

Study and Uses of the *I Ching* in Tokugawa Japan

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The *I Ching* 易經 (Book of Changes) has been a book of particular significance and interest in East Asian history. Divination on its basis and philosophy derived from it were integral parts of Chinese civilization. Being within the orbit of the Chinese cultural sphere, traditional Japan was indebted to the *I Ching* for the development of aspects of its culture. The text arrived in Japan no later than the sixth century and was little studied in ancient Japan (539-1186). Its readership expanded to major literate groups such as Zen Buddhist monks, courtiers, and high-ranking warriors in the medieval period (1186-1603).¹ *I Ching* scholarship reached its apex during the Tokugawa period (1603-1868) when the *I Ching* became one of the most popular and influential Chinese texts.² This essay is a preliminary work which aims to provide a brief overview of *I Ching* scholarship in Tokugawa Japan, highlighting several themes: the popularity of the text, the major schools, scholars, and writings, and the characteristics of *I Ching* scholarship.³

The Popularity of the *I Ching*

The popularity of the *I Ching* in Tokugawa Japan has been acknowledged by a number of Japanese scholars. Miyazaki Michio 宮崎道生, a scholar of Tokugawa thought, has remarked: "There was a consensus reached by [Tokugawa] Confucians

¹ For a historical overview of the text in pre-Tokugawa Japan, see Wai-ming Ng, "The *I Ching* in Ancient Japan," *Asian Culture Quarterly* 26.2 (Summer 1996), pp. 73-76; and Wai-ming Ng "The History of the *I Ching* in Medieval Japan," *Journal of Asian History* 30.2, forthcoming.

² The *Hsiao Ching* 孝經 (Book of Filial Piety) and *Lun Yü* 論語 (Analects) seem to have exerted a stronger impact on ancient and medieval Japan than the *I Ching*. When *I Ching* scholarship reached its apex in the Tokugawa period, its popularity and influence matched, and even surpassed, those of these two classics.

³ This is a new research topic and secondary materials are extremely limited. Imai Usaburô 今井宇三郎 provides a brief account of the text's history in Japan in the "preface" to his translation, *Ekikyô* 易經 (Tokyo: Meiji tosho shuppansha, 1987). Murakami Masataka 村上雅孝 studies the punctuation of some early Tokugawa commentaries in "Kinsei ekigaku juyô shi ni okeru Gahôten *Ekikyô hongî no igi*" 近世易学受容史における鵜峰点易經本義の意義, *Bungei kenkyû* 文芸研究 100 (1982), pp. 79-88, and in "Bunshi Genshō to *Shûeki dengi taizen*" 文之玄昌と周易伝義大全, *Nihon bunka kenkyûjo kenkyû hôkoku* 日本文化研究所研究報告 25 (1989), pp. 19-60. See also Hama Hisao 浜久雄, "Itô Tôgai no ekigaku" 伊藤東涯の易学, *Tôyô kenkyû* 東洋研究 90 (1989), pp. 1-31. A number of articles on its divinational methods can be found in the journal published by Waseda University, *Ekikyô kenkyû* 易經研究 (1958-83).

regarding the *I Ching* as the highest classic.”⁴ Imai Usaburô, a leading scholar of the *I Ching*, has commented: “Supported by the *bakufu*’s policy towards Confucianism, *I Ching* studies and *I Ching* divination prospered as never before during the Tokugawa period.”⁵ I will provide a statistical analysis to demonstrate the popularity of the text by analyzing the number of authors and writings on it and the importation and reproduction of Chinese commentaries.

An early attempt to count the number of Confucian writings in the Tokugawa period was made by Terada Hiroshi 寺田弘, an ex-official of Satsuma domain, in the Meiji period (1868-1912). He provided the following statistics in the *Nihon keikai* 日本經解 (An Explanation of Confucian Books in Japan):⁶

Table 1A: Confucian Writings in the Tokugawa Period

Confucian Classics	No. of Books	No. of Authors
<i>I Ching</i> 易經	338	116
<i>Shu Ching</i> 書經	124	68
<i>Hsiao Ching</i> 孝經	116	81
<i>Ch'un Ch'iu</i> 春秋	108	75
<i>Shih Ching</i> 詩經	90	60
<i>Li Chi</i> 禮記	37	33

According to Terada, there were 338 texts written about the *I Ching* by 116 Tokugawa scholars. His calculations indicate that it was more popular by an overwhelmingly margin than the other Confucian classics in the Tokugawa period.

During the Taishô period (1912-1926), Hayashi Taisuke 林泰輔, a former professor of Chinese philosophy at the University of Tokyo, revised these figures in the *Nihon keikai sômokuroku* 日本經解總目錄 (A Complete Index of the *Nihon keikai*, four volumes). He raised the number of books and authors to 395 and 212, respectively.⁷

⁴ Miyazaki Michio, *Kumazawa Banzan no kenkyû* 熊沢蕃山の研究 (Tokyo: Shibunkaku, 1990), p. 256.

⁵ *Ekikyô*, p. 76.

⁶ The *Nihon keikai* (also called *Dai Nihon keikai mokuroku* 大日本經解目錄) was compiled by Terada Hiroshi and collated by Shigeno Seisai 重野成齋 (1826-1910) in the Meiji period. The book closely followed the format of Ch'ing scholar Juan Yüan's 阮元 (1764-1849) *Huang-ch'ing ching-chieh* 皇清經解 (An Explanation of Confucian Books in the Ch'ing Period) and Wang Hsien-ch'ien's 王先謙 (1842-1918) *Huang-ch'ing ching-chieh hsü-pien* 皇清經解續編 (*Huang-ch'ing ching-chieh*, Supplement, 1886-88). See Uchino Dairei 内野台嶺, “*Nihon keikai ni tsuite*” 日本經解について, in Fukushima Kinezô 福島甲子三, ed., *Kindai Nihon no Jugaku* 近代日本の儒學 (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1939), pp. 1132-35.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 1141-43.

Table 1B: Confucian Writings in the Tokugawa Period

Confucian Classics	No. of Books	No. of Authors
<i>I Ching</i> 易經	395	212
<i>Lun Yü</i> 論語	363	261
<i>Ta Hsueh</i> 大學	246	183
<i>Ch'un Ch'iu</i> 春秋	224	164
<i>Hsiao Ching</i> 孝經	199	144
<i>Shih Ching</i> 詩經	173	131
<i>Meng Tzu</i> 孟子	169	126
<i>Chung Yung</i> 中庸	168	131
<i>Shu Ching</i> 書經	147	111
<i>Li Chi</i> 禮記	144	91

These prewar statistics are rough and underestimated. My own count suggests much larger figures: I have found the titles of 1085 texts on the *I Ching* written by at least 416 authors in the Tokugawa period. Although precise figures for other Confucian classics are not available, studies of the *I Ching* seem to far exceed those of other Confucian classics in terms of number of authors and the quantity of writings commenting on the book. I classify these authors as follows:

Table 2: Authors Commenting on the *I Ching* in the Tokugawa Period

Categories	Schools	No. of Authors	Percent	Rank
Confucianism (354/85.1%)	Chu Hsi school	204	49	1
	Ancient school	42	10.1	4
	Wang Yang-ming school	13	3.1	/
	Eclectic school	46	11.1	3
	Oracle school	49	11.8	2
Schools of Thought and Religion (39/9.4%)	Shinto	1	/	/
	National learning	10	2.4	/
	Mito school	4	/	/
	<i>Shingaku</i>	1	/	/
	Buddhism	19	4.6	5
	Western learning	4	/	/
Miscellaneous	Medicine, science, art, military, etc.	23	5.5	4
Total	12	416	100	/

It is obvious that Confucianism was the dominant force in *I Ching* scholarship, and that Buddhism and the court in Kyoto no longer played a major intellectual role in the Tokugawa period. This table also indicates that authors came from various backgrounds. The *I Ching* played an integral role in the development of Tokugawa intellectual life.

I divide *I Ching* writings into four major categories according to content and approach: textual interpretation (explanation, commentary, and textual criticism), symbols and numbers, divination, and others.⁸

Table 3: Writings on the *I Ching* in the Tokugawa Period

Categories	Approaches	No. of Books	Percent	Rank
Textual Interpretation (659/60.7%)	Explanation	367	33.8	1
	Commentary	172	15.9	
	Textual Criticism	120	11.0	
Symbols & Numbers	/	146	13.5	3
Divination	/	223	20.5	2
Others	/	57	5.3	4
Total: 4	6	1085	100	

The number of writings matched the Chinese output during the Ch'ing Dynasty.⁹ This table also demonstrates the popularity of textual study of the *I Ching* and the extensive use of the book in divination. About one-third of the writings were interpretations of Tokugawa intellectuals, suggesting a high degree of maturity and independence in Tokugawa scholarship.

The popularity of the text is also evident in the large quantity of Confucian books imported from China. According to the data provided by Ōba Osamu 大庭脩, the *I Ching* topped the list of imported Chinese Confucian classics entering Japan through the port of Nagasaki.¹⁰

⁸ This method of categorization is mainly derived from the Chinese system of classification. Chinese scholars usually divide *I Ching* literature into two main categories: the school of textual interpretation (*i-li* 義理) and the school of symbols and numbers (*hsiang-shu* 象數). They represent two traditions and approaches. The former studies the text, whereas the latter examines its symbols and numbers. The school of textual interpretation has three branches: the school of explanation (*ch'üan-shih* 詮釋), the school of commentary (*chu-shu* 註疏), and the school of textual criticism (*k'ao-cheng* 考證). The explanation school develops interpretations based on a general understanding of the text. The commentary school annotates the text, usually sentence by sentence. The textual criticism school employs sophisticated methods of textual criticism, such as philology, phonetics, and higher criticism, to study the text. In addition, there are two subcurrents in *I Ching* scholarship. The school of divination reads it as a divination manual. "Others" include schools of religion and culture which apply the text's ideas to enrich their theories and rituals.

⁹ According to the index in the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu* 四庫全書 (Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries), the number of writings on the *I Ching* in the early half of Ch'ing China totaled 485, more than a quarter of the Confucian writings (1776) included. See Richard Smith, *China's Cultural Heritage: The Ch'ing Dynasty, 1644-1912* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983), p. 192. This figure was underestimated because the Ch'ing government excluded many unorthodox writings which did not use the *k'ao-cheng* approach or discussed divination. Ch'ing China may have produced thousands of books on the *I Ching*, although precise statistics are not available.

¹⁰ See Ōba Osamu, *Edo jidai ni okeru Tōsen mochiwatarisho no kenkyū* 江戸時代における唐船持渡書の研究 (Suita: Kansai daigaku gakujutsu kenkyūjo, 1967). Ōba's data do not include the importation of books through illegal trade or other channels outside Nagasaki.

Table 4: Importation of Confucian Books in the Tokugawa Period

Books	No. of Titles	Books	No. of Titles
<i>I Ching</i>	118	<i>Ta Hsueh</i>	8
<i>Ch'un Ch'iu</i>	64	<i>Hsiao Ching</i>	5
<i>Shih Ching</i>	44	<i>Meng Tzu</i>	5
<i>Shu Ching</i>	36	<i>Lun Yü</i>	3
<i>San Li</i> 三禮	20	<i>Chung Yung</i>	0

My own count raises the number of imported *I Ching* writings to 219. A small number of books may have come through Korea and the Ryûkyû Kingdom.

Table 5: Importation of Books on the *I Ching* in the Tokugawa Period

Commentaries	Eras	No. of Titles	Percent
Old Commentary (7/ 3.2%)	Han	3	/
	Wei	1	/
	T'ang	3	/
New Commentary (120/ 54.8 %)	Sung	10	4.5
	Yüan	4	/
	Ming	25	11.4
	Ch'ing	81	37.0
Uncertain	Uncertain	92	42.0
Total	Han to Ch'ing	219	100

Most imported books, regardless of when they were produced, were Ch'ing editions. Books listed under the category of "uncertain" were also mainly Ch'ing works.

Another barometer of its popularity was the reproduction of Chinese texts. Tokugawa Japanese reprinted at least 69 Chinese books (166 editions) on the *I Ching*.

Table 6: Reprints of Chinese Writings on the *I Ching* in the Tokugawa Period

Commentaries	Eras	No. of Titles	No. of Editions
Pre-Han	Uncertain	2	12
Pre-Sung (14/36)	Han	3	4
	Six Dynasties	2	13
	Sui	1	1
	T'ang	6	6
Post-Sung (47/121)	Sung	17	69
	Yüan	8	13
	Ming	13	22
	Ch'ing	9	17
Uncertain	Uncertain	8	9
Total	All	69	166

Virtually all important Chinese books on *I Ching* were reprinted. Some of them were reprinted many times by different publishers.¹¹ This is a clear indication of the text's popularity, the influence of Chinese scholarship, and the prominence of Sung commentaries.

There were two major factors contributing to the growth of *I Ching* studies in the Tokugawa period. First, medieval Japanese had laid a solid foundation for Tokugawa scholarship by punctuating, annotating, and reprinting Chinese writings on it. Second, the rise of Neo-Confucianism gave further momentum to *I Ching* studies. Its preference for the *I Ching* became a decisive factor in shaping the intellectual map. Other factors, such as the patronage of the *bakufu* and domains, the intellectual influence of Chinese and Korean scholars, a flourishing publishing industry, a relatively high rate of literacy, the emergence of professional *I Ching* diviners (*ekisha* 易者), and the practicality and flexibility of the text itself, should also be taken into account.¹²

I Ching Studies in the Early Tokugawa Period

During the early Tokugawa period (the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries), Confucian scholars replaced Zen monks as the main force in *I Ching* studies. Although recent research indicates that Confucianism was not the official learning or orthodoxy of early Tokugawa Japan, its vitality and influence were undeniably strong in the intellectual world.¹³ The three schools of Confucianism--the Chu Hsi 朱熹 school, Wang Yang-ming 王陽明 school, and school of ancient learning (*kogaku* 古學)--produced the majority of scholars and writings during this golden period of *I Ching* studies. The Chu Hsi school was the largest school of *I Ching* studies. During the first half of the Tokugawa period, many scholars of the highest caliber emerged from it and contributed their energy to the punctuation and interpretation of Sung commentaries.

The punctuation of Chinese and *Kanbun* works (*kunten* 訓點) helped the Japanese read Chinese texts according to Japanese syntax (*kundoku* 訓讀) by changing the order and pronunciation. The project of punctuating the *I Ching* began in the medieval period with Zen Buddhist monks and courtiers and was largely completed in the seventeenth century by Chu Hsi scholars.¹⁴

¹¹ The most popular texts were the *Chou-i chuan-i* 周易傳義 (fifteen editions), *Chou-i chu* 周易注 (twelve editions), *Chou-i pen-i* 周易本義 (eleven editions), and *I-hsüeh ch'i-meng* 易學啓蒙 (eleven editions).

¹² This section is developed from Wai-ming Ng, "Quantitative Notes on *I Ching* Scholarship in Tokugawa Japan," *Japan Foundation Newsletter* 23.5 (February 1996), pp. 17-19.

¹³ See Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology: Early Constructs, 1570-1680* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) and Watanabe Hiroshi 渡辺浩, *Kinsei Nihon shakai to Sôgaku* 近世日本社会と宋学 (Tokyo: Tôkyô daigaku shuppankai, 1985). I think this view is sound in terms of its analysis of Confucian-*bakufu* relations, but less so in its assessment of the intellectual influence of Neo-Confucianism. Ironically, Neo-Confucianism had lost its early vitality when it was adopted as the official ideology by the *bakufu* during the Kansei era (1789-1800).

¹⁴ I have found seventeen punctuators of the *I Ching* in the Tokugawa Japan. Fifteen of them were Chu Hsi scholars, and two were scholars of the eclectic school. Eleven of them lived in the early Tokugawa, and six in the late Tokugawa. They punctuated 23 (seven pre-Sung and sixteen post-Sung) Chinese commentaries. See Wai-ming Ng, "The Hollyhock and the Hexagrams: The

In the Tokugawa period, Japanese punctuation of the *I Ching* was a task almost exclusively done by Chu Hsi scholars. In particular, the seventeenth century was the age of Japanese punctuation. There were five major punctuators of the text in this period.

(1) Bunshi Genshō (1555-1620) inherited the method started by Keian Genju 桂庵玄樹 (1427-1508). He popularized the Sung school by punctuating two of its most popular *I Ching* textbooks which were used in the Chinese civil service examinations: *Chou-i chuan-i* 周易傳義 and *Chou-i chuan-i ta-ch'üan* 周易傳義大全. Both were combinations of Chu Hsi's (1130-1200) and Ch'eng I's (1033-1107) commentaries. With assistance from a Ming scholar, Huang Yu-hsien 黃友賢 (b. 1538), Bunshi spent seven years finishing his punctuation of a Korean edition of the *Chou-i chuan-i*. Bunshi's punctuated *Chou-i chuan-i* was promoted and published by his student, Tomari Jochiku 泊如竹 (1570-1655), as the *Shûeki keiden* 周易經傳 (24 *kan* in eight volumes) in 1627. Bunshi did not finish punctuating the *Chou-i chuan-i ta-ch'üan*; two unfinished chapters were later punctuated by his student, Seien 正圓, in 1627.¹⁵

(2) Fujiwara Seika 藤原惺窩 (1561-1619) punctuated the *I Chuan* and *Chou-i chuan-i* with the help of a Korean Chu Hsi scholar, Kang Hang 羌伉 (1567-1618). The former text was adopted by the *bakufu*'s Confucian academy as a textbook during the Genroku period (1688-1703).¹⁶

(3) Hayashi Razan 林羅山 (1583-1657) punctuated the *Chou-i pen-i* 周易本義, *Chou-i chuan-i*, and *Chou-i chuan-i ta-ch'üan*. Razan's punctuated *Chou-i pen-i* was improved and published by his son, Hayashi Gahō 林鵝峰 (1618-1680), in 1664 and later became an official edition.¹⁷

(4) Yamazaki Ansai 山崎闇齋 (1618-1682) punctuated Chu Hsi's three books: *Chou-i pen-i* (in 1675), *I-hsüeh ch'i-meng* 易學啓蒙 (in 1677), and *I-kua k'ao-wu* 蓍卦考誤. The first two became official editions in the eighteenth century.

(5) Matsunaga Sun'un 松永寸雲 (1618-1680) punctuated the *I-ching chi-chu* 易經集註 and *Chou-i chuan-i*; both were combinations of Chu Hsi's and Ch'eng I's commentaries. They were published in 1664 and reprinted many times thereafter.

Thanks to these five punctuators, all of Chu Hsi's and Ch'eng I's commentaries were punctuated and published in the early Tokugawa period. Most of their punctuated books were reprinted multiple times by both official and private publishers throughout the Tokugawa period.

Chu Hsi scholars also began to develop their own interpretations and commentaries. In general, however, their explanatory works on Sung commentaries were

I Ching in Tokugawa Thought and Culture" (Ph. D. dissertation: Princeton University, 1996), p. 37.

¹⁵ On the relationship between the two books punctuated by Bunshi, see "Bunshi Genshō to *Shûeki dengi taizen*," pp. 19-60.

¹⁶ Since the early Tokugawa period, some people have alleged that Seika pilfered Bunshi's punctuation. The first to make this accusation was Jochiku in the *Kikigaki* 聞書 (A Book of Hearings). This issue has yet to be settled by modern scholars. Nishimura Tenshū 西村天囚 (1865-1924), Ijichi Ieyasu 伊地知委安, and Inoue Tetsujirō 井上哲次郎 (1885-1944) have maintained that the text was pilfered, whereas Ōe Fumiki 大江文城 and Abe Yoshio 阿部吉雄 believe Seika to be innocent. See Abe Yoshio, *Nihon Shushigaku to Chōsen* 日本朱子学と朝鮮 (Tokyo reprint: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai, 1965), p. 69.

¹⁷ On the differences between Razan's and Gahō's punctuations, see "Kinsei ekigaku juyō shi ni okeru Gahōten *Ekikyō hongī* no igi," pp. 79-88.

more safe than stimulating, because they attempted to be faithful to Chu Hsi's commentaries.

Fujiwara Seika favored Ch'eng I's *I Chuan* and Chu Hsi's *Chou-i pen-i*. His understanding of Sung texts was influenced by Yüan and Ming scholarship. For example, following the Yüan-Ming practice, he combined these two books in his readings. He held that the essence of the Chu Hsi school could only be attained through a secret transmission of the *I Ching*. It is commonly believed that he passed his teaching on to Hayashi Razan. Razan studied under the guidance of a disciple of Kiyohara Hidekata's 清原秀賢 in his youth. He recalled that he had not read important Sung commentaries, such as the *I-hsüeh ch'i-meng*, *T'ai-chi t'u shuo* 太極圖說, and *Huang-chi ching-shih shu* 皇極經世書, until he turned to Seika for guidance.¹⁸ According to a record kept in the library of the Hayashi family, before giving Razan a book, *Ekigaku zukai* 易學圖解 (An Illustrative Explanation of the *I Ching*), which explained various *I Ching* charts and diagrams, Seika had Razan make a pledge that he would not transmit this teaching to anymore except one of Razan's own sons.¹⁹ Like Seika, Razan also relied heavily on the *Chou-i chuan-i* and *Chou-i chuan-i ta-ch'üan*, and he developed some interesting political and religious views from his reading of the *I Ching*.

Hayashi Gahô's interpretations of the *I Ching* surpassed his father's. Unlike Seika and Razan, he opposed the common practice of combining the Chu Hsi and Ch'eng I commentaries. He wrote: "The *Chou-i ta-ch'üan* appeared and combined Ch'eng I's *I Chuan* and Chu Hsi's *Chou-i pen-i* together. Although the teaching of Chu Hsi is in agreement with that of Ch'eng I, his ideas on the *I Ching* are different. Although the *Chou-i pen-i* is very popular, it mixes with elements from Ch'eng I's *I Chuan*. As a result, the meaning of the ancient *I Ching* is not understood."²⁰ He pointed out that the *I Chuan* offered fine textual interpretation, whereas the *Chou-i pen-i* was better in its analysis of symbols and numbers. He studied them separately and wrote a number of books. His representative works were the *Shûeki hongî shikô* 周易本義私考 (My Investigation of the *Chou-i pen-i*, 1662, thirteen *kan*) and *Shûeki kunten idô* 周易訓點異同 (Similarities and Differences in the Punctuation of the *I Ching*, 1677).

Yamazaki Ansai was a great scholar of the *I Ching*.²¹ Believing it was the most important book to come to Japan from China, he made great efforts to restore the true teachings of Chu Hsi and to distinguish Chu Hsi's scholarship from the distorted ideas that had been the byproduct of the textbooks used for the civil service examinations. He

¹⁸ This account is questionable. Razan read the *Chou-i chuan-i ta-ch'üan* before he met Seika. The Hayashi family liked to contrast Seika and Razan with Hidekata and misleadingly portrayed Hidekata and his family as stubborn supporters of the old commentary. Actually the Kiyohara family began to adopt the new commentary as early as the early fifteenth century. Indeed, almost all traditions of *I Ching* scholarship in the late medieval period used both the new as well as the old commentary. Seika and Razan represented a continuation of, rather than a departure from, this trend.

¹⁹ I think this story may have been fabricated by the Hayashi family to legitimize their orthodoxy. The real successor to Seika's *I Ching* scholarship seems to have been Matsunaga Sekigo 松永尺五 (1592-1657) who lectured Toyotomi Hideyori 豊臣秀吉 (1593-1615) on the text.

²⁰ In the "preface" of Hayashi Gahô (punctuated), *Ekikyô hongî* (1674, five *kan*). Quoted in "Kinsei ekigaku juyô shi ni okeru Gahôten *Ekikyô hongî* no igi," pp. 81-82.

²¹ Ooms is right to point out that Ansai's scholarship of the *I Ching* has often been overlooked. *Tokugawa Ideology*, p. 203.

was critical of all post-Sung commentaries and opposed the fusion of the Chu Hsi and Ch'eng I commentaries.²² He was proud to have reconstructed a lost Chu Hsi commentary on the *I Ching*, *Shueki engi* 朱易衍義 (An Explication of Chu Hsi's Commentaries on the *I Ching*, 1677, three kan). This book was later adopted by the Tokugawa authorities as the official text in the eighteenth century. Ansai put great emphasis on the *I Ching* in education and made the Ansai school the most important and productive force in *I Ching* studies within the Chu Hsi school. In his four-stage curriculum, the *Chou-i pen-i* and *I Chuan* were the readings for the final stage in a student's development.²³ The *I Ching* occupied a central position in the school. Most of Ansai's disciples, including Satô Naokata 佐藤直方 (1639-1719), Asami Keisai 淺見綱齋 (1652-1711), and Miyake Shôsai 三宅尚齋 (1662-1741) specialized in it.²⁴ Disagreement over interpretations of the text later brought internal strife to the school.²⁵

Kaibara Ekken 貝原益軒 (1630-1714) studied under Ansai and Matsunaga Sekigo in his early years. When he read the hexagram *i* 益 (increase), he changed his name to Ekken. He borrowed from the text to formulate his own cosmological, ethical, and medical ideas. His famous questioning of Chu Hsi's dualistic metaphysics was an act inspired by his reading of the *I Ching*. He argued that since the *I Ching* never distinguished between *li* 理 (principle) and *ch'i* 氣 (material force), Chu Hsi was incorrect in emphasizing the priority of principle over material force. He suggested that everyone should read the *I Ching* because it was capable of unifying the way of heaven and the way of man. He stated: "The way of heaven and earth is the root and source of the human way.... Therefore, after first learning the way of daily human relations, we should learn the way of heaven and earth. Is not this way why the sage studied the *Book of Changes*?"²⁶ He wrote the *Ekigaku teiyô* 易學提要 (An Outline of *I Ching* Scholarship, 1665) as a textbook for his students. One of his students, Nakamura Tekisai 中村惕齋 surpassed Ekken in the quality of his own *I Ching* scholarship. Tekisai punctuated the text and wrote several books to interpret Sung commentaries.

²² Although Ansai criticized Yi T'oege's 李退溪 (1501-1570) *Chuyôk gyemong chônûi* 周易啓蒙傳疑 (My Criticisms of Commentaries on the *Chou-i ch'i-meng*, four kan), many of his ideas seem to have been inspired by Yi. See *Nihon Shushigaku to Chôsen*, p. 311.

²³ The four stages were calligraphy, Chu Hsi's *Chin-ssu lu* 近思錄 (Reflections on Things at Hand), the Four Books, and the Chu and Ch'eng commentaries on the *I Ching*. The *I Ching* represented the most advanced and difficult part of Ansai's Confucian curriculum. See *Tokugawa Ideology*, p. 255.

²⁴ Keisai and Shôsai were prolific writers; they wrote 36 and 26 works, respectively, to elucidate Ansai's teachings on the *I Ching*. Unlike Ansai and his classmates, Naokata was more interested in symbols and numbers than the text.

²⁵ The dispute was over the meaning of "*ching i chih nei, i i fang wai*" 敬以直內，義以方外 (by devotion we strengthen ourselves within; by righteousness we square away the world without) in the *Wen yen* 文言 (Commentary on the Words of the Text) of the *I Ching*. Inside and outside, according to the standard interpretation presented by Chu Hsi, referred to the heart and body. Influenced by Shinto thought, Ansai argued that the two represented oneself and the outside world. Naokata and Keisai disagreed over this unorthodox view, and this caused their expulsion from the Ansai school.

²⁶ *Yamato zokkun* 大和俗訓 (Moral Teachings in Japan). The translation is from Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism: The Life and Thought of Kaibara Ekken* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), pp. 147-48.

Muro Kyûsô 室鳩巢 (1658-1734) wrote a number of books on the *I Ching*. The most notable was the *Shûeki shinso* 周易新疏 (A New Commentary on the *I Ching*, ten *kan*) in which he offered his own commentary. Other works included his lectures on Sung commentaries. Kyûsô borrowed heavily from the *I Ching* to develop his ethical and religious ideas. He was also famous for his divination skills. Even the famous "rational" thinker, Arai Hakuseki 新井白石 (1657-1725), asked Kyûsô to use the *I Ching* for advice on the marriage of his daughter.²⁷

The Wang Yang-ming school was a small school in *I Ching* studies, though its characteristics can be seen in its *I Ching* scholarship. Compared with Chu Hsi scholars, Wang Yang-ming scholars were more eclectic and usually included both the old and new commentaries in their writings and lectures.

Nakae Tôju 中江藤樹 (1608-1648) studied the Chu Hsi commentaries in his early years.²⁸ Tôju became absorbed in the *I Ching* in his later years. His scholarship had two major characteristics. First, the *I Ching* became the point of departure for his Confucian training. He noted: "Because the *I Ching* includes the essence of the Thirteenth Confucian Classics, we should study it thoroughly. However, the wonder and the subtlety of the *I Ching* make it difficult for ordinary people to understand. If they read the *Hsiao Ching* (Classic of Filial Piety), *Ta Hsüeh* (Great Learning), and *Chung Yung* (Doctrine of the Mean) wholeheartedly, they will come to grasp the outline [of the *I Ching*] easily."²⁹ The *I Ching* provided him with a framework to interpret other classics. Although he was a specialist in the *Hsiao Ching*, he told his students that if they had to choose one Confucian classic to study, it should be the *I Ching*. Indeed, his famous scholarship on the *Hsiao Ching* was related to his reading of the *I Ching*. In the *Kôkyô keimô* 孝經啓蒙 (An Introduction to the *Hsiao Ching*), he used the *I Ching* to interpret the *Hsiao Ching*. He adopted the same approach to explicate the *Chung Yung* in the *Chûyô kai* 中庸解 (An Explanation of the *Chung Yung*). Second, he practiced a very peculiar ritual of the *I Ching*. He made a statue of *Ekishin* 易神, or the God of the *I Ching*, and worshipped it everyday and every time he used the *I Ching* for divination. He identified *Ekishin* with *Taiotsushin* 太乙神, a Taoist deity. This kind of practice was not uncommon in medieval times, but became rare in the Tokugawa period. Tôju lamented that the influence of the Sung school's rationalism meant that people no longer worshipped the God of the *I Ching*. He wrote: "I worship the statue of the spirit frequently. I believe that all Confucians should worship the statue of the God of the *I Ching*. However, Sung Confucians discredited talismen and symbols, and thus had no sources of authority. No wonder when in doubt, they became indecisive and could not make decisions for a long time."³⁰

²⁷ For details of the story, see "Nihonjin to eki" 日本と易, in Kaji Nobuyuki 加地伸行, ed., *Eki no sekai* 易と世界 (Tokyo: Shin jinbutsu ôraisha, 1987), pp. 61-62.

²⁸ Having read Chu Hsi's *I-hsüeh ch'i-meng* at the age of 28, Tôju believed that he had grasped the essence of the book. However, he did not understand its divinational methods. He went to Kyoto to look for a teacher but gave up when he found the tuition outrageous. He came to understand the divinational methods later through self-study.

²⁹ *Okina mondô* 翁問答, in Yamashita Yû 山下湧 and Bitô Masahide 尾藤正英, eds., *Nihon shisô taikai* 日本思想大系, vol. 29, *Nakae Tôju* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1974), p. 96.

³⁰ "Taijô tenson Taiotsushinkyô jo" 太上天尊太乙神經序 (1640), in Koide Tetsuo 小出哲夫, ed., *Nakae Tôju, Kumazawa Banzan shû* (Tokyo: Tamagawa daigaku shuppanbu, 1976), p. 195.

Kumazawa Banzan (1619-1691) was the greatest *I Ching* scholar in the Wang Yang-ming school. He claimed that the *I Ching* was the most important Confucian classic and wrote several books on it to establish his sophisticated political, historical, ethical, and religious views. His *Ekikyô shôkai* 易經小解 (A Modest Interpretation of the *I Ching*, seven kan) was particularly important for its originality. His *I Ching* scholarship had several characteristics: First, he used Japanese history and political reality to explain its principles. By doing this, he rationalized the Tokugawa political and social systems and criticized the problems facing the *bakufu* and local administration at the same time. Second, he stressed its practical nature. He argued: "If you understand morality, knowledge, politics, art, and everything [through the *I Ching*], there will be nothing difficult at all."³¹ Third, he favored the *Hsi Tz'u* 繫辭 (Commentary on the Appended Judgments), the most philosophical part of the Ten Oldest Commentaries (Ten Wings or *Shih i* 十翼). Fourth, he popularized the *I Ching* by annotating a part of the main text, the Ten Wings, and the chart and diagram, in Japanese.

The school of ancient learning produced the finest and most original *I Ching* scholarship of the entire era.³² *Kogaku* scholars had several distinguishable features in *I Ching* studies. First, they discredited the Sung commentaries and attempted to restore the original meaning of the *I Ching*. Second, they believed the text itself to be the only reliable source of knowledge and discarded other approaches, such as divination, symbolism, and numerology.³³ Third, they were equipped with a spirit of doubt, and dared to challenge many established ideas. Their views and methodologies were somewhat similar to those of Ch'ing *k'ao-cheng* scholars, as both employed sophisticated philological, phonetic, and historical methods to restore the original meaning of the text.

Itô Jinsai's scholarship on the *I Ching* was pioneering and insightful. Although the *I Ching* was not his major academic concern, his monistic philosophy was influenced by it. He was at first close to the Sung school. Having read Chou Tun-i's 周敦頤 (1017-1073) *T'ai-chi t'u shuo* (An Explanation of the Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate), he wrote the *Taikyokuron* 太極論 (Discourse on *T'ai-chi*) at the age of 27. In his middle years, he began to question Sung scholarship and criticized Chu Hsi and other Sung scholars for treating the *I Ching* as a divination manual. He held that the *I Ching* was a book of wisdom, and had nothing to do with divination.³⁴ Hence, he appreciated the

³¹ *Eki keijiden shôkai* 易繫辭傳小解 (A Brief Explanation of the *Hsi Tz'u* Commentary of the *I Ching*), in Masamune Atsuo 正宗敦夫, ed., *Kumazawa Banzan zenshû* 熊沢蕃山全集 (Tokyo: Meicho shuppan, 1978), vol. 4, p. 402.

³² Although Itô Jinsai (1627-1705) was called "kogaku sensei" 古學先生 (master of ancient learning) shortly after his death, the use of the term "kogaku" to refer to the intellectual school which included Yamaga Sokô 山鹿素行 (1622-1685), Itô Jinsai 伊藤仁齋 (1627-1707), Ogyû Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666-1728), and their students only gained currency after the publication of the *Nihon kogakuha no tetsugaku* 日本古學派の哲學 by Inoue Tetsujirô in 1902.

³³ Their disapproval of the use of divination did not mean that they did not research this aspect of the book. *Kogaku* scholars produced two important works on divination: Itô Tôgai's 伊藤東涯 *Kahen setsu* 卦變說 (The Theory of Changing Lines in a Hexagram) and Dazai Shundai's 太宰春台 *Ekisen yôryaku* 易占要略 (An Outline of *I Ching* Divination, 1753). However, they seldom used it for divination.

³⁴ Unlike Ch'ing scholars, Jinsai and his son Tôgai were critical of Han scholarship for adding the *wu-hsing* 五行 doctrine to Confucianism. See Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore de Bary,

effort of Ch'eng I to explicate its philosophy. Jinsai attempted to restore the ancient meaning of the *I Ching* in his trilogy: *Taishôkai* 大象解 (An Explanation of the Commentary on the Great Images), *Ekikyô kogi* 易經古義 (The Ancient Meaning of the *I Ching*), and *Shûeki kenkon kogi* 周易乾坤古義 (The Ancient Meaning of the Hexagrams *Ch'ien* and *K'un*). The intellectual significance of these works did not hinge on their quality but on the new direction they gave to *I Ching* studies--the reconstruction of the original *I Ching* through two of the Ten Wings, *Ta Hsiang* 大象 (Commentary on the Great Images) and *T'uan Chuan* 彖傳 (Commentary on the Decision). He came to an astonishing conclusion that the *I Ching* was a book of divination in the times of King Wen and the Duke of Chou, and it became a Confucian text only after the time of Confucius and his disciples.³⁵ Jinsai used the *Lun Yü* (Analects of Confucius) and *Meng Tzu* (The Mencius) as the criteria to judge the credibility of the *I Ching* and other classics. Because these two books never mentioned divination, Jinsai concluded that three of the Ten Wings, *Hsi Tz'u*, *Tsa Kua* 雜卦 (Miscellaneous Notes on the Hexagrams), and *Shuo Kua* 說卦 (Discussions of the Trigrams) were not written by Confucius or his students because they advocated divination.

Itô Tôgai 伊藤東涯 (1670-1736) was one of the greatest *I Ching* scholars in the Tokugawa period. Tôgai was the successor to Jinsai's *I Ching* scholarship, but he went beyond Jinsai in both depth and breadth. Like his father, Tôgai did not believe in divination and was determined to find the original meaning of the *I Ching*. He was a devoted scholar of the *I Ching* and wrote a large number of books on it. The *Shûeki keiyoku tsûkai* 周易經翼通解 (A Comprehensive Explanation of the Text and the Ten Wings of the *I Ching*, 1728, eighteen *kan*) has been praised by Hoshino Hisashi 星野恒 (1837-1917) as the most important writing on the *I Ching* in the Tokugawa period.³⁶ Separating the main text from the Ten Wings and combining Ch'eng I's *I Chuan* with other commentaries, Tôgai gave his own explanation of the whole book, a feat that Jinsai did not accomplish. In another important work, *Tokueki shiki* 讀易私記 (Records on My Reading of the *I Ching*, 1703), he gave a number of reasons proving that the Ten Wings were not the works of Confucius. His major arguments include the following. First, these texts advocated divination which conflicted with the teachings of the *Lun Yü* and *Meng Tzu*. Second, Mencius and Tzu Ssu 子思 never mentioned that Confucius had written the Ten Wings. Third, the *Shuo Kua* and *Tsa Kua* were very confusing and were not Confucius's writing style. Fourth, the *Hsi Tz'u* discussed the spirit which was a subject that Confucius did not address. Fifth, the *Hsi Tz'u* was imbued with Taoist ideas. Sixth, the four moral principles in the *Wen Yen* 文言--*ching* 敬 (reverence), *i* 義 (righteousness), *chih* 直 (endurance), and *fang* 方 (etiquette)--were too strict and narrow.³⁷

and Donald Keene, eds., *Sources of the Japanese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), pp. 413-14.

³⁵ The Hirata school of *kokugaku* 國學 (national learning, nativism) later borrowed this idea, but inverted it.

³⁶ This commentary was also the favorite book of Fukuzawa Yukichi's father. When the Fukuzawa family was in financial difficulty, they sold everything except this book. Yukichi's father claimed: "These thirteen volumes of ethics [the *I Ching*] with Tôgai *sensei*'s notes are a rare treasure. My descendants shall preserve them generation after generation in the Fukuzawa family." Eiichi Kiyooka, trans., *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa* (New York: Schocken Books, 1972), pp. 45-46.

³⁷ For a textual analysis of the *Tokueki shiki*, see "Itô Tôgai no ekigaku," pp. 8-15.

Dazai Shundai 太宰春台 (1680-1747) wrote highly original interpretations of the *I Ching*. His *Shûeki hansei* 周易反正 (Return to the Correct Interpretation of the *I Ching*, 1746, twelve *kan*) was an ambitious attempt to restore Han commentaries. It is regarded as one of the best writings on the *I Ching* in the Tokugawa period. His attempt to reconstruct Han commentaries through philology and textual criticism paralleled the *k'ao-cheng* scholarship of mid-Ch'ing China. Significantly, Shundai's book was finished about two decades earlier than Hui Tung's 惠棟 (1697-1758) and a century earlier than Chang Hui-yen's 張惠言 (1761-1802) and Chiao Hsün's 焦循 (1763-1820) famous works which had similar objectives and approaches.³⁸ Influenced by Sorai's politicization of Confucianism, he stressed the political implications of the *I Ching* in his *Ekidôron* 易道論 (Discourse on the Way of the *I Ching*). He remarked that the *I Ching* was a book of political wisdom for the ruler to govern the nation; while other Confucian classics were readings intended for the people living in peaceful times, the *I Ching* was a book meant to save the nation in a time of confusion.

The methods and ideas of *kogaku* scholars had a tremendous impact on *I Ching* scholarship in the latter half of the Tokugawa period. The Hirata school of *kogaku* (national learning or nativism), the eclectic school (*setchûgakuha* 折衷學派), and the oracle school were all indebted to *kogaku*.³⁹

While the three Confucian schools acted as the dominant force in *I Ching* studies, Buddhism and Shinto played a respectable role during the first half of the Tokugawa period. Both attempted to accommodate the text to their doctrines.

Zen Buddhism, once the dominant force in *I Ching* studies during medieval times, still exerted a considerable influence in the early decades of the Tokugawa period. The center of *I Ching* scholarship for the Rinzai sect was the Ashikaga School. Divination on the basis of the *I Ching* had been secretly transmitted by the School since the fifteenth century, and this tradition was continued by early Tokugawa rector. They performed yearly predications (*nenzei* 年筮) on New Year's Eve for the shôgun and wrote books on divination. Even outside the Ashikaga School, many Rinzai monks studied the *I Ching*. For example, Saishô Shôtai 西笑承兌 (1533-1607), in the preface to the Fushimi edition of the *I Ching*, expressed his wish that the text would become a bridge between Buddhism and Confucianism, and asked his fellow monks to study it. Takuan Sôhō 澤庵宗彭 (1573-1645) used it to explicate Buddhist ideas such as karmic retribution. The Sôtô sect pursued *I Ching* scholarship along other lines. A large number of Sôtô Zen

³⁸ The similarity between *kogaku* and *k'ao-cheng* scholarship has drawn a lot of attention, in particular, the study of the *Meng Tzu* by Itô Jinsai and Tai Chen 戴震 (1724-1777). Here, we find a similar case in *I Ching* scholarship with Dazai Shundai and Hui Tung 惠棟. In both cases, *kogaku* scholars published their works prior to their Chinese counterparts. Some may speculate that *kogaku* exerted a certain influence on Ch'ing scholars. It is true that some works of Tokugawa intellectuals were brought to China. For example, Tôgai's and Sorai's books were known among Ch'ing intellectuals. However, there is no documentary evidence to suggest that *kogaku* scholars influenced Ch'ing *k'ao-cheng* scholarship. I think similar developments in the intellectual history of the two countries contributed to this coincidence.

³⁹ The term "*setchûgakuha*" (eclectic school) was first used by Inoue Tetsujirô in his *Nihon rinri ihen, Setchûgakuha no bu* 日本倫理彙編, 折衷學派の部 (Tokyo: Ikuseikai, 1903), vol. 9. It is a loose concept designed to include a group of late Tokugawa scholars who did not belong to either the Chu Hsi school or *kogaku*.

monks used the *I Ching* to explicate the doctrine of the five ranks (*goi setsu* 五位説), a central philosophy of Sôtô Zen in both China and Japan.

New Ise Shinto, Yoshida Shinto, and Suika Shinto believed in the unity of Shinto and Confucianism and employed the *I Ching* to enrich their Shinto ideas. For instance, Watarai Nobuyoshi 度會延佳 (1615-1690), the founder of New Ise Shinto, suggested that both Shinto and the Way of the *I Ching* (*Ekidô* 易道) were founded on the same principles of loyalty and honesty. Kikkawa Koretari 吉川惟足 (1616-1694), the champion of Yoshida Shinto, identified Kuni-tokotachi-no-mikoto 國常立尊 as *T'ai-chi*, and Izanagi and Izanami as the gods of *yin* and *yang*. Yamazaki Ansai, the founder of Suika Shinto, referred to the *I Ching* as "China's *kamiyo no maki*" (the scroll of the Age of the Gods), and the *Nihon shoki* 日本書記 (Chronicles of Japan, 720) as "Japan's *I Ching*," and used them to advocate the unity of Shinto and Confucianism.

I Ching Studies in the Mid-Tokugawa Period

During the mid-Tokugawa period (from the mid-eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century), *I Ching* scholarship underwent dramatic changes. Although the Chu Hsi school, Wang Yang-ming school, and school of ancient learning managed to produce a large number of *I Ching* scholars and works, their scholarship became redundant, and few rose to match the high level of previous scholarship. The intellectual forces which stole the limelight during the latter half of the Tokugawa period were the eclectic school, school of national learning, and oracle school.

The eclectic school was the main force behind *I Ching* studies in the latter half of the Tokugawa period. Despite their anti-Sorai stance, scholars of this school were close to *kogaku* scholarship of the *I Ching*. For instance, they did some important philological and historical studies to restore the ancient meaning of the text. They also rejected ideas and practices deemed irrational, such as *yin-yang wu-hsing* and divination. The school was based in three big cities: Ôsaka, Edo, and Kyoto.

The headquarters of the eclectic school in Ôsaka was the famous merchant academy, *Kaitokudô* 懷徳堂. Goi Ranshû 五井蘭洲 (1696-1762) wrote several books to explicate Chu Hsi's and Ch'eng I's commentaries on the *I Ching*. His two students, Nakai Riken 中井履軒 (1732-1817) and Nakai Chikuzan 中井竹山 (1730-1804), became more critical of Sung commentaries and developed their own interpretations by using both the old and new commentaries.

Nakai Riken was a creative interpreter and a skillful historian of the *I Ching*. His masterpiece, *Shûeki hôgen* 周易逢源 (An Investigation of the Origins of the *I Ching*, six *kan*), was one of the best commentaries in the Tokugawa period. He was highly skeptical of established interpretations. In the book, he criticized three things: Chu Hsi's commentaries, the Ten Wings, and speculative ideas and superstitious practices. First, Riken criticized Chu Hsi's commentaries for being too abstract and for losing the original meaning of the *I Ching*. He also attacked the Ch'eng I and Shao Yung commentaries. Second, he challenged the ideas about the formation and content of the Ten Wings. He questioned the common belief that the Ten Wings were written or edited by Confucius, pointing out that the *Ta Hsiang* was composed far before the time of Confucius, while the others were written toward the end of the Eastern Chou period. He liked the content and writing of the *Ta Hsiang*, *Hsi Tz'u*, and *T'uan Chuan*, but criticized the rest. He wrote:

"If [any part of] the *T'uan Chuan*, *Ta Hsiang*, and *Hsi Tz'u* grasps the meaning of the *I Ching*, we can use it to explicate the main text. If [any part of these texts] misses the meaning of the main text, we can throw it away.... Confucians since the Han period have esteemed the Ten Wings highly. They all taught the Ten Wings first and used them to interpret the main text. Hence, the mistakes in the Ten Wings frequently misled scholars."⁴⁰ Third, he believed that the original *I Ching* had nothing to do with the *yin-yang wu-hsing* doctrine, charts and diagrams, and divination, and that the extant *I Ching* was a corrupted version. Criticizing Sung commentaries for adding non-Confucian elements to the *I Ching*, he tried to restore the text's original meaning in the *Ekichôdai ryaku* 易彫題略 (An Outline of the Main Ideas of the *I Ching*, three *kan*) and *Ekikyô kikigaki* 易井聞書 (A Record of Sayings about the *I Ching*, two *kan*).

Nakai Chikuzan wrote two interpretative works: *Ekidan* 易斷 (My Judgment on the *I Ching*, five *kan*) and *Ekisetsu* 易説 (Discourse on the *I Ching*). Like his younger brother, Chikuzan was critical of Sung scholarship. In particular, he attacked Chou Tun-i's *T'ai-chi t'u shuo* for using the *yin-yang wu-hsing* framework to interpret the *I Ching*. However, Chikuzan avoided criticizing Chu Hsi's commentaries directly. Although Chikuzan did not enjoy a reputation in *I Ching* scholarship equal to that of his brother, he taught some brilliant students, including Yamagata Bantô 山片蟠桃 (1748-1821) and Satô Issai 佐藤一齋 (1772-1859).

The founder of the eclectic school in Edo was Inoue Kinga 井上金蛾 (1732-1784). He chose selectively from the Han and Sung commentaries to develop his *Ekigaku setchû* 易學折衷 (A Synthesis of *I Ching* Scholarship, 1761). He did a philological study of the book in his *Shûeki ikô* 周易彙考 (A Study of the Terminology in the *I Ching*, twelve *kan*) and *Ekigaku bengi* 易學辯疑 (A Debate on Questions in *I Ching* Studies, 1767). Kinga was a celebrated educator and trained a large number of *I Ching* scholars.

Ôta Kinjô 太田錦城 (1765-1825) was the most famous *I Ching* scholar in this lineage. His works were primarily historical and philological studies of the main text and the Ten Wings. Among the many talented students Kinjô trained, Kaihō Gyoson 海保漁村 (1798-1866) was particularly important for his efforts to restore a clear picture of the ancient divinational methods in his *Shûeki kosenhō* 周易古占法 (Divination of the *I Ching* in Ancient Times, 1840, four *kan*). Among Gyoson's other philological surveys, the most noteworthy was the *Shûeki Kan chûkô* 周易漢注考 (An Investigation of Han Commentaries on the *I Ching*, 21 *kan*) which was a critical review of fragmentary Han commentaries. He also co-authored a book with Kinjô to reconstruct the text's ancient meaning through an examination of the *Ta Hsiang*: *Shûeki shôgi yoroku* 周易象義余録 (An Appendix to the Meaning of the *Ta Hsiang* of the *I Ching*, five *kan*).

Satô Issai was one of the finest *I Ching* scholars of the entire Tokugawa period. This Edo-based scholar traveled frequently and was indebted to different intellectual traditions. He studied under Hayashi Jussai 林述齋 (1768-1841) in Edo, Nakai Chikuzan in Ôsaka, and Minakawa Kien 皆川淇園 (1735-1807) in Kyoto. The combination of

⁴⁰ *Shûeki hôgen*, scroll 3. I have read the unpublished original manuscript kept in the Kaitokudô Collection (*Kaitokudô bunko* 懷德堂文庫) at Ôsaka University. Riken also pointed out that most scholars made mistakes in punctuating the sentences of the Ten Wings. See Tao De-min 陶德民, *Kaitokudô Shushigaku no kenkyû* 懷德堂朱子学の研究 (Ôsaka: Ôsaka daigaku shuppankai, 1993), pp. 327-28.

these three *I Ching* traditions contributed to his eclecticism. He wrote one of the most important and original commentaries of the Tokugawa period, *Shûeki rangai sho* 周易欄外書 (A Commentary on the *I Ching*, ten *kan*). He also made the best Japanese-punctuation of the *I Ching* in the late Tokugawa period, the "Issai punctuation" (*Issai ten* 一齋點). He coined a metaphor which compared the text's principles to the root of a tree and Western knowledge to the branch. This idea influenced his student, Sakuma Shôzan 佐久間象山 (1811-1864), who produced the famous phrase, "Eastern ethics and Western techniques."

The founder of the eclectic school in Kyoto was Minakawa Kien, a famous and prolific *I Ching* scholar. In his major work, *Meichû* 名疇 (A Categorization of Terms), he used the *I Ching* as a framework to define and categorize the moral terms of Confucianism. Using a methodology that incorporated philology and phonetics (he called it *kaibutsugaku* 開物學 or knowledge through investigation), he wrote many important books on the *I Ching*. His *Shûeki shakukai* 周易釋解 (An Explanation of the *I Ching*, sixteen *kan*) was one of the best commentaries in the Tokugawa period. The *Ekigaku kaitei* 易學階梯 (A Study Guide to the *I Ching*, three *kan*) was written as a textbook and used widely by Tokugawa intellectuals. His linguistic method of studying the *I Ching* was passed on to his students.

In brief, the eclectic school was similar to *kogaku* in its *I Ching* scholarship. Few scholars of the eclectic school researched Sung commentaries; they used philology, phonetics, and textual criticism in studying the main text and the Ten Wings (especially the *Ta Hsiang*) to restore the ancient meaning of the *I Ching*.

The school of national learning held some interesting opinions of the *I Ching* in the late Tokugawa period. Most early *kokugaku* scholars were indifferent to the text and even critical of it. Motoori Norinaga 本居宣長 (1730-1801) commented that the *I Ching* was a deception intended to fool people. Although some early Shinto and *kokugaku* scholars admitted that the *I Ching* had theoretical and divinational value, a real shift in attitude did not occur until the rise of the Hirata school. Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤 (1776-1843) insisted that the *I Ching* was not an alien work of literature but the handiwork of a Japanese deity. He wrote the *San'eki yurai ki* 三易由來記 (The Origins of the Three Early Versions of the *I Ching*, 1835) and *Taikô koeki den* 太昊古易傳 (The Original *I Ching* in Antiquity, 1836, four *kan*) to trace his alleged Shinto or Japanese origins of the ancient *I Ching*. He believed that the creator of the trigrams, Fu Hsi, was indeed a Shinto deity who went to China to cultivate the Chinese. Atsutane blamed King Wen, the Duke of Chou, and Confucius for distorting and Confucianizing the *I Ching*. He held that the only way to restore the ancient *I Ching* was to study the *Ta Hsiang* and *T'uan Chuan* which he believed were fragmentary commentaries on the lost ancient *I Ching*. The *Koeki taishô kyô* 古易大象經 (The Great Images in the Ancient *I Ching*) and *Tan'eki ron* 彖易論 (Discourse on the *T'uan Chuan*) were his ambitious efforts along these lines. He attempted to restore the original *I Ching* by rearranging the order of the hexagrams and changing the number of yarrow stalks.⁴¹ In order to make his scholarship seem legitimate, Atsutane attributed his ideas to Norinaga. Atsutane's ideas were further developed by his students, Ikuta Yoroze 生田萬 (1801-1837) and Ôkuni

⁴¹ For details on Atsutane's views on *I Ching* divination, see Kitô Gennosuke 紀藤元之介, "Hirata Atsutane no zeihôkan" 平田篤胤の筮法観, *Ekikyô kenkyû* 21 (October), pp. 7-12 and 21 (December), pp. 5-10.

Takamasa 大國隆正 (1791-1871). The *I Ching* scholarship of *kokugaku* reveals that when everything foreign was shown to have a Japanese origin, national learning and cultural borrowing could coexist.

There was a group of professional *I Ching* diviners whom I call the oracle school. According to Ogawa Kendô's 小川顯道 *Chiritsuka dan* 塵塚談 (Discussions on Trifle Things), there were more than a thousand *I Ching* diviners in the City of Edo alone and at least one *I Ching* diviner for every village. He divided these men into three categories. Ordinary diviners who had a small stall on a street corner were called *tachimi* 立見. Famous diviners who had their own offices or academies were *sayauchi* さや打. Dispatch diviners were *shikiri* しきり. Scholars of the oracle school belonged to *sayauchi*. They either owned or worked in private academies where the *I Ching*, and other Confucian classics, were taught. They were prolific writers on the *I Ching*, and their writings were mostly about divination. Their concern was not limited to personal fortune, but included medicine, the military, business, agriculture, and meteorology among other fields. By doing this, they expanded the practical uses for the *I Ching*. In terms of intellectual lineage, most of them belonged to the Chu Hsi school, but their scholarship on the *I Ching* was eclectic. They traced the text's ancient meaning and lectured on Sung commentaries together.

Arai Hakuga 新井白蛾 (1725-1792) was the most famous *ekisha* of the Tokugawa period. He was trained as a Chu Hsi scholar in his early years. Realizing that he could never surpass Sorai's Confucian scholarship, Hakuga concentrated on the *I Ching* and eventually established his own academy of *I Ching* studies in Kyoto. His inferiority complex had an impact on his scholarship. He boasted that his books outsold Hattori Nankaku's 服部南郭 (1683-1759) and could stand up to academic scrutiny better than Sorai's. He liked to mix old and new commentaries in his writings. He wrote at least 39 books on the *I Ching*; his important works included: *Koeki dan* 古易斷 (My Judgment on the Ancient *I Ching*, 1776, ten kan), *Ekigaku ruihen* 易學類篇 (A Collection of *I Ching* Scholarship, 1766, 23 kan), and *Ekigaku shôsen* 易學小筌 (A Modest Interpretation of the *I Ching*, 1754) in which he popularized divination by suggesting a simplified method. He was confident enough to compare his *Koeki dan* to the *Chou-i che-chung* 周易折衷 (A Synthesis of *I Ching* Studies) and himself to Shao Yung.⁴² The Hakuga school produced some famous diviners in late Tokugawa times, including Mase Chûshû 眞勢中洲 (1754-1817) and Matsui Rashû 松井羅洲 (1751-1822).

Mase Chûshû enjoyed the same reputation as his teacher, Hakuga. His activities were centered in Ôsaka, where he taught a large number of people. He wrote at least 35 books on the *I Ching*. He co-authored the *Shûeki shakuko* 周易釋故 (An Explanation of the Ancient Meaning of the *I Ching*, 1811-1813, 25 kan) with Matsui Rashû. It was an ambitious attempt to restore the divination practices and original text of the ancient *I Ching*. For instance, he argued that the original divination technique used 48 yarrow

⁴² The *Chou-i che-chung* was the representative work of Ch'ing scholarship. Shao Yung was famous for his divinational skill. It is inappropriate to portray Hakuga and his students as profit-seeking diviners. They were Confucian specialists on the *I Ching*, and their works show evidence of fine scholarship and originality. Suzuki Yoshijirô 鈴木由次郎 has given a balanced account of Hakuga's scholarship in his "Arai Hakuga no ichimen" 新井白蛾の一面, *Ekikyô kenkyû* 16 (May 1963), pp. 2-6.

stalks instead of the 49 mentioned in the *Chou I*.⁴³ He also attempted to correct mistakes in the main text and the Ten Wings which he believed had occurred over the ages.

The oracle school was extremely popular and influential in Ōsaka and Kyoto in the late Tokugawa period. Although it has been overlooked by modern scholars because of its emphasis on divination, scholars from this school made important contributions to the theory of divination and helped further the tradition of Shao Yung.

I Ching Studies in the Late Tokugawa Period

The last decades of the Tokugawa period were a time of decline in *I Ching* scholarship. People seemed to have lost interest in scholarly pursuits concerning the text, such as verifying its authenticity or offering criticism of it. As a result, few fine scholars or works appeared. This decline in scholarship did not mean that the *I Ching* became less popular, however. Its readership widened to include the lower stratum of society. The text's practical nature was highlighted by different schools of thought and religions in the late Tokugawa period. People used it to find clues to solve political, economic, and cultural problems. This application of the *I Ching* had important implications for understanding the role of Confucianism in Japan's modernization.

There were two major approaches to solving the political crisis: reform and restoration. The Mito school was famous for its ideas of *sonnō* 尊王 (reverence for the emperor) and reform. The *I Ching* and other Confucian texts became tools of authorization and legitimation in their hands. For instance, Aizawa Seishisai 會澤正志齋 (1781-1863) quoted the *I Ching* extensively in the *Shinron* 新論 (New Thesis, 1825, two *kan*) to explain some characteristics of Japan's *kokutai* 國體 (national character). He also urged the daimyō of the Mito domain to implement reforms according to the political principles of the *I Ching*. In his *Tokuēki nissatsu* 讀易日札 (Notes on My Daily Reading of the *I Ching*, 1862, seven *kan*), he compared the social hierarchy to the six lines in a hexagram, noting that from bottom to top society consisted of commoner, samurai, officer, daimyō, emperor, and "nobody." Seishisai himself was by no means anti-*bakufu* in his views, but his political thought did not legitimate the shōgun and thus provided the potential to be interpreted in an anti-*bakufu* light.

In addition to Mito scholars, people from different parts of Japan also expressed their ideas on reform. The *I Ching* was cited extensively to advocate reform and the necessity of change. Sakuma Shōzan urged Hitotsubashi Yoshinobu 一橋慶喜 (1837-1913) to carry out reforms by using an oracle in his explanation.

When the chorus of reform was ignored, some reformers adopted an anti-*bakufu* stance. Confucianism provided them with the logic to advocate a restoration. Many *shishi* 志士 (loyalist) thinkers quoted the hexagram *fu* 復 (return or restoration) to express their wish for a restoration of imperial power. For example, Kusumoto Tanzan 楠本端山 (1828-1883) emphasized the goodness of *yang* returning to its original position to carry out the rule of benevolence. Ogasawara Keisai 小笠原敬齋 (1828-1863), in his punctuation of the *I Ching*, added many criticisms of the *bakufu* and urged the emperor to

⁴³ For details of Chūshū's divination, see Katō Taigaku 加藤大岳, "Mase Chūshū no zeihō ni tsuite" 真勢中洲の筮法について, *Ekikyō kenkyū* 34 (April 1981), pp. 52-60.

rule by himself according to the spirit of the hexagram *fu*. Other *shishi*, such as Yoshida Shôin 吉田松蔭 (1830-1859) and Takasugi Shinsaku 高杉晉作 (1837-1867), also drew upon the *I Ching* to express their anti-*bakufu* opinions.

Scholarship on economic problems focused on two major issues: improving the old sector, agriculture, and establishing the new sector, modern industry and business. There was a movement for agricultural improvement in late Tokugawa times. Hayakawa Hachirô 早川八郎 (1739-1809), a *bakufu* retainer, used the *I Ching* to suggest ways to improve productivity in his *Kyûsei jôkyô* 久世條教 (Teachings for Many Generations, 1799, seven *kan*). He encouraged farmers to study its philosophy and divination. Many scholars outside the *bakufu* also concerned themselves with agriculture. Some students of Hirata Atsutane addressed this issue by using the *I Ching* as their basic framework. Two famous examples are Konishi Atsuyoshi's 小西篤好 (1767-1837) *Nôgyô yowa* 農業余話 (Discursive Talks on Agriculture, 1828, two *kan*) and Tamura Yoshishige's 田村吉茂 (1790-1877) *Nôgyô jitoku* 農業自得 (Self-Actualization in Agriculture, 1856, two *kan*).

One of the most prominent leaders of the rural improvement movement was Ôhara Yûgaku 大原幽學 (1797-1858). He was a charismatic rural reformer whose authority rested on his ability to predict using the *I Ching*. He studied the divination methods of the Arai school in Kyoto before he traveled to various rural areas to implement agricultural reforms. He became a famous *I Ching* diviner and formed his own intellectual school, *seigaku* 性學 (school of nature). Yûgaku taught people in villages the theory of the text and its ethical implications, believing that it could enhance their material and spiritual lives. Using the theory of *yin-yang*, he made every two households into a mutual cooperative unit. He also used divination and geomancy to decide the location of houses, paddie fields, and irrigation canals.

The philosophy of change and the divination methods in the *I Ching* gave early entrepreneurs wisdom and confidence. The most striking example was Takashima Donshô 高島吞象 (1832-1914), a self-made businessman whose interests extended from the electricity and railway industries to agriculture and the iron and steel industries. In his autobiography, *Takashima Kauemon jijoden* 高島嘉右衛門自序傳, he attributed his own success to the principles he found in the *I Ching*. The philosophy of the *I Ching* also inspired some officials and intellectuals to advocate a "free-market economy." For instance, in his *Sanka zui* 三貨圖彙 (Illustrative Glossary of the Monetary Policy in the Three Countries, 42 *kan*), Kusama Naokata 草間直方 (1753-1831), a famous Kyoto merchant who had served the *bakufu* and several domains as an economic advisor, held that an economy should follow the natural principle of *yin-yang* and required no human intervention.

The problem of integrating Western ideas into the Chinese-Japanese cultural heritage was a common concern of nineteenth-century Japanese. Some attempted to transplant Western ideas into a Neo-Confucian metaphysical framework using the *I Ching*; some cited it, claiming that Western ideas had existed in ancient China. In astronomy and physics, Shizuki Tadao 志筑忠雄 (1760-1806), Yamagata Bantô, and Yoshio Nankô 吉雄南皋 (1787-1843) used it to advocate Newtonian physics and Copernican heliocentrism. Hashimoto Sôkichi 橋本宗吉 (1761-1836) and Kasamine Tachû 笠峰多狒 used the images of the *I Ching* to demonstrate the theory of electricity. In medicine, Ikeda Tôzô 池田冬藏, a *Rangaku* 蘭學 (Dutch learning) physician, used its principles to explicate Western medical ideas in his *Igaku engen* 醫學淵流 (The Origins of Medicine). Many Tokugawa artilleryists used it to explain Western artillery. In the

Shūhatsu zusetsu 周發圖說 (A Graphic Illustration of the Movable Carriage, 1778), Sakamoto Tenzan 坂本天山 (1745-1803) used its images to illustrate his movable carriage. In the *Hōka* 炮卦 (The Hexagram of a Canon, 1852), Sakuma Shōzan attributed his knowledge of explosives and canons to principles he found in the text.

Characteristics of *I Ching* Scholarship in the Tokugawa Period

To summarize, *I Ching* scholarship bloomed during the Tokugawa period. The number of scholars and writings was not only unprecedented in Japan, but also outnumbered the Korean output and even rivaled that of the Chinese. The popularity of the *I Ching* can also be seen using other parameters, such as the importation and reproduction of Chinese commentaries, the intellectual attitude of Tokugawa intellectuals, and the text's influence on Tokugawa politics, economics, thought, and culture.

I Ching scholarship was pursued by Tokugawa intellectuals from different schools of thought and religions. Confucians, Buddhists, Shintoists, *kokugaku* scholars, Mito scholars, students of Western learning, artists, merchant and peasant scholars, political leaders, and other intellectuals studied and accommodated the *I Ching* to their teachings.

I Ching scholarship was eclectic. It maintained a delicate balance between different approaches: philosophical and divinational, practical and academic, Han and Sung, and Chinese and Japanese. Each group of scholars pursued *I Ching* studies in its own way and mixed in many non-Confucian elements. Ch'ing Chinese scholars were textually oriented and exceedingly critical of divination and symbols and numbers, whereas Yi-period Korean scholars preferred using symbolic and numerical approaches. In Tokugawa Japan, all three approaches enjoyed considerable support, although textual analysis seems to have been more influential than the others.

I Ching scholarship underwent Japanization. The making of Japanