽¹⁴⁾ A fair number of Hōkō's poems are addressed to Tsunamoto, composed during sessions where the two drank wine and exchanged poems. These are preserved in Hōkō's collected works, sometimes with prefaces that describe how they composed matching poems, the one using *waka*, the other *kanshi*. Hōkō makes reference to Tsunamoto's distinguished Ōe ancestry.⁽¹⁵⁾ He also has three poems requested of him by Yoshimoto, two of which are datable to 1720.⁽¹⁶⁾

Yoshimoto would have been exposed to his father's literary attainments, and

13 A highly detailed account of Tsunamoto's life and accomplishments is included in Watanabe Kenji, *Kinsei daiemyō bungeiken kenkyū*, pp. 183–201.

14 Gahō records these in his diary, the *Kokushikan nichiroku* 国史館日録, in Yamamoto Takeo 山本 武夫 ed. and comp., *Kokushikan nichiroku* (Tokyo: Zokugunsho Ruijū Kanseikai 続群書類従完成会, 1997–2005), for example under the year 1665, vol. 1, p. 103 (locally-produced paper), p. 104 (books), p. 179 (loan of the *Heike*), p. 188 (local products); in 1667, vol. 2, p. 251 (greetings); in 1668, vol. 3, p. 237 (New Year gifts); in 1670, vol. 4, p. 270 (one crane, presumably live). Tsunamoto's name and those of other Mōri family members are elsewhere mentioned frequently in passing.

15 See for example *Hōkō Hayashi sensei zenshū* vol. 2, 56/315, 7 poems exchanged with Chūtaifu Ōe kun 中大夫大江君 (Tsunamoto); 56/317 set of 5 with Mōri Kainokami 毛利甲斐守 (Tsunamoto); vol. 3, 59/20, 60/32, 42, farewell poems addressed to Toyoura Shūi Minamoto kun 豊浦拾遺源君 (Tsunamoto); vol. 3, 75/202 a New Year poem with preface dated 1693 to Toyoura Shūi Mōri Tsunamoto kun 豊浦拾遺毛利綱元君, with reference to both Tsunamoto's personal qualities and his distinguished ancestry.

16 *Hōkō Hayashi sensei zenshū* vol. 3, 67/121, 68/126, 128.

likely also his social interactions in Edo. He would likely also have received Confucian teaching, and seems to have accompanied his father to attend at least one of Tsunayoshi's lectures.⁽¹⁷⁾ During the year before the Meirinkan was built, Yoshimoto and his heir Munehiro 宗広 (1717–1751, 1731–1751) studied Confucian and other Chinese texts with Yamagata Shūnan, who kept a record of what they studied.⁽¹⁸⁾ How influenced personally Yoshimoto was by Confucianism is difficult to judge. At the very least a reputation for studiousness in Confucian texts was likely to have been a part of the narrative about him at the time, and we do know that he promoted his domain Confucians to higher rank and assigned them a major role in the planning and operation of the Meirinkan.

Another important aspect of the background to the Meirinkan founding was the general poor state of the domain finances and frequent social unrest, which the school was intended to mitigate by training capable officials and instilling a sense of moral values among officials and the wider population. The general state of unrest has been well covered in Japanese scholarship, so there is no need to go into much detail here, except to note that there was a sense of urgency on the part of Yoshimoto and his high officials about the school foundation which underlies the scale of the project, and the speed with which it was completed.⁽¹⁹⁾ This is a point of comparison with Shigefumi in Taku, who likewise faced unrest and disorder; he hoped that his Confucius temple would spur people to transform themselves morally, and thus obviate the need for legal enforcement by the authorities.⁽²⁰⁾

In both the case of Taku and Hagi, the influence of Bakufu education policy

17 This was when Tsunayoshi lectured on the Zhongyong on 1693/2/23; Watanabe Kenji, *Kinsei daimyō bungeiken kenkyū*, p. 188.

18 Yamagata Shūnan, *Jikō chūki* 侍講注記 (autograph ms. in the Waseda University Library, n.d.).

19 See especially Ogawa, “Kyōhōki Chōshū-han no bunkyō to hankō Meirinkan,” which takes as focus the founding of the Meirinkan within the context of the domain administration.

20 Chard, “Visual Power and Moral Influence,” pp. 440–35.

is evident, and directly referenced in the related documents. Tsunayoshi's promotion of 'civil' or 'literary' education (*bunkyo* 文教) is well known, and both the Taku and Hagi records praise him highly for playing a major role in the restoration of Confucianism and Confucian schools in Japan, and highlight the Yushima school and temple in particular as a model and inspiration for the domains. In the case of Hagi, Yoshimune's influence is also conspicuous. He is known for a re-emphasis on martial training and values, but he also promoted civil and literary education, as is evident in the Bakufu's publication of the *Rikuyu engi taii* 六諭衍義大意, which promoted Confucian values.⁽²¹⁾ And, where Tsunayoshi had worked to promote Confucian learning among high officials and *daimyō* to transform governance, Yoshimune decreed in 1717 that education should be extended to all classes in society, from the Yushima Seidō school on down.⁽²²⁾ The same policies were enacted in the Meirinkan school, which combined Confucian and other literary learning with all forms of martial training (such as archery, sword, spear, hand-to-hand fighting, and horsemanship) in one location, and allowed all classes of society to study there.⁽²³⁾

In Taku, the opening of the Confucius temple came at the end of a long construction project lasting at least six years, consuming one-third of the sub-domain's tax revenues, and reportedly involving 9222 workmen.⁽²⁴⁾ In Hagi, the formal edict for the construction of the 3201-square-metre multi-building compound was issued during the eighth month of 1718, and the job completed on 1718/12/22. Plans for the school must have been in train prior to 1718. One

21 Tsuji Tatsuya 辻 達也, *Tokugawa Yoshimune* 徳川吉宗 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1958), p. 167.

22 The edict in question is recorded in the *Tokugawa jikki* 徳川実紀 vol. 5, Narushima Motonao 成島 司直 et al. comp. (Tokyo: Keizai Zasshisha, 1904), p. 540. See also the discussion in Tsuji, *Tokugawa Yoshimune*, p. 167.

23 Ogawa Kuniharu and Ogawa Ayako, *Yamaguchiken no kyōikushi*, p. 74.

24 Chard, "Visual Power and Moral Influence," p. 441, citing Takushi Kyōiku Inkaikai 多
久市教育委員会 comp., *Jūyō bunkazai Taku seibyō* 重要文化財多久聖廟 (Taku: Taku
Shichō Yoshitsugi Masami 多久市長吉次正美, 1983), pp. 39 and 51.

indication of this is a request in 1716 sent through the Hagi Confucian Ogura Shōsai to Hayashi Hōkō to write the honorific titles for Confucius and the four correlates on wooden spirit tablets for the Meirinkan temple.⁽²⁵⁾ Still, the scale and speed of the project from conception to completion was remarkable, which can be seen as a reflection of the school's importance in the eyes of Yoshimoto and the other domain authorities, and their determination to build it. In Taku, great effort was expended on the design of the temple building, and on obtaining a fine bronze statue image of Confucius installed within it, in an attempt to replicate what they thought were "Chinese" forms, and to make the temple as impressive as possible.⁽²⁶⁾ In Hagi, the temple was named the Taiseiden 大聖殿, like the Yushima temple, and may have been designed along similar lines. At the very least, the Hagi Confucians seem not to have had any unusual difficulty in formulating the design, which suggests that they had a clear idea of what they wanted. The use of wooden spirit tablets was perfectly legitimate, but would not have been as impressive as the bronze statues of the Taku shrine, and the Yushima Seidō.⁽²⁷⁾

The Meirinkan was designed to give equal weight to literary and martial training, and many non-Confucian arts (such as medicine, painting, Nō, Kyōgen, Japanese poetry) and texts (military strategy) were taught there.⁽²⁸⁾ Nevertheless, it is clear that Confucianism had pride of place as the tradition which defined what a school should be. A modern architectural study of Edo-

25 See Ogawa, "Kyōhōki Chōshū-han no bunkyō to hankō Meirinkan," p. 3. Shōsai asked permission to return to Hagi because both he and his mother became ill, and the task was not completed on time.

26 Despite all their efforts, modern architects say that the building remains essentially Japanese in design and construction. Chard, "Visual Power and Moral Influence," p. 440, and *Jūyō bunkazai Taku seibyō*, p. 39.

27 The original wooden tablets survive, held in the elementary school which now stands on the Meirinkan site. See the illustration at: <http://kineko.matrix.jp/hagi/bokushu.html>, last accessed 16 Sept 2017.

28 Ogawa, "Kyōhōki Chōshū-han no bunkyō to hankō Meirinkan," p. 1.

period domain schools places the Hagi Meirinkan in a category which situates the Confucius temple in the centre, in contrast to schools which accorded it less prominence, or which did not have one at all.⁽²⁹⁾ It was Confucian scholars, in particular Ogura Shōsai and Yamagata Shūnan, who played leading roles in designing the school and temple, and in formulating the regime of teaching and training that was organized there. Shōsai was appointed the first head of the school, and was given considerable authority, and funding, to fulfil this responsibility. Shūnan, who was to become the second school head in 1737 when Shōsai died, undertook much of the technical research needed for the temple and the Sekisai sacrifices to Confucius. Though younger than Shōsai and the others, he was the one who composed the *kanbun* invocations and instructions for the Sekisai. He had been a student of Ogyū Sorai, and it is tempting to attribute his proficiency in composing *kanbun* to Sorai's emphasis on reading Chinese texts directly, rather than according to the traditional Japanese *kundoku* method. Sorai's teachings eventually came to be incorporated into the teaching at the Meirinkan, though modern scholars have differing views as to when this occurred.⁽³⁰⁾

The remainder of this study will focus on Shūnan's documents relating to the founding of the Meirinkan, in the hope of capturing some of the Confucian-oriented discourse circulating at the time. Though this provides much less of a personal voice than Shigefumi's explanation of why he founded the Taku temple, when we take the Hagi documents in connection with those from Taku, we gain

29 Kido Hisashi 城戸 久 and Takahashi Hiroyuki 高橋 宏之, *Hankōikō: Edo jidai no gakkō kenchiku to kyōiku* 藩校遺構: 江戸時代の学校建築と教育 (Tokyo: Sagami Shobō, 1975), p. 14.

30 Ogawa, "Kyōhōki Chōshū-han no bunkyō to hankō Meirinkan," pp. 12–14. For a different view, that Sorai's teachings were incorporated right from the founding of the school, see Ushimi Masahiro, *Chōshūhan kyōiku no genryū*, and Ushimi, "Yamagata Shūnan no kyōikuron ni okeru Ogyū Sorai no eikyō: 'tatsuzai seitoku' go oyobi 'tami no fubo' go o chūshin ni 山県周南の教育論における荻生徂徠の影響: 「達材成徳」語および「民の父母」語を中心に," *Ajia no rekishi to bunka* 9 (2005), pp. 9–20.

insights on the different way the temple was thought to function there, and on the changing nature of the Confucius temple in the eighteenth century.

Yamagata Shūnan's documents

We will begin by considering the two invocation documents read out by Yoshimoto at the inaugural Sekisai sacrifice in the Meirinkan temple on 1719/2/19, the “Meirinkan rakusei sai Sensei kōmon 明倫館落成祭先聖告文” and “Meirinkan Sekisai shukumon 明倫館積業祝文”.⁽³¹⁾ The “Kōmon”, as its title suggests, is an announcement to Confucius of the completion of the temple and school, explaining its purpose and asking for his divine assistance; the “Shukumon”, which is much shorter, is a more generic invocation with less specific detail. Both are represented as the direct voice of Yoshimoto, but were in fact drafted by Shūnan and are preserved in his collected works. They are framed in conventional Confucian discourse, and it is not clear how much input, if any, Yoshimoto had on their content, but as far as we know they represent the actual invocations used at the time, and records state that they were in fact delivered by Yoshimoto himself.

Following is a summary list of the main points in the “Kōmon” to be stressed in the context of the current study:

1. Yoshimoto identifies himself in humble language as the imperial court minister Ōe Yoshimoto 大江 吉元.
2. Yoshimoto praises Confucius's exalted position as the universally venerated ancestral teacher of virtue, rites, and music.
3. Yoshimoto explains the heavy burden of rulership over a large domain that he has inherited from his ancestors, and his shame at not being up to the task of effecting the moral transformation of his people, protecting widows and orphans, and keeping the borders of his domain secure.

31 Texts reproduced in *Yamaguchiken shi: shiryō hen (kinsei 5)*, pp. 197–8.

4. In consultation with his ministers, he has newly founded a school, with a martial training ground beside it.
5. The purpose of the school is to enable the junior males (*shitei* 子弟) of Hagi to cultivate morals and develop talent (*seitoku tatsuzai* 成徳達材) of their own accord.⁽³²⁾
6. The school will lighten the burden of Yoshimoto's responsibility as ruler, ensuring good administration at the top, and ensure its continuation down through posterity; such a project can only be achieved by taking Confucius as foundation.
7. Yoshimoto feels a special responsibility because his early ancestors achieved glory as scholars of the Confucian canons, and ensured that the teaching of Confucian texts spread throughout Japan.
8. Now Yoshimoto has founded a temple, in which are lodged Confucius and the four correlates, in order to give expression (or visible manifestation, *hyō* 表) to the veneration for teaching and the glorification of the virtue of the teacher.
9. The temple construction had begun in the eighth month of the previous year (1718), and the works and decoration completed by the start of the current year.⁽³³⁾
10. Elders and officials of the domain have now gathered for the formal installation of the spirit tablets, and a pious declaration made according to the prescribed forms, in the hope that the sacred spirits [of Confucius and

32 *Seitoku tatsuzai* derives from the phrases *chengde* 成徳 and *dacai* 達材 in the *Mencius*, describing two of five ways the Confucian gentleman teaches (*Mencius* 7a/40). This is one basis of Ushimi Masahiro's claim that the expression in this context is evidence of Ogyū Sorai's influence right at the start of the Meirinkan mentioned above; Ushimi, "Yamagata Shūnan no kyōikuron ni okeru Ogyū Sorai no eikyō."

33 In contrast to most accounts, which say that everything was finished in the twelfth month of 1718, with a formal opening in the first month of 1719.

the four correlates] in Heaven would forever watch over [the school and temple].

Throughout this text we cannot but note that the tone and discourse are hyperbolic and conventional, but some points based on the events and overall discourse of the time do come through. One is the Mōri claim to have from their Ōe ancestors a long heritage of literary, and specifically Confucian, accomplishment. We also see the explicit statement that martial training is side by side with the literary training in the school. Finally, we have what must have been part of the central motivation for building the school in the first place, that it would improve domain administration and the sense of morality among the people.

The much shorter “Shukumon” invocation expresses Yoshimoto’s praise for Confucius, the fact that he is a sage born with preternatural knowledge from Heaven, and that he is the source of rites, music, and the civil/literary teachings (*bun-kyō* 文教), continuing to support the inferior teachings of the current age. The piece ends with an announcement of sacrificial offerings made according to the ancient regulations, and lists the full formal titles of the four correlates as enfeoffed by the Yuan dynasty in 1330.⁽³⁴⁾

One of Shūnan’s most important tasks for the Meirinkan founding was to provide instructions for the correct ritual forms of the Sekisai sacrifice in the temple. Toward this end, he compiled histories of the ceremony in China and Japan, and an instruction manual for the ritual, the *Sekisai gichū* 積業儀注. The preface to this latter document, which seems to originate from the time the text was compiled for the Meirinkan opening, contains what may be the most explicit statement of the intended function of the temple itself, grounded in historical examples in China and Japan, and justifying why the temple was always included

34 Confucius’s disciples Yanguo Fusheng gong 兗國復聖公 (Yan Hui 顏回), Chengguo Shousheng gong 郟國守聖公 (Zengzi 曾子), and Yiguo Shusheng gong 沂國述聖公 (Zisi 子思), along with Zouguo Yasheng gong 鄒國亞聖公 (Mencius).

in schools and the Sekisai (or Sekiten 積奠) always performed in it.⁽³⁵⁾ Much of the first part of this preface is taken up with a panegyric on education as an essential activity of a state, and Confucius's role as transmitter of the teachings of the ancient (Chinese) sage kings, which, interestingly, he says include "establishing the regulations for the civil and martial" (*kenshō bunbu* 憲章文武). Following the models of Confucius would result in good social order, abandoning them would lead to disorder, thus he is the "teacher of kings through ten thousand generations" (*mansei teiō no shi* 万世帝王の師). Respect for the "Way" (*dō* 道) of Confucius meant that one must also revere the person of Confucius, hence the ritual of the Sekisai had to be performed. Thus even (Chinese) emperors (*tenshi* 天子) made personal sacrifice to him, and schools at all levels of society in China since the Han dynasty performed the Sekiten, in the Tang dynasty recorded in the *Tongdian* 通典, and in Japan in the *Engishiki* 延喜式. Shūnan argues that the high status of the ritual is reflected in the fact that ten sacrificial vessels are used in it, second only to the twelve used in the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth.

The argument thus goes no further than stating that the temple and sacrifices are expressions of veneration for the teachings and person of Confucius, and that all schools should include the temple as a matter of course. This is quite different from the case of Taku, where the temple was meant to be visible to the public and exert an influence on them. Shigefumi says explicitly that the temple functions as a religious building housing the god Confucius within it, which arouses curiosity and inspires people to do good, and attracts them to study in the associated school. The language used by Shūnan is full of conventional Confucian rhetoric, often hyperbolic to the point of seeming almost religious, but he says nothing of the effect it might have on the uninitiated. Every care was taken to get the precise technical details of the temple building and ritual appurtenances right, and the rites in it were performed with great solemnity, but in the end the temple was there because it was supposed to be

35 Text reproduced in *Yamaguchiken shi: shiryō hen (kinsei 5)*, p. 149.

there, and its absence would violate correct usage and tradition.

One further document by Shūnan contains a few points worth including in this discussion. This is the “Nagato no kuni Meirinkan ki 長門國明倫館記”, which Shūnan composed in 1641 at the command of Yoshimoto’s son and successor Munehiro to commemorate the original founding of the school. Munehiro had the text inscribed on a stele to display in the school for the edification of future generations, to inspire them to exert themselves and carry on the legacy of the Mōri ancestors.⁽³⁶⁾

Once again this document is conspicuous for the conventional Confucian and hyperbolic character of the language, though the language is occasionally adapted to allow for the presence of martial training, as in the phrase “ritual, music, archery, and [chariot] driving” (*rei gaku sha gyo* 礼楽射御), a reference to arts studied in the aristocratic training of ancient Spring and Autumn period China.⁽³⁷⁾ Also in the document is a description of the spirit tablets used in the temple to represent Confucius and the correlates, described as wooden tablets in the Ming Chinese design, with the honorary titles of the deities written on them by Hayashi Hōkō. The Sekisai ritual in the temple is said to have been based on the *Engishiki*, taking into account the version performed in Edo, which would have been that of the Yushima Seidō. The domain lord (Yoshimoto) presented the invocation in person, one of the high domain officials made the first offering in Yoshimoto’s stead, the head of the Meirinkan (i.e. Ogura Shōsai) made the second offering, and the most senior domain Confucian made the final

36 This text is preserved in *Yamaguchiken shi: shiryō hen (kinsei 5)*, pp. 168–70, and also in Mombushō 文部省 comp, *Nihon kyōikushi shiryō* 日本教育史資料 (rpt. Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1970; originally published 1891) vol. 5, pp. 657–8. This latter version does not include the notes in smaller characters. The stele itself survives, displayed outside the elementary school that now stands on the site of the Meirinkan.

37 *Yamaguchiken shi: shiryō hen (kinsei 5)*, p. 169. This is in a *kanbun* rendition of Yoshimoto’s edict in the sixth month of 1718.

offering.⁽³⁸⁾

Shūnan also includes a brief verbal description of the layout of the Meirinkan compound, according to which the temple (here named Senseibyō 先聖廟, Temple to the Former Sage(s) rather than Taiseiden 大聖殿) occupies the north, and the lecture hall (*kōdō* 講堂) is in the middle. As we have seen, one architectural study of domain schools cites the Meirinkan as an example of a school type which locates the Confucius temple at the centre.⁽³⁹⁾ A diagram of the school produced in 1797 does show the temple almost exactly in the middle of the compound, with the lecture hall to the left (west-south-west of the temple).⁽⁴⁰⁾ The diagram shows the temple due north of the main gate to the south, but the lecture hall is not in the centre. Unless Shūnan was being very imprecise in his wording, we must allow for the possibility that there were changes to the location of some of the buildings between 1741 and 1797.

The final section of the “Meirinkan ki” is Shūnan’s own summation and appraisal. This includes a historical survey which roughly parallels Taku Shigefumi’s account in saying that Confucius schools were ubiquitous in ancient Japan, together with the Confucius temples in which the Sekiten/Sekisai was performed, but that in the disorder of the Sengoku period these vanished completely. Finally Ieyasu brought order to the realm and began the restoration of Confucianism, which reached its culmination when Tsunayoshi founded the Yushima school and temple, which was then replicated among the domains.

On Ieyasu, Shūnan notes that he summoned Hayashi Razan, and on the Yushima Seidō, he directs the reader to consult the “Record of Scholar Hayashi” (“Hayashi gakushi ki 林学士記”), which tells the story. “Scholar Hayashi” would have been Hayashi Hōkō in this time, and his collected works do contain a great

38 *Ibid.* The information on the tablets, the models for the ceremonies, and the people performing the different parts of the ceremony is give as notes in small characters.

39 Kido and Takahashi, *Hankōikō: Edo jidai no gakkō kenchiku to kyōiku*, p. 14.

40 The diagram is in the unpaginated supplementary materials in the *Nihon kyōikushi shiryō* (1970).

many documents related to the Yushima Seidō, but only one of them is a *ki*, the “Seidō saizō ki 聖堂再造記”. This was composed after the rebuilding of the temple and school after the originals were destroyed in a fire in 1704, but includes also an account of the founding of the original.⁽⁴¹⁾ Of the surviving documents on the Yushima temple composed by Hōkō, this seems most likely to be the one Shūnan is referencing.

Also in this final section of the text is the claim that early Mōri rulers studied Confucianism. Dōshun kō 洞春公 (the sixteenth-century warlord Motonari who was the ancestor of the Mōri domain rulers) is said to have invited one Takakura Kanshi 高倉菅子 to teach, giving him a hall in Kyoto for the purpose. The identity of this Takakura is obscure, but he might conceivably have been Motonari’s contemporary Takakura Nagaie 高倉 永家 (1496–1578), imperial courtier and renowned *waka* poet.⁽⁴²⁾ Mihara Kōmon 三原黄門, who was Motonari’s third son Kobayakawa Takakage 小早川 隆景, is said to have studied from one Ashikaga Hakuōshū 足利白鷗洲. The latter seems to have been Hakuō Genshū 白鷗 玄修 of the Ashikaga School (Ashikaga Gakkō 足利学校); he helped Takakage set up the Najima Gakkō 名島学校在 1596, a Confucian school with temple modelled on the Ashikaga Gakkō located in what is now Fukuoka.⁽⁴³⁾ Finally, Shūnan says that the Associate Counsellor of Toyoura (Toyouura Sangi 豊浦参議), who was Mōri

41 *Hōkō Hayashi sensei zenshū* vol. 4, 91/8–9.

42 A note in Shūnan’s text gives this Takakura Kanshi the title Hyōgo no kami 兵庫頭, and Nagaie held the approximately similar title Hyōetoku 兵衛督. However, there is no apparent record of him studying Confucianism. See the entry on Nagaie in *Gunsho ruijū* 群書類従, vol. 18 (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 1960), p. 313.

43 See the account of this in Ogino Tadayuki 荻野忠行, *Kuroda Kanbei (Josui) no imōto Myōen taishi: Bizen to Chikuzen no Uragamishi to Ogōshi Fukuokajō Najimajō Ino kōtai jingū* 黒田官兵衛(如水)の妹妙圓大姉：備前と筑前の浦上氏と小河氏福岡城・名島城・伊野皇大神宮 (Fukuoka: Azusashoin, 2010), pp. 243–254. The founding of school and temple is also recorded in Mihara Toshokan 三原図書館, *Mihara Kōmon Kobayakawa Takakage kyō* 三原黄門小早川隆景卿 (Mihara: Mihara Toshokan, 1937), p. 37. Nothing of the school remains.

Hidemoto 秀元, a grandson of Motonari and the first lord of Chōfu (1579–1650, r. 1600–1650), studied with one Beppu/Befu Shūtetsu 別府周徹; a note says that Shūtetsu was a student of Fujiwara Seika 藤原惺窩 (1561–1619) and edited the Chinese ritual texts *Zhouli* 周禮 and *Yili* 儀禮. This was almost certainly the homophonous Shūtetsu 周哲, also known as Gusai 愚齋, who did prepare the same two texts for publication, passing them on to Hayashi Razan to check before printing in 1632.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Shūtetsu is not known to have been a student of Fujiwara Seika, but as he worked with Razan it is possible that in fact he was. Another point worth mentioning is that Hidemoto seems to have been on excellent personal terms with Razan. According to a well-known anecdote, Razan felt free to snatch pieces of excellent fish from Hidemoto's *bentō* when they ate together at a meeting.⁽⁴⁵⁾ The distortion in the name aside, it does appear that Shūnan could be correct in saying that Hidemoto studied from Shūtetsu, and possibly from Razan as well.

Shūnan then goes on to state that all subsequent lords (presumably of Hagi and other Mōri domains) all studied Confucianism. To what extent all of this is true, and how serious a personal commitment each individual ruler invested in this study, would require detailed research. However, what this does tell us is that the Mōri lords' study of Confucianism was likely part of the ambient discourse during the founding and early years of the Meirinkan school.

Conclusion

The Hagi Meirinkan and Taku temples, founded only eleven years apart, offer two quite different examples of how Confucius temples could be deployed to

44 The texts, listed as being punctuated by Gosai and Razan, are in Nagasawa Kikuya 長沢 規矩也 comp., *Wakokubon keisho shūsei* 和刻本經書集成 2 (Tokyo: Kyūko Shoin, 1975).

45 See Tsuji Tatsuya 辻 達也, *Nihon no rekishi 13: Edo kaifu* 日本の歴史 13 江戸開府 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1974), p. 132.

meet specific needs. Thinking in terms of the transmission vectors for Confucian culture across East Asia, we can observe that the temple is particularly effective: it is highly visible, and easily recognized as a sacred building by people who know nothing of Confucianism. This explains why it has come to be found throughout China and elsewhere in East Asia, even in Japan where the society and political structures were so very different. The principle of transculturation helps us understand why the same vectors could be reconstructed differently in different environments, in response to the specific needs of a particular place and time, as we see in Taku and Hagi.

In Taku, we find the Confucius temple consciously deployed as a sacred building, an analogue of Buddhist and other temples, housing a divine power and intended to attract the attention and curiosity of the wider population, and cause them to become aware of Confucian teachings. So successful was Shigefumi in this strategy that the temple and the Sekisai sacrifice performed in it have continued down to the present day.

In Hagi, the temple was situated inside the school compound. Despite its prominent location within the grounds, it was not an independent building designed to attract the attention of the public outside, but was rather an integral component of the school as a whole, intended to help establish the Meirinkan's identity. Domain schools in the Edo period varied greatly in how prominent a position they accorded their temples, or whether they had one at all. As noted above, the Hagi Meirinkan has been categorized as a type of school in which the temple occupied the centre, which would suggest an effort to impose a Confucian identity over the whole institution. Even if we understand Shūnan literally in saying that the temple occupied the north, this still would have been a position of honour, with Confucius facing south. This resonates well with Shūnan's statement of the temple and Sekisai sacrifices as essential to a school, as an expression of the veneration due to Confucius and his teachings, which set the paradigm of the school being an institution constituting an essential part of ideal government. Confucius had defined what a school should be and what should be taught in it, therefore official schools at all levels of administration in China and Japan had

always included temples to Confucius.

Set against this, we have two points. First, the fact that many domain schools had no Confucius temple, or acknowledged him in occasional or less conspicuous ways. Contrary to what Shūnan says, the Confucius temple was not universally an essential component of schools in Edo period Japan. Second, in the Meirinkan we have the prominence accorded to martial training in the layout of the physical premises and in the curriculum. Equal proficiency in the civil/literary learning and the martial arts had for some time been the policy of the Bakufu, started in earnest by Tsunayoshi, and at the time of the Meirinkan's founding in 1719 it accorded well with Yoshimune's education policies in endorsing the value of martial training alongside literary study. Even so, the Meirinkan inclusion of martial training put it considerably ahead of its time in comparison with most other domain schools, where emphasis on the martial came somewhat later. Shūnan has relatively little to say about the martial training in the school, and what little he does say is couched in the terms of ancient Chinese archery and charioteering. His emphasis is very much on the Confucian nature of the school, and on the virtue and commitment to Confucian learning demonstrated by Yoshimoto and his high officials. We can only speculate on what Shūnan really thought about the prominent martial profile in the school, but the fact remains that he does not highlight it much in his writings.

Given the important role played by Shūnan and his more senior Confucian colleagues in the design and institutions of the Meirinkan, it is tempting to see the prominence of the temple as their handiwork, a way of stamping their authority on the physical premises of the school and thus more securely defining for it a Confucian identity. Senior Confucians such as Ogura Shōsai had seen their office of *Kagyōnin* raised in rank in 1718, such that they came to participate in the high councils of domain governance at just the time that plans for the Meirinkan were under way. The prominence of the temple enhanced the Confucian identity of the school; despite the wide range of non-Confucian arts taught, the message was that the correct form of schools and education generally derived from Confucius, and that the model of what a school is and how it

functioned were defined by the Confucian tradition in China and in Japan, and should be followed today. In this way, the powerful material vector of the temple was deployed by Hagi Confucians to demonstrate their authority over the school compound. It was no accident that the senior Confucian Ogura Shōsai was named as the first school head.

Unlike the Taku temple, which achieved a lasting existence as a cultural entity in its own right, the Hagi temple lived and died with the school. There may have been specific reasons why it was established and given a central place in the Meirinkan school compound, but more generally it was similar to many other such temples in domain schools of the eighteenth century in forming one standard component of the school. No matter how much they seem to be functioning as religious buildings, and however solemnly the sacrificial rituals in them were conducted, they were not autonomous temples capable of surviving without the school. As domain schools became more and more numerous during the course of the eighteenth century, and the pattern of education in them became more established, the function of their temples became less distinct. It may be that the well-known example of the Meirinkan had an influence on other later institutions, though further work would be needed to confirm this.

The respective fates of the Taku and Hagi temples after the end of the Edo period can be seen as a consequence of their very different natures at their inception. Shigefumi's intent to create a building that would attract people's attention and interest was so successful that it took root in survived as a venue for local Sekisai ceremonies for more than three hundred years, down to the present day.

The Meirinkan temple is no longer a Confucian shrine, but it is not completely lost. Its physical structure as rebuilt in 1849 survives. The nearby Kaichōji 海潮寺 Buddhist temple was destroyed in World War II, so the Meirinkan temple was sold to the monks for 250 yen, dismantled, and physically moved across to continue service as a Buddhist temple. The elementary school on the Meirinkan site displays the stele by Shūnan and another by his descendent Yamagata Taika 太華 (1781–1866) commemorating the school's reconstruction in

1849, and also preserves other relics, such as the original spirit tablets to Confucius and the four correlates.⁽⁴⁶⁾

46 See the photograph of the front of the current temple at <https://hakataboy.com/temple.php?dirpath=temple/Yamaguti/Hagi/KaityouJI/>; the tablets can be seen at <http://kineko.matrix.jp/hagi/bokushu.html>. Both last accessed 15 September 2017.