INTRODUCTION

The Rise of Funerary Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan

Buddhism permeated daily life during the Tokugawa period (1600–1868), and Buddhist temples stood in every corner of the country. It is estimated that by the late seventeenth century, there were more than 100,000 Buddhist temples, and this number remained undiminished until the early years of the Meiji period (1868–1912), when an anti-Buddhist movement adopting the motto "abolish the Buddha and discard Śākyamuni" (*haibutsu kishaku*) swept the country.[1] There were more than 100,000 temples (probably between 200,000 and 250,000 if subtemples such as *jiin*, *tatchū*, and *anshitsu* are included) in a country whose population had grown from around 12 million at the turn of the sixteenth century to around 30 million by 1700, and where there were about 73,000 administrative units (about 63,000 village [*mura*] units and 10,000 ward [*machi*] units). This meant that, on average, 300 people (or 60 households, assuming that each family unit has five members) in each village and ward supported at least one or two temples.[2] The Tokugawa Japanese had to shoulder this financial burden in addition to the regular tax obligations and corvée duties owed to the government and to the ruling class.

Almost no village in Tokugawa Japan was without a Buddhist temple and few people were untouched by the activities of Buddhist monks. Nonetheless, Buddhism was not a state religion. Unlike the

Meiji imperial government, for example, which tried to elevate Shinto to the status of a state religion, the Tokugawa regime did not make any attempt to incorporate Buddhist ideas or rituals into its governing principles. It neither forced people to allocate their precious resources to Buddhist temples nor encouraged Buddhist institutions to tap the economic surplus of Tokugawa society. On the contrary, throughout the Tokugawa period, both central (*bakufu*) and local (*han*) governments, which often found themselves vying with Buddhist institutions over the same resources, tried to contain, control, and even in some cases, suppress Buddhism. Given all of this, one might wonder how Buddhist institutions were able to penetrate every corner of the country and how so many Buddhist temples were able to maintain themselves.

As the register of head-branch temples from the Kan'ei era (1624–43) testifies, however, most temples simply could not entrust their sustenance to the mainstay of Tokugawa economic life—agricultural landholdings.[3] Among 2,838 temples listed in the Kan'ei register, 15 percent reported that their income from landholdings was less than one *koku* (= 5.119 bushels) of rice; 52 percent reported income of between one and five *koku*; and 13 percent reported income between six and ten *koku*. According to one estimate, in order to be stable during the 1630s, a temple needed an annual income of at least ten *koku* of rice.[4] As far as the Kan'ei register is concerned, a vast majority of Buddhist temples—80 percent—had to find extra or supplementary income sources in order to survive.

Where and how were Buddhist temples, which were largely stable and even prosperous throughout the country, able to find financial resources to supplement their mediocre income from agriculture? In an attempt to answer this question, I draw attention to the example of Edo, the shogunal capital that came to embrace a large number of Buddhist temples within a short period of time yet was able to accommodate them without much stress. The mode in which Buddhist temples operated in Edo may be seen as a local issue; however, given that, as far as religious policy was concerned, the shogunal government (i.e., the shogunate, or *bakufu*) set the regulations for all Buddhist temples in the country, it follows that the example of Edo can help us to assess the rise, sustenance and prosperity of Buddhism throughout Tokugawa Japan.

Edo, which served as the de facto capital of Tokugawa Japan, had been a small rural town with no significant religious establishments

until Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616) settled there in 1590. Edo's population grew to around 1 million by the late seventeenth century and remained quite stable thereafter. Its dramatic metamorphosis from a rural town into a seventeenth-century megacity was accompanied by a rapid growth in the number of Buddhist temples. According to a *bakufu* survey from the Bunsei era (1818–29) detailing the genesis of religious institutions, Edo was home to more than 1,000 temples—on average, one temple per 1,000 residents. In comparison, all its Shinto shrines numbered only 112.[5] This level of temple density was far less than the national average; however, given that about half of the population were samurai, most of whom were affiliated with temples in their local domains, Edo was—at least, as far as the commoner residents were concerned—clearly a "Buddhist" city.

In order to understand the context of Edo's swift accommodation of a large number of Buddhist temples, it is helpful to look at the findings from the Bunsei-era survey.[6] Data from this survey show that, in the 1820s, Buddhist temples in Edo had the following sectarian distribution outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Buddhist Temples in Edo

Name of sect	Number of temples	%
Jōdoshū	231	23.6
Nichirenshū	200	20.5
Sōtōshū	156	16.0
Jōdoshinshū	124	12.7
Tendaishū	92	9.4
Rinzaishū	72	7.4
Shingi Shingonshū	65	6.6
Ōbakushū	14	1.4
Kogi Shingonshū	13	1.3
Shugen	7	0.7
Jishū	2	0.2
Shingon Risshū	2	0.2
TOTAL	978	100.0

SOURCE: Asakura Haruhiko ed., *Gofunai jisha bikō bessatsu* (Tokyo: Meicho shuppan, 1987), pp. 7–35.
NOTES: Not included in this survey were: temples related to the shogunal house as prayer halls or funerary temples (such as Kan'eiji, Zōjōji, Gokokuji, Denzūin, Gojiin, and Nishihonganji in Tsukiji); temples located near the city boundary of Edo demarcated by the "vermilion line"; temples serving Shinto shrines as *jingūji*; and many other subtemples (which, in terms of organizational structure, belonged to high-status head temples but were independently run). In other words, Edo temples actually numbered more than what is indicated by Table 1. As I have said, there were more than 1,000 Buddhist temples in Edo.[7]

We notice that Pure Land (Jōdoshū, Jōdoshinshū), Nichiren, and Zen Buddhist (Sōtōshū, Rinzaishū, Ōbakushū) sects were dominant in Edo. The strong presence of the so-called Kamakura Buddhist sects in Edo (which was a newly developed city) stood in contrast to the situations in the more traditional rural villages of the surrounding Musashi area, where such old Buddhist establishments as those associated with the Tendai and Shingon sects were relatively prominent. Before Tokugawa Ieyasu entered the city, Edo's Buddhist temples had been sparse in number and meager in magnitude (notwithstanding a few exceptions, such as Sensōji and Zōjōji). As Edo rapidly developed, Buddhist sects, seeing ample opportunities for growth, vied with each other to expand their footholds. Of these, Jōdoshū, Nichirenshū, Sōtōshū, and Jōdoshinshū (also commonly known as Ikkōshū) turned out to be the most successful.[8]

Table 2 shows the number of temples of each sect established within certain time periods. The year 1600 marks the beginning of the Tokugawa regime, and 1631 and 1663 are the years in which the shogunate reiterated its ban on the construction of new temples. In 1631 (the eighth year of the Kan'ei era) the shogunal government outlawed the building of new temples, ordering the major temples of each sect to survey their branch temples and to enter them in what would later be known as the Kan'ei register of head-branch temples (*honmatsuchō*). The *bakufu* then classified the temples listed in the Kan'ei head-branch register as "old-track temples" (*koseki jiin*) and privileged them over the ones erected after 1631, which were collectively referred to as "new-land temples" (*shinchi jiin*). Officials of the *bakufu* continued to attempt to halt the mushrooming of Buddhist temples throughout Edo.[9] Despite the government's hostility, the number of temples continued to increase. About three decades later, the shogunate once again issued an edict forbidding the opening of "new-land temples"—an edict that was once again promulgated in 1692. The increase in new temples slowed measurably thereafter, and their number eventually stabilized at around 1,000.

Given the status and prestige carried by "old-track temples" throughout the Tokugawa period, it is not surprising that many temples tried to inflate their genealogy when they were surveyed in the early nineteenth century. The older-is-better mindset seemed especially conspicuous among those temples that claimed they had originated before 1600. It is highly unlikely that there were already

Table 2: The Genesis of Buddhist Temples in Edo

Name of sect	Pre-1590	1590–1599	1600–1631	1632–1663	Post-1663	N/A	Total
Jōdoshū	21	21	123	12	6	48	231
Nichirenshū	18	27	96	14	3	42	200
Sōtōshū	25	19	60	9	7	36	156
Jōdoshinshū	20	11	66	9	4	14	124
Tendaishū	21	4	19	2	4	42	92
Shingonshū	3	0	29	5	5	38	80
Rinzaishū	1	2	39	14	9	7	72
Ōbakushū	1	0	1	2	1	9	14
Shugen	2	0	0	0	2	3	7
Jishū	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
TOTAL	112	84	433	67	41	241	978
%	11.5	8.6	44.3	6.8	4.2	24.6	100.0

SOURCES: *Gofunai jisha bikō,* vol. 7, pp. 281–302 and Nittō (1995), pp. 179–81.
NOTE: This table adapts Nittō Kazuhiko's meticulous analysis of the *Gofunai jisha bikō,* to which I added statistics pertaining to the temples managed by *shugen*.

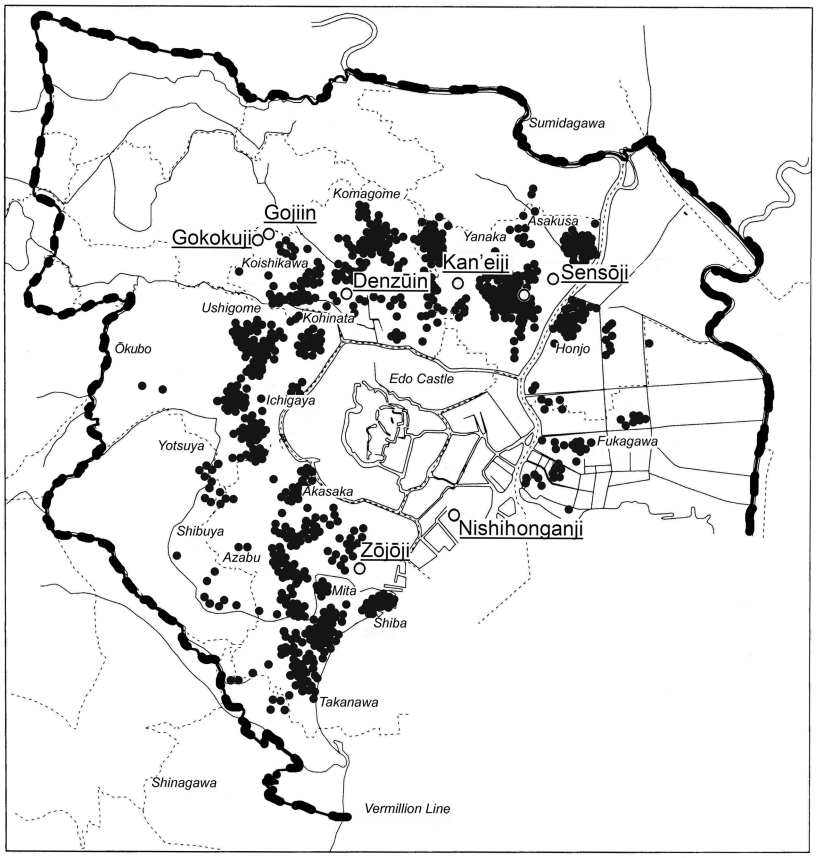
196 temples (see Table 2) in the small town of Edo before the shogunal government was established. Many of these, if they existed at all, must have been obscure religious facilities that hardly qualified to be called "temples."[10] The statistical accuracy of Table 2 should be read with care. Nevertheless, as far as the genesis of Edo's Buddhist temples is concerned, the Bunsei survey reveals some overall historical trends: (1) a vast majority of temples were newly erected within a relatively short period of time, and (2) the vast majority of these were erected during the early decades of the seventeenth century.

Specifically, more than 60 percent of the 231 Jōdoshū temples were founded in the seventeenth century (before 1591, Edo had only 21 Jōdoshū temples). In particular, under the leadership of two major head temples, Chion'in in Kyoto and Zōjōji in Edo (which would, respectively, control 92 and 70 branch temples in Edo), by the 1630s the Jōdoshū saw a dramatic proliferation of its branch temples. In the case of Nichirenshū, the ratio of temples established after 1600 reached 56 percent; and, in the case of Sōtōshū, it exceeded 48 percent. Jōdoshinshū was also quite successful in expanding its branches within the new political center of the nation. More than 60 percent of its temples were established between 1600 and 1662. On the whole, more than half of all Buddhist temples in Edo were erected between 1600 and 1663, whether newly constructed, transformed from obscure

prayer halls, or transplanted from other areas. If we take into account those temples whose histories are unknown but whose construction was unlikely to have taken place before 1600, we can see that most of Edo's Buddhist temples came into being in the seventeenth century, particularly in its early to middle decades.

Where in the city were these temples constructed? It is not easy to determine where all of these temples were initially founded because religious institutions in Edo were often subjected to the shogunate's precarious city planning. The transfer of most of the inner-city temples to the outskirts of the city following the Meireki Fire in 1657 was particularly dramatic. Initially, in the early years of the seventeenth century, the shogunate allocated spaces in Hirakawa, Sakurada, and Kanda—all in the vicinity of the shogunal castle—for Buddhist temples. However, due to the rapid growth of city districts and the need to expand and upgrade the shogunal castle, the shogunate began to relocate Buddhist temples to the suburban areas. By 1639 the expansion of the outer moats encircling the castle and the additional appropriation of new tracts of land for the second residences (*nakayashiki*) and tertiary residences (*shimoyashiki*) of the daimyo families had already forced out many of the inner-city temples. When the Meireki Fire devoured large parts of Edo, the shogunate moved the remaining temples further outwards. Temples located in Kanda and Hirakawa were relocated to Asakusa, Yanaka, or Komagome; those in Kyōbashi to Shiba; those in Inner Ushigome to Outer Ushigome or Kohinata; and those in Inner Azabu to Outer Azabu.[11] It was not until the Genroku era (1688–1703) that Edo temples were relatively stabilized at the surrounding belts of the city along Fukagawa, Honjo, Asakusa, Shitaya, Yanaka, Komagome, Koishikawa, Kohinata, Ushigome, Yotsuya, Azabu, Mita, Takanawa, and Shiba (see Map 1).[12]

Except for the Nishihonganji temple in Tsukiji, all Buddhist temples in the old districts were transferred to the relatively sparsely populated suburban areas that encircled the shogunal castle and the downtown area, as if forming a defensive wall. By the turn of the seventeenth century, some areas were literally transformed into Buddhist districts, showcasing a large number of temples clustered together: Asakusa led the pack with 172 temples, followed by Azabu with 76, Ushigome with 74, Yanaka with 67, Shitaya with 57, and Yotsuya with 53.[13] Many temples were removed from the heavily inhabited inner-city districts that were supposed to constitute their supporting base.



Map 1 Locations of Buddhist Temples in Edo. Adapted from Nittō (1998), p. 11.

Despite a shaky start and mounting density, most of the Buddhist temples in Edo adjusted well to their new environments, as was seen in their ability to embrace tens of thousands of priests, to hold a great number of prosperous religious events, and to erect and maintain innumerable ritual halls, stupas, and other facilities.[14] Given that many of the samurai residents, particularly those belonging to the upper echelon, were affiliated with temples in their local domain or fief, and that Edo was a massive urban hodgepodge containing tens of thousands of transients, it must have been rather difficult for Edo's Buddhist temples to survive. Yet stories of temple poverty were rarely heard, despite the fact that there is no evidence that temples were all richly endowed with land.

The forms of "temple lands" (*keidaichi*) in Edo were various: those granted by the shogun himself (vermilion-seal lands [*goshuinchi*]);

those granted by the government (*hairyōchi*); private land properties subject to government tax (*nenguchi*); new land properties donated by private patrons (*kishinchi*); old lands that had always been exempt from taxation (*jochi*); and front districts (*monzen* or *monzenmachi*) that townspeople could lease for their residence or business. Among these land categories, the vermilion-seal land, exempted from taxation and regarded as an indication to high honor, was granted only to 49 temples of the highest rank. The rice yield, measured in terms of *kokudaka* (amount of *koku*), from this category ranged from 700 *koku* to five *koku*, and its total yield amounted to 5,480 *koku*.[15] On average, the taxable *kokudaka* per temple on vermilion-seal land was a bit more than 112—an amount that could generate, for instance, an actual income of 34 *koku* of rice at a tax rate of 30 percent. This was certainly not so bad; however, it pertained to only 5 percent of all Edo temples.

As far as income from land properties was concerned, many other temples had to rely upon rent from their *jochi* and/or *monzen*. A bit more than half of all temples held these *jochi* and/or *monzen*, but only a tiny portion of them were able to net a sizable income from renting them out. In terms of the land area over which each temple had a proprietary right, more than 60 percent of the temples commanded less than 1,000 *tsubo* (approximately 303 square meters); and among them, 319 (about one-third) had fewer than 500 *tsubo*—a land area that would not leave much room for rent income after basic temple facilities were accommodated. In particular, many of the Jōdoshinshū and Nichirenshū temples (68 percent and 40 percent, respectively) were built on land that comprised fewer than 400 *tsubo*.[16] In short, for a majority of the Edo temples, land property was simply not a dependable source of income.

So where could the majority of Edo's Buddhist institutions—most of which were newly erected, not associated with old religious traditions, and heavily concentrated in suburban valleys and hills—turn to secure a stable income? Some temples resorted to the business of prayer or votive rites, which generated income in the form of prayer fees, donations, alms-giving, and the sale of such votive items as amulets and talismans. This was clearly the case at Sensōji, which capitalized on the popularity of its renowned Asakusa Kannon as an object of popular worship to garner more than 70 percent of its annual income of 2,000 to 3,000 gold pieces.[17] Buddhist halls, blessed with "miraculous Buddhas and Bodhisattvas," were able to attract

crowds of visitors and pilgrims and, in this manner, to rake in a sizable income. But the number of those temples blessed with marketable deities was very few.[18] Furthermore, the fortunes of prayer temples, which owed much to the religious fashion of the time, were often precarious and highly unpredictable. So what, in the final analysis, provided a majority of Buddhist temples—regardless of their sectarian affiliation, prestige, and religious reputation—with financial stability?

The answer is simple: death. During the Tokugawa period, all families were required to be affiliated with a Buddhist temple, and everyone had to die a Buddhist and be given a Buddhist funeral. Not only the funeral but also the postmortem rituals were, to one degree or another, within the religious purview of Buddhist monks who played their priestly role and collected their fees. Naturally, in order to ensure the stable income generated by death-related rituals, almost all Buddhist temples tried to secure funerary patronage from their affiliated households. The enduring relationship between a Buddhist temple and its funerary patron household, cemented from generation to generation through recurring rites and services related to death and ancestral veneration, gave rise to what is commonly known as the *danka* system (*danka seido* or *dankasei*).[19] It was the *danka* system, more than anything else, that sustained Buddhist temples in Tokugawa Japan.

Here, *danka* (also known as *danna*, *dan'otsu*, *danchū*, *dankata*, or *danto*, all of which trace their etymology to the Sanskrit word *dana* [giving]) refers to the funerary patron household or individual who is affiliated with and supports a temple, known as *dankadera* (also called *dannadera* or *bodaiji*, and, in the case of Jōdoshinshū, *tetsugitera*).[20] By binding all Japanese people to the Buddhist care of funerary practices and thereby generating an economy of death, the *danka* system provided Buddhist temples with a stable source of income and, hence, guaranteed sustenance. The *danka* system is commonly, albeit misleadingly, rendered as the "temple parish system" in English. However, as I discuss in Part II, the *danka* system has little to do with the idea of "parish," which connotes a clear geographical setting for the affiliations between patron families and funerary temples. On the contrary, the *danka* system simply indicates the affiliation between patron households (or individuals) and funerary Buddhist temples—an affiliation that is formed when the former, with free will and no restrictions on location, choose the latter. Too

often, patterns of affiliation between the household and the temple were so arbitrary, disorderly, and crisscrossed that it was almost impossible to group them into temple-centered parishes that could be adequately demarcated by geographical boundaries.

The *danka* system was a financial foundation not only for Buddhist temples in Edo but also for a vast majority of Buddhist temples throughout the country, regardless of their sectarian affiliation, distribution, and location. In 1879 the Meiji government ordered local governments to conduct a comprehensive survey of Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples and to submit the results. It was a project aimed at gathering new data on the changes that occurred over the past few turbulent years and updating the previous surveys conducted in 1870–71. With regard to Buddhist temples, the government demanded that the survey include information on head-branch relationship and sectarian affiliation, history (year of establishment, founder, and chronicle), administration (current head monk and subtemples), religious facilities and deities enshrined therein, landholding, the number of *danna* (funerary/prayer) households (or patrons), and so on. The survey results in Kōzuke province, for example, provide us with detailed data on how its many temples maintained funerary *danna* patrons.[21]

More than a decade had passed since the Meiji Restoration, and during this period many temples throughout the country, including those in Kōzuke province, had to endure the anti-Buddhist storm of the new era. Nevertheless, the 1880–81 survey reports, entitled *Kōzuke no kuni jiin meisaichō* (Detailed registers of Buddhist temples in Kōzuke province), show that almost all Buddhist temples in the province continued to maintain funerary *danna* patrons.[22] According to the reports, there were a total of 1,361 temples in Kōzuke province. Among them, those that had funerary *danna* patrons numbered 1,283, or a bit over 94 percent. This high ratio of funerary *danna*-holding temples was more or less similar across different sects. In the case of Tendaishū, it was 91 percent, or 322 temples out of 355; in the case of Shingonshū, it was 95 percent, or 414 temples out of 434; and in the case of Zenshū (Sōtō, Rinzai, and Ōbaku), it was 94 percent, or 392 out of 416. Of Jōdoshū's 93 temples only one was without *danna* patrons; and Nichirenshū and Jōdoshinshū, which had 23 and 40 temples, respectively, did not have any that were without funerary *danna* patrons.[23]

Table 3: Ratios of Funerary *Danna*-Holding Temples

Sect	Kakuda	Izu	Shingū	Kurashiki	Ōzu	Hita
Tendaishū	1/1	0/0	0/1	14/17	8/9	4/10
Shingonshū	38/54	11/17	1/3	113/149	28/35	18/30
Zenshū	69/71	234/280	136/140	86/119	84/108	120/176
Jōdoshū	13/13	42/50	7/9	8/8	1/1	48/68
Nichirenshū	3/4	66/73	2/2	44/53	2/2	14/19
Jōdoshinshū	15/15	15/16	8/8	36/42	11/11	190/202
TOTAL	139/158	368/436	154/163	301/388	134/166	394/505
%	88.0	84.4	94.5	77.6	80.7	78.0

SOURCES: The data in each area are based on, respectively, *Kakudaken shoshū honmatsu jigō sonota meisaichō* (1871), *Izu no kuni honmatsu jigō sonota meisaichō* (1871), *Shingūhan shoshū honmatsu jigō sonota meisaichō* (1870), *Kurashikiken honmatsu jigō sonota meisaichō* (1871), *Ōzuhan shoshū honmatsu jigō sonota meisaichō* (1871), and *Hitaken shoshū honmatsu jigō sonota meisaichō* (1871).
NOTES: The numbers before the slash indicate those of *danna*-holding temples; those after it indicate the total numbers of temples in each sect. The category of Zenshū includes Sōtōshū, Rinzaishū, and Ōbakushū; and that of Jōdoshū includes Jishū. In the case of the Shingū, Kurashiki, and Hita areas, subtemples such as *anshitsu* and *tatchū* are all individually counted as they were separately recorded in the reports. These are the only separately counted subtemples. In the case of Ōzu, temples belonging to Zenshū included three Ōbakushū temples, none of which had funerary *danna* households; all others were affiliated with Rinzaishū. Among the Zenshū category in Hita, there were 26 Ōbakushū temples, and, among them, only four had funerary *danna* households.

The number of funerary *danna* patrons held by each temple ranged from just one person (although this was extremely rare) to thousands of persons, indicating that the economic dependence of Buddhist temples upon funerary *danna* holdings was never even. For temples with a small number of *danna* patrons, income generated through the *danka* system must have been supplemented by other sources; however, those blessed with a large number of *danna* patrons could have enjoyed a high level of financial stability with income derived from the provision of death-related services. Despite variations in number, funerary *danna* patrons seemed to be indispensable for the survival and prosperity of the vast majority of temples in Kōzuke province.

Indeed, funerary *danna* patrons were an integral part of temple economy. In some areas the ratio of *danna*-holding temples reached 100 percent, as was seen, for example, in the Shiiya domain (currently parts of Niigata prefecture), where all of its 23 temples had funerary *danna* households.[24] Table 3 clearly shows the high degree to which Buddhist temples were endowed with funerary *danna* patrons.

The data provided here are taken from survey reports conducted in 1870–71, and the samples are chosen from the areas that cover northern Honshū to Kyūshū. Soon after the Restoration the Meiji government, as part of its pro-Shinto policy, surveyed the status of Shinto shrines and scrutinized Buddhist temples. Even though many temples suffered from the prevailing anti-Buddhist sentiment and lost some of their funerary *danna* patrons, a large majority of them still kept their funerary *danna* households—a legacy that bespeaks the firm entrenchment of the *danka* system that had been inherited from the previous period.

As is seen in Table 3, the distribution of temples in terms of sectarian affiliation shows a wide range of variation, with a relatively strong presence of Zen temples in comparison to those belonging to Tendaishū, a discrepancy probably due to the different local characteristics of the areas chosen for study. Nevertheless, without exception, the overall ratios of funerary *danna*-holding temples were very high, ranging from 77.6 percent to 94.5 percent. This suggests that a vast majority of temples throughout the country were involved, to one degree or another, in the business of death-related rituals.

Arimoto Masao, who traces the regional distribution of Buddhist sects during the Tokugawa period, sums up the religious functions of Buddhist temples.[25] According to him, the primary business of Buddhist temples in the Kantō region and its vicinities was to provide funerary rituals and memorial services to their patron households. The preaching of Buddhist doctrine was clearly secondary.[26] The Kinki region and its vicinities, despite the presence of many old and great temples, showed the strong presence in local villages of *miyaza* or "shrine council" organizations, which controlled communal village rituals for Shinto deities. Such organizations often discouraged Buddhists from promoting their teachings on death and afterlife. Nevertheless, Buddhist temples in this region were also, like those in eastern Japan, primarily engaged in the performance of death rituals and postmortem memorial services.[27] Arimoto continues to note that the situation in the areas of Jōdoshinshū was not so different from that in other regions, despite the fact that its sectarian teachings did not officially recognize the ritual efficacy of *nenbutsu*-chanting for the well-being of the deceased.

Based on an analysis of the religious practices of Jōdoshinshū followers in the Okayama area, Nagura Tetsuzō notes that by at least the 1640s, all of them were basically subjugated to the prescription

of Buddhist death.[28] To be sure, in some areas, the Jōdoshinshū faithful tried to differentiate their ritual practices pertaining to death and ancestral veneration from those of other sects by emphasizing that their *nenbutsu*-chanting was an expression of gratitude toward the Amida Buddha rather than a devotional offering to their ancestral spirits.[29] But the overall tendency overrode Jōdoshinshū's traditional practices, which, with the complete dissolution of Ikkō *ikki* (a series of revolts by Jōdoshinshū followers who were guided by the Law of the Buddha), were anyway forced to yield to the Law of the King. By the mid-seventeenth century, Jōdoshinshū temples emerged strong in various parts of the country, and these temples, which were not endowed with extensive landholdings, found themselves dependent upon donations and fees paid by lay followers for ritual services related to death and postmortem care. The twelve-article regulations of Higashichōshōji, a Jōdoshinshū temple in the Fukui ward of Echizen, included one straightforward article about what its patrons (*monto*) were expected to do: according to their station in society, they were to strictly conduct all yearly ancestral rites and Buddhist rituals.[30] Indeed, most of the Jōdoshinshū temples imposed a similar set of regulations upon their patrons. The list of regulations was long, including compliance with the shogunal law, contribution to the maintenance of temple buildings, respect for the head monk, hard work, frugality, and so forth. And the key point was always unambiguous: the faithful conduct of death rituals and memorial services within the framework of the *danka* system.[31] More than anything else, it was the economy of death that brought the Tokugawa Japanese to support Buddhist temples.

It should be noted, however, that the *danka* system was not really a legal "system" or "institution" per se; rather, it was a custom, manipulated and entrenched by Buddhist temples, which capitalized on the anti-Christian policy of the Tokugawa *bakufu*. Once established as a custom, it somehow became integrated back into the anti-Christian policy, which was gradually institutionalized into a nationwide system of population surveillance. The *danka* system was never written into law. Despite its lack of legal status, as a public custom, it was applied to the entire populace without exception and exerted enduring influence. In understanding the practice of the *danka* system, therefore, it is essential to comprehend its anti-Christian context—a context that decisively transformed its sphere of practice from private to public.

During the early seventeenth century, in the name of protecting the land of the "divine country," or the "country of the gods" (*shinkoku*—a nativist dictum that would repeatedly be invoked in subsequent anti-Christian pronouncements), the Tokugawa regime decided to eradicate Christianity from Japan and began purging Christian missionaries and their followers, who were collectively referred to as "Kirishitan."[32] Christian missionaries consisted of Roman Catholic fathers (*bateren*) and brothers (*iruman*), both of whom entered Japan between 1549 and the 1630s for the purpose of proselytizing. The term *bateren* is derived from the Portuguese word "padre," and *iruman* from the Portuguese word *irmão*. These terms reflect the fact that the majority of the missionaries—about 300 in total (230 padres and 70 *irmão*)—were Jesuits from Portugal.[33] On the other hand, ever since Francis Xavier's arrival in Japan in 1549, the term "Kirishitan," which comes from the Portuguese word Christão, was used by the Tokugawa Japanese to refer to the Roman Catholic Church, the Christian religion, or its followers. For their part, the Christian missionaries referred to the Japanese who accepted their religion as "qirixitan."[34] Gonoi Takashi estimates that the total number of Kirishitan between 1549 and the 1630s may have reached as high as 760,000.[35] In *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan*, when referring to those Japanese who accepted Christianity during this period, I employ the term "Kirishitan" rather than the terms "Christians" or "Christian converts" in order to minimize possible theological implications as well as to respect the uniqueness of the Kirishitan religion.[36]

In carrying out its anti-Christian policy, the Tokugawa regime relied upon the system of "temple certification," or *terauke*. Under this system, each year all residents were ordered to prove their non-Christian identity by presenting themselves for inspection by the Buddhist temple with which they happened to be affiliated. The temple would then issue them a "certificate" stating that they were affiliated with it and, therefore, had nothing to do with the Kirishitan religion. Those who failed to undergo temple certification were classified as Kirishitan and were put to death.

Here the phrase "Buddhist temple"—a translation of the Japanese words *jiin*, *tera*, or *ji*—refers to the head monk of a temple or the temple itself. In the Japanese cultural tradition, a Buddhist temple is understood to have at least three components: (1) the temple buildings, (2) the Buddhist images and sūtras enshrined

within these buildings, and (3) the clergy residing in the temple compound in order to maintain the buildings and to serve the Buddhist deities (represented by iconic images). Conventionally, however, since the head monk (abbot) of a temple represents that institution, the name of the temple often functions as a synonym for its head monk. In some cases, the name of a temple indicates, whether collectively or individually, the members of the clergy belonging to it (without necessarily specifying them).[37] The temple names cited in this book follow this convention.

Notwithstanding the anti-Christian policy in the country of the gods (*kami*), it is curious why the Tokugawa regime chose to adopt a Buddhist rather than a Shinto system of inspection. During the medieval period, Buddhist temples had been a source of political havoc. Furthermore, due to their close affiliation with the imperial court, which the incipient shogunal house had yet to overcome, the strategy of deploying Buddhist temples could have been a risky proposition.[38] As we will see in Part I, however, by the late seventeenth century, the entire population had been subjected to the anti-Christian measure of temple certification, and this anti-Christian system had become fully integrated into the governing apparatus of the Tokugawa regime.

In 1613, Konchiin Sūden (1569–1633), an influential Buddhist adviser who served the first three Tokugawa shoguns, composed an anti-Christian edict entitled "A Statement on Expelling Padres" (*Bateren tsuihō no bun*). Shogun Hidetada presented this to the nation, thereby setting the ground for the anti-Christian policy that would be implemented in the decades that followed. Initially, only those who were identified as Kirishitan were required to obtain written proof from Buddhist temples or village officials with regard to their abandonment of Christianity and affiliation with Buddhism; however, beginning in the 1630s, the shogunate gradually unified the method of religious inspection into a system of temple certification and began to impose this upon the populace. After the Amakusa-Shimabara Rebellion (1637–38), which was condemned as a Christian-inspired revolt, *bakufu* leaders intensified their efforts to root out all Christian elements, ever more vigorously prevailing upon Buddhist temples to carry out the task of religious inspection. By the 1660s, based on the non-Christian certificates of their residents, village officials were ordered to draw up an anti-Christian register, known as a "register of sectarian inspection" (*shūmon aratamechō*),

for all residents under their jurisdiction and to submit it to the government.

Within this administrative framework, every year Buddhist temples carried out the role of certifying the non-Christian identity of each resident, and upon this non-Christian certification, village or ward officials annually compiled the "register of sectarian inspection" and submitted it to their higher government office. Here, the inspection by Buddhist monks and the registration by secular officials involved totally separate procedures. Due probably to the obvious link between these two processes, however, scholars often fail to differentiate them, as is seen in the frequency with which the term *terauke* (temple certification) is rendered as "temple registration." *Terauke* applied only to the procedure in which the "*tera*" (i.e., the head monk of a "Buddhist temple") conducted the task of "*uke*" (i.e., "certifying" that persons affiliated with the temple were not Kirishitan). The responsibility for actually registering those who were inspected by Buddhist temples belonged exclusively to village or ward officials, not to Buddhist monks. To be sure, there was no law prohibiting temples from maintaining a private register of their own, and most temples did maintain one; however, this kind of register was known as *kakochō* or *ekōchō*, "register of the past or the dead," consisting of a list of deceased *danna* members and their posthumous names, and it was designed to schedule memorial services for dead patrons, not to conduct anti-Christian inspections for living patrons.

As the annual anti-Christian inspection was put into strict practice, Buddhist monks, who acted like public officials, were quick to transform their religious inspectees into regular funerary patrons and to organize them into the institution of a permanent *danna* relationship or, in other words, the *danka* system. In making Buddhist temples responsible for anti-Christian religious inspection, the shogunate never officially bound the Buddhist inspection to the *danka* system, nor did it authorize Buddhist temples to use the *danka* system to enforce funerary patronage upon the populace. But, over time, the entire populace was, through the assertion of Buddhist temples, locked into the mandate of Buddhist death.

However, as I discuss in Part II, it should also be noted that, despite its political tone of enforcement, the *danka* system was ultimately structured to accommodate, respond to, or resonate with the socio-religious needs of the people. The early modern Japanese,

who wanted to deal with the deaths of their family members with dignity, were receptive to the ritual prescriptions of the *danka* system and its links with the anti-Christian policy. Rather than continuing with the medieval approach to death, which had by and large reflected the Buddhist notions of karmic reward and retribution, the early modern Japanese eagerly adopted the hands-on funerary rituals and services of familial Buddhism. Death rituals, not the doctrinal polemics of karma and retribution, were an answer for the socio-religious needs of the new type of family structure that was taking shape in the seventeenth century. Thus, in order to gain a balanced understanding of how the *danka* system came into being and operated, we also need to take into account how changing religious concerns in the changing family structure corresponded to it. The *danka* system was pushed, but at the same time, it was pulled as well.

The process of pulling can be seen through the prism of people's changing concerns with afterlife and hell—concerns that were, for example, reflected into the vicissitudes of the Kumano nuns (*bikuni*). In his discussion of medieval Japanese Buddhism, William R. LaFleur suggests that the idea of "six courses" (*rokudō*) served as "a coherent explanation of the world and of human experience; it was the single most satisfying and comprehensive explanation available to the Japanese people at the time."[39] The *rokudō* refers to the six possible modes of being, which, in hierarchical order, are: gods (*kami*), humans (*ningen*), asuras (*ashura*), animals (*chikushō*), hungry ghosts (*gaki*), and creatures of hell (*jigoku*). After death, in a cycle of ongoing transmigration, one is destined to be reborn into one of these modes of being. This, of course, is in accordance with the law of karmic reward and punishment—a law that was believed to be both inescapable and universal. Within the system of karmic causality, as LaFleur puts it: "Death will result in rebirth, and rebirth always poses the possibility of either progress or slippage to another location in the taxonomy. In strict interpretations, everything depends on the life lived now and the karma engendered in the present. The system thus makes each person individually responsible for his or her own future. Injustice is an impossibility."[40] Progression upward through the *rokudō* taxonomy was, of course, what people hoped for and sought after. Buddhist doctrine even taught that it was not entirely impossible to find a way out of the cycle of birth and death and to enter the realm of Paradise, where

transmigration ceases. For the medieval Japanese, however, the desire for a dream-like eternal happiness in Paradise was far outweighed by the looming possibility of slipping into hell. Their anxieties over this led them to undertake all manner of quests for salvation.[41] No matter what they tried to do, they could not escape the agonizing knowledge that the avoidance of hell was their own personal and individual responsibility.

In keeping with the belief that they were personally responsible for their own fate, the medieval Japanese found themselves overwhelmed by the horrible scenes of hell. The "scroll of hell" (*jigoku zōshi*), which depicted a variety of images of unspeakable suffering in the pits of hell, was a regular companion to medieval Buddhist didacticism. During the late medieval period, the *etoki bikuni*, or "painting-recitation nuns"—which included those who were later commonly known as the Kumano nuns—owed much of their religious popularity to their ability to preach about the scroll of hell, which highlighted posthumous sufferings in the hell of *rokudō* cosmology.[42] The terrifying scenes portrayed in the scroll, particularly the "Heart Visualization and the Mandala of the Ten Realms" (*Kanjin jikkai mandara*), which came in various editions, allowed no one to forget the need to safeguard one's future life. In particular, images of ill-fated women writhing in agony in a bloody pond or being punished with childlessness exacerbated women's fear of Buddhist condemnation. The medieval Japanese took very seriously the merciless working of karmic causality, which emphasized the moral responsibility of each individual.

From the early seventeenth century on, however, the painting-recitation nuns began to lose much of their previous appeal as preachers of the *rokudō* cosmology, which had once gripped the medieval Japanese. As time progressed, many of these nuns gradually became street singers, entertainers, prostitutes, wandering mendicants, or the wives of petty Buddhist preachers (*yamabushi*), particularly from the Tenna-Genroku years (1681–1704), which ushered in the boom of a commercial economy.[43] The message of karmic retribution, once a powerful weapon for these street preachers, was being heard less and less. Already in 1661, in his *Tōkaidō meishoki* (Record of famous places along the Tōkaidō Highway), Asai Ryōi (1612–91) commented on what he perceived as Kumano *bikuni*: "While one was not aware of it, [Kumano nuns] stopped chanting. Although still visiting Kumano and Ise, [they] neither practice austerities nor

keep precepts. [They] even do not know how to explicate the scrolls, but, instead, only treasure singing. . . . 'One of the five heaviest punishments shall be meted out to those who violate precept-keeping nuns,' says a Buddhist sūtra, but, sadly, it is nuns themselves who eagerly initiate peddling out [their bodies]."[44]

It is true that the seventeenth-century metamorphosis of *etoki bikuni* was expedited by the Tokugawa government, which tried to do away with itinerant religious entrepreneurs involved in street solicitation. In 1614, Tokugawa Ieyasu determined that public religious solicitations should be subjected to government approval. Thereafter, *bakufu* officials began to tightly regulate solicitation activities in terms of duration, area, and format, while controlling the free movement of wandering religious practitioners. All this was a serious blow to Kumano nuns, whose livelihood depended upon the generosity of public donations.[45] In 1659, for example, the bulletin board at the entrance of Kiji Bridge in Edo warned that the Kumano nuns settled in the residential ward in Inner Kanda should follow government regulations regarding their movements and contact with outsiders.[46] Many of the itinerant nuns, who used to roam the city freely, were gradually segregated into separate settlements as their social functions were transformed. According to the edict on Kumano nuns, which was issued in the 1660s, those who were engaged in religious activities without having "climbed the [Kumano] mountain" and having spent a certain period of time in disciplinary training were defined as illegal mendicants and were subject to control. Many of these mendicant nuns, who could not afford a retreat to Kumano and so failed to obtain a license, were accordingly cut off from the Kumano organization, commonly known as *Hongan jiin* (Temples of the Original Vow), and soon fell into poverty.[47] In 1706, when the shogunate issued edicts banning the solicitations of alms-gathering nuns and warned people to stay away from them in the name of "good moral order," the religious functionality of these women, who had previously captured the religious imagination of the populace with their skillful recitations dealing with the afterlife and hell, was much diminished.[48]

However, it would be naïve to attribute the gradual dissipation of the didactic utility of hell scrolls entirely to the Tokugawa policy of trying to contain the travel of *etoki bikuni*. One must look at the diminishing appeal of the religious message that the fate of one's soul is the consequence of one's own moral behavior and/or reli-

gious devotion.[49] By the mid-seventeenth century, the ghastly images of hell were being replaced with the idea of a religious path that promised liberation from the cycle of endless transmigration. And this path featured familial Buddhism, which would be fully institutionalized into the *danka* system, rather than individual Buddhism. The task of saving one's soul through one's own religious actions, which had been a mainstay of medieval Buddhism, gave way to a family-centered ritualism designed to elevate the deceased to the status of an ancestral deity, or *sorei*.[50] One's spirit, which was deified with the help of familial funerary rituals and through ancestral rites of oblation, was known as a *hotoke* (literally, a Buddha) and believed to be a divine being who had wholly transcended the domain of karmic transmigration.[51] Relieved of their anxiety over karmic causality, the Tokugawa Japanese increasingly believed that their spirits could be saved as long as their descendants practiced familial Buddhism, which was now locked into the *danka* system.

Familial death rituals and ancestral rites of oblation were indeed heralded as the solution to what might be dubbed the "problem of death and hell." Yasumaru Yoshio sums up the change: "Dead spirits, which had been an object of worry in the medieval period, were, through the mediation of Buddhism, incorporated into the order of this world; and from the early modern period the practice of venerating ancestral spirits served as the foundation of order in Japanese society."[52] It is ironic that, under the *danka* system, Buddhism ended up neutralizing the notion of Buddhist karma that it had so treasured during the medieval period. The Buddhism related to familial and ancestral death rites, and commonly practiced in Tokugawa Japan, may be referred to as "funerary Buddhism" (*sōshiki Bukkyō*).

To be sure, the term "funerary Buddhism," which correlates with the title of Tamamuro Taijō's book *Sōshiki Bukkyō*, is not free from the burden of ideology. Some scholars and Buddhist critics use this term to underline the negative features of the *danka* system that left Buddhism bereft of its original spiritual value. On the other hand, scholars of Jōdoshinshū practices point out that funerary Buddhism was not as marked in that sect as in others, even though, under the threat of anti-Christian suppression, Jōdoshinshū monks and their followers were all eventually forced to incorporate ancestral rites into their religious practice.[53] The term "funerary Buddhism" is not completely free of controversy; nonetheless, it succinctly cap-

tures the socio-religious nature of Tokugawa Buddhism as it operated within the framework of the *danka* system.[54]

How and when did funerary Buddhism begin to take root in the family life of ordinary Japanese? In understanding how funerary Buddhism permeated the populace, we first need to clarify within what religious context it was practiced. Scholars who regard "ancestor worship" as a quintessential Japanese cultural tradition often ascribe it to the *danka* system. However, Ōkuwa Hitoshi notes that the Tokugawa Japanese rarely used the term *sosen sūhai*, which refers to ancestor worship. What they used, continues Ōkuwa, were such terms as *senzo matsuri* or *sosen saishi*, which can be rendered as "rites for ancestors" or "ancestral rites." These concepts stress the ritual aspect, not the ideational aspect, of ancestral veneration. In a religious context, ancestral rites (*sosen saishi*) and ancestor worship (*sosen sūhai*) stand in contrast to one another: with regard to the former, one becomes an ancestor because one's spirit receives ritual veneration; with regard to the latter, after death one automatically becomes an ancestor and so becomes an object of ancestral worship.[55] In other words, with "ancestral rites" there can be no ancestors without the offering of rituals, while with "ancestor worship" there are always ancestors, with or without rituals. Based on this distinction, Ōkuwa suggests that the concept of "ancestor worship" fails to capture Tokugawa Japan's notion of ancestral veneration, which was premised on the religious efficacy of rituals in relation to creating and maintaining ancestors rather than on the divinity of ancestors as objects of worship.[56] The universal practice of funerary Buddhism in Tokugawa Japan, which featured death rituals and ancestral rites, bespoke the arrival of a new age—an age of ancestral veneration.

In ancient Japan, the word *hōmuru*, which means "to bury," was often read as *haburu*, which means "to throw away" or "to discard." As this indicates, in ancient times funerals often consisted simply of dumping the dead body.[57] According to the *Shoku Nihon kōki* (Later chronicles of Japan continued), in 842, Kyoto officials collected and incinerated as many as 5,500 corpses, all of which had been abandoned in the inner city and on the riverbeds. The *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* (Veritable records of three Japanese reigns) states that in 883, the court ordered local officials to bury the abandoned corpses that could be seen from the pathways taken by the envoy from Palhae (Pohai) Kingdom.[58] Similarly, it is said that Kūya (903–72), a well-

known mendicant monk, often gathered dead bodies that had been deserted in the wilderness and cremated them after blessing them by reciting Buddha's name. As the *Konjaku monogatarishū* (Tales of times now and past), the *Shasekishū* (Collection of sand and pebbles) of Mujū Ichien (1226–1312), and other works of narrative literature inform us, the custom of discarding corpses—particularly corpses of the lower classes and of those who had no family—persisted into the medieval period.[59] It is true that courtiers conducted formal funerary services and erected mausoleums for their deceased family members; however, in most cases, as Tanaka Hisao notes, even these aristocrats did not feel obliged to offer regular memorial services for their ancestors, often going so far as to neglect their burial sites.[60]

It was not until the late medieval period that people, both high and low, began to pay serious attention to the well-being of the spirits of their deceased family members. From the early seventeenth century, Buddhist death rituals and memorial services, which were designed to facilitate the process of transforming the deceased's spirit into a benign ancestral deity outside the rule of karma, gained wide currency across all classes.[61] Yanagita Kunio (1875–1962), a founding father of Japanese folklore, characterized the nature of these Buddhist death-related rituals as a process of purifying one's soul so that it could ascend to the status of *kami*. He even determined that this process had nothing to with the notion of improving one's karma.[62] Indeed, the Tokugawa Japanese believed that, once it was posthumously deified, and as long as its descendants venerated it, the spirit of a dead person was assured divine status in a realm not bound to the law of karmic reward and retribution. Attaining the divine status of ancestral *kami* in the Shinto sense required, ironically, not Shinto rituals, but Buddhist rituals of ancestral veneration. The ancestral *kami*, which were created and honored through "Buddhist" rituals, were a major feature of the *danka* system and offered an avenue for the spiritual well-being of early modern families.

The new mode of Buddhist death rituals and ancestral veneration reciprocated a shift in family structure, which was moving from the medieval extended family to a monogamous nuclear family household (*tankon shōkazoku*). In most cases, a stem family, in which there was no more than one couple in each generation made up of father, mother, children, and sometimes grandparents, demanded spiritual support that would foster its independence and solidarity.[63] This support took the form of household-based Buddhist death ritu-

als and ancestral veneration focused upon the stem-lineage of the conjugal family unit. In contrast, in the preceding extended family system, the focus of ritual devotion was the main family lineage, to the detriment of branch family members, who were discouraged from asserting their own independent lineages. For branch family members, the custom of ancestral veneration was a constant reminder of their inferior status and their need to submit to the main family lineage. However, the monogamous nuclear family system in the Tokugawa period had its own means of sanctification, which featured familial Buddhist death rituals, ancestral rites, and notions of filial piety.[64] In Part II, I explore the crisscrossing issues of the *danka* system, death rituals and ancestral rites, and early modern households in Tokugawa society.

I discuss in Part III how, against a backdrop of anti-Christianity, *danna* households, Buddhist monks and institutions, and the state were mutually involved in matters of death and ancestral veneration. Unlike in premodern China and Korea, where Buddhism was commonly understood to be antithetical to family values, early modern Japan championed Buddhism as a way of sustaining harmony between family and society. Empowered with funerary Buddhism, Buddhist monks in Tokugawa Japan took advantage of the inaction and disinterest of other religious traditions. It was always obvious that, given its fundamental makeup, Shinto could not function as a dispenser of death-related rituals. Shinto was extremely sensitive to any source of pollution, and of all sources of pollution, death was considered to be the most defiling. Further, Japanese Confucianism, which had been ascendant among Zen monks and courtiers from the late medieval period, was far removed from the ritual arena of ancestral veneration, standing in stark contrast to Chinese and Korean Confucianism. In Tokugawa Japan, Confucianism was by and large considered to be an intellectual discipline concerned with political economy and social engineering rather than a wellspring of familial ritual life. The religious vacuum created by Shinto and Confucianism thus offered Buddhism a golden opportunity to come to the fore. Although Buddhist monks styled themselves as "renunciants" (*shukkesha*) who had left their families and the secular world, they emerged within the *danka* system as arbiters of family affairs pertaining to death and ancestral veneration.

The role of Buddhist monks as arbiters of family rituals did not pose any problem to the government, even though the *bakufu* was

keen to keep the Buddhist clergy in check. Already in the early decades of the seventeenth century, such highly regarded shogunal advisors as Konchiin Sūden and Tenkai (1536–1643), who had experienced the political turmoil caused by the collision between the Law of the Buddha and the Law of the King, made sure that Buddhist institutions served the regime.[65] Family rituals comprised an arena of social control in which Buddhist institutions could offer their service to the Law of the King. When this vision was coupled with the regime's anti-Christian policy, the shogunate could effectively subordinate the Law of the Buddha to its tacit approval of the *danka* system.

Once incorporated into the apparatus of shogunal governance, however, Buddhist temples did not remain passive agents of shogunal policy; rather, they strove to carve out spaces within which they could advance their own ends, often targeting the same pool of resources—whether political, economic, or social—as did the government. The tactics of Buddhist temples usually came down to implementing, through the leverage of annual religious inspection, a variety of schemes designed to secure the patronage of funerary *danna* households. Buddhist death rituals and ancestral rites were promoted as a sort of social "norm" to which the *danna* households were expected to subscribe: people were to die Buddhist and to venerate ancestral deities within the framework of the *danka* system. Every new death reinforced the prescription of Buddhist death, and ancestral rites, which were conducted throughout the year—regularly, on such occasions as the New Year, Higan (celebrations of the vernal and autumnal equinoxes), and Bon (a festival in the seventh month), as well as irregularly—were a constant reminder of the mandate of the *danka* system. Squeezed between the Law of the Buddha and the Law of the King, the Tokugawa Japanese often found themselves struggling to satisfy both.

It should therefore come as no surprise that Buddhist death rituals and ancestral rites, despite their posture as familial affairs, often became a site of competition, resistance, and negotiation between the government, Buddhist temples, and *danna* households. The government tried to keep the growing power of Buddhist temples in check and to tweak various regulatory measures in order to control the Buddhist clergy, while the temples continued to extract income and compliance from the populace. Disenchanted, anti-Buddhist critics charged Buddhist temples and their members of being corrupt and

demanded that they start practicing material frugality and clerical honesty. In an extreme case during the 1660s, local lords such as Ikeda Mitsumasa (1609–82) of the Okayama domain, Tokugawa Mitsukuni (1628–1700) of the Mito domain, and Hoshina Masayuki (1611–72) of the Aizu domain, moved to execute a draconian anti-Buddhist measure known as the "retrenchment of Buddhist temples" (*jiin seiri*). Many Buddhist temples in these domains were demolished, and hundreds of Buddhist monks were defrocked and returned to practicing agriculture.[66]

In spite of such pressure and harassment, Buddhist institutions did not back down. Resorting to their right of religious inspection, Buddhist monks stressed the inseparability of anti-Christianity, Buddhist rituals for the dead, and ancestral veneration. These efforts contributed to the integration of family rituals into the governing apparatus of the *danka* system. Over time, rites for a deceased family member were gradually standardized into three stages: a funeral; a series of thirteen postfuneral memorial services, known as the "thirteen Buddhist rites" (*jūsan butsuji*), which were conducted over a period of about three decades; and the annual veneration of the ancestral deity.[67] The Tokugawa Japanese, who followed the multistage ritual practice of Buddhist death, believed that paying homage to ancestral deities was good in itself, indispensable for the well-being of the household, and by extension, good for society in general. Having been brought to funerary Buddhism, *danna* households maintained, or at least tried to maintain, good relations with their funerary temples by fulfilling their obligations to them. In return, funerary temples tended to the religious needs of their patrons. As for the *bakufu*, the social harmony that the *danka* system seemed to foster was something to be protected despite the government's desire to check and control the Buddhist clergy.

That said, however, the *danka* system was not immune from conflict and disruption. Disputes between funerary temples and their patron households were not unusual. In many cases, those disputes took the form of "leaving the *danna* affiliation" (*ridan*) or of "unauthorized egress and ingress" (*fuhō deiri*) to another funerary temple. When a dispute arose, the temple usually tried to avoid losing its funerary patron, while the latter tried to justify switching to another temple. In Tokugawa society, where precedent was taken very seriously, disputes over the issue of "leaving the *danna* affiliation" posed a quandary to the public authorities, who tended to give pri-

ority to social stability. When the dispute was aggravated to the point of collective action, it could slip out of control and even develop into a political problem. As far as the government was concerned, a lopsided relationship between a *danna* household and its temple was not desirable. While trying to find the appropriate balance of power between the temple and the household, the public authorities often found themselves facing a delicate issue of social order. Tipping the balance, even slightly, could result in unpredictable chain reactions.

Thus, the manner in which *danna* households, funerary temples, and the state came to terms with the *danka* system reflected the inner dynamics of Tokugawa society—dynamics that were tangled up with socio-ethical arguments for ancestral veneration, with the state apparatus for population surveillance, and with discourses regarding the proper social location of Buddhism. The *danka* system, practiced in terms of claims and counterclaims, rights and obligations, and political control and religious autonomy, was neither static nor monochromatic. Its social topography was complicated by cooperation and competition over money, power, and social influence.

Looking at the larger picture, how did the state utilize the social customs of, and ethical values embedded within, funerary Buddhism for the purposes of social engineering? In a society in which ritual served as a marker of social status, private funeral rituals could not escape the radar of state censure when they become excessively luxurious or pretentious. Public authorities tried to incorporate people who followed various local customs and attitudes into an overarching system of Buddhist death and to make the latter socially accountable. For their part, the people tried to utilize their familial rituals in order to assert a sense of social standing, dignity, autonomy, and/or social resistance.

The *danka* system was never an isolated phenomenon; it was always part of the evolving Tokugawa social system. Thus, the question of why so many temples emerged between the late sixteenth century and the mid-seventeenth century, and of how they were able to maintain themselves, involves analyzing the construction and evolution of Tokugawa society in relation to funerary Buddhism. In Part III, I examine the social practices of the *danka* system, which arose with, was perpetuated by, and adapted to an overabundance of Buddhist temples. In so doing, I shed light on the dynamics of the power relationships among and between religious practice, fam-

ily, and the state. Through political pressure (anti-Christian religious inspection), ideological persuasion (the imperative of Buddhist death and ancestral veneration), and sentiment (filial piety and social harmony), the agents of the *danka* system (i.e., Buddhism, family, and public authority) demonstrated that the Tokugawa social order remained a site subject to cooperation, competition, and conflict.[68] In illuminating the social matrix of funerary Buddhism, it is therefore important to look at the "perceived norm" of Buddhist death as a socio-religious institution in which the Tokugawa social order was communicated, experienced, and contested. Funerary Buddhism was a corollary of the process of social power that embodied and articulated the basic notions and values of the Tokugawa Japanese.[69]

In order to evaluate the relations of power that characterized the socio-religious practice of the *danka* system, I show in Part IV how Shinto priests strove to circumvent the Buddhist grip on funerary rites. In dealing with this issue, one thing should be clear: no matter how hard Shinto priests petitioned for a "Shinto funeral" (*Shintō sōsai*) for one of their own, public authorities would not countenance them. When their petition (which was often prolonged and disputatious) reached its limit, the government reluctantly allowed the head priest in question and his heir apparent—but only these two—to be granted a Shinto funeral. This kind of exception was rarely granted, and, when it was, it was rarely allowed to extend past one generation. The government's primary concern was to ensure that this did not disrupt the *danka* system, which was now inseparable from the practice of anti-Christian religious inspection. No matter how fed up they were, until long past the twilight of the Tokugawa period, Shinto priests would never be entirely free from the religious dominance of funerary Buddhism.[70]

Indeed, the persistence of the *danka* system speaks to the nature of the social order that, for more than two centuries, underpinned Tokugawa Japan. It was a social order that was institutionalized through anti-Christian religious inspection and cemented through funerary Buddhism. In this way, Buddhism and the Tokugawa state formed a united front for fighting the "wicked enemy" known as Christianity—an alien religion that threatened the peace and order of Japan from without. It was believed that Christian missionaries and their Japanese collaborators were not only corrupting the foundation of the divine country through deceptive religious teachings but also through bribes. It was even argued that each month, the

country of Tartar (home to a Mongolian people) sent monies to Japanese Kirishitan![71] The shogunate's perception of Christianity as a threat stood in stark contrast to Christian missionaries' efforts to abide by the law of Japan. Evidence of a Christian threat had not actually been found, but this did not matter.[72] *Bakufu* leaders continued to link the task of rooting out the "national enemy" to that of consolidating an overarching governing order that bound the populace to the *bakuhan* system.

However, the anti-Christian situation could not last forever: with the arrival of a new age, during which the structure of government was massively overhauled in the wake of the Meiji Restoration, radical change began to occur. Amid the increasing pressure of the Western powers, which demanded tolerance of Christianity, Meiji leaders realized that their anti-Christian stance was not sustainable. Charged with implementing a new vision of a Shinto state, they nonetheless tried to replace funerary Buddhism with Shinto funerals, but this did not work out as they had hoped. After a period of trial and error, the Meiji government, which was eventually forced to lift the ban on Christianity, decided to stop manipulating the custom of death rituals that was so deeply rooted in the *danka* system.

In sum, *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan* explores the following major themes: (1) how and why Buddhist institutions came to serve as an administrative vehicle for the anti-Christian policy of the Tokugawa state, thus resulting in the institutionalization of the *danka* system; (2) how Buddhist institutions subjected the entire population to the *danka* system, thereby imbuing death rituals and ancestral rites with a Buddhist character and so incorporating Buddhism into the modus operandi of Tokugawa Japanese households; and (3) how, under the *danka* system, the paradigm of Buddhist death was imposed, contested, and negotiated among the *danna* households, Buddhist temples, and the state—a process that eventually resulted in the backlash of the Shinto funeral movement.

Reflecting the gravity that held sway not only over the religious lives of the Tokugawa Japanese but also over their entire social existence, scholarly works dealing with the issues of the *danka* system and funerary Buddhism are numerous. In recent years, Western scholarship on Tokugawa Japan has moved beyond the level of sketchy or secondary passing citations, with excellent case studies shedding light on a particular Buddhist sect, region, or period (Hardacre 2002; Vesey 2003; Williams 2005).[73] These research

achievements, which take seriously the road of social or institutional history, are a great contribution to the study of Tokugawa Buddhism and society. However, many current discussions are still by and large troubled by the most basic errors, as the recurring employment of such key terms as "temple registration" and "temple parish system" attests. These terms are either mistaken, misleading, or simply wrong. The total banishment of such erroneous terms and concepts from future writings is one of the goals of *Death and Social Order in Tokugawa Japan*.

Japanese scholarship on the *danka* system and funerary Buddhism is voluminous, detailed, and informative, and many of its works demonstrate a high level of notoriously meticulous Japanese scholarship. Indeed, when addressing certain specific issues, some of this work is superb. Even though all of these works deal with certain aspects of the *danka* system and funerary Buddhism, it is extremely hard to combine them into a coherent whole because they are heavily compartmentalized, fragmented, narrowly specialized along disciplinary lines, and/or scattered throughout innumerable local case studies. Encountering this scholarship is like coming upon a particularly dense forest.

For example, historical or institutional works on the establishment and practice of the *danka* system (Hōzawa 2004; Morioka 1962; Ōkuwa 1968, 1979; Tamamuro Fumio 1987, 1999; Tsuji Zennosuke 1952–55) do not necessarily shed light on how it was ritually operated and culturally implicated. And works on anti-Christianity (Gonoi 1990; Murai 1987, 2002; Ōhashi Yukihiro 2001; Shimizu Hirokazu 1981) rarely proceed to discuss the issue of how it evolved into the *danka* system and funerary Buddhism. As for the issue of how the *danka* system and funerary Buddhism functioned in terms of death rituals and rites of ancestral veneration, this is for the most part seen as the job of such disciplines as folklore or Buddhist studies. However, scholars in these fields (Akata 1980, 1986; Fujii Masao 1983, 1988; Gorai 1992; Inoguchi 1954; Shintani 1983, 1991), with the exception of a very few (Fukuta 2004; Ōtō 1996; Sasaki 1987), usually take a synchronic approach to their material and do not relate it to the historical specifics of early modern society, economy, and politics. By the same token, historical works that locate the *danka* system and funerary Buddhism within the wider political, social, or cultural context of Tokugawa Japan (Arimoto 1995, 2002; Mori 1993; Toyoda 1982; Yasumaru 1974) usually dissipate into fragmented discussions according

to disciplinary or subdisciplinary divisions. Discussions of Shinto funeral movements (Kondo 1990; Okada Shōji 1997; Sakamoto Koremaru 1994) are not an exception: most of them are case studies, with scholars rarely leaving their period specializations to cross the border demarcating Tokugawa and Meiji Japan.

As if reflecting the patchwork nature of the *bakuhan* system that was premised upon the principles of domanial autonomy and self-reliance, extant works on the *danka* system and funerary Buddhism resist interdisciplinary, intersectarian, interperiod, interterritorial, or interregional communication. They are scattered and fragmented. The need to surmount this lack of synthesis and contiguity is paramount. By focusing on death and social order, this book offers a new approach to the far-reaching ramifications of the *danka* system and funerary Buddhism, which were never practiced in isolation from the wider political, cultural, and socioeconomic contexts of early modern Japan.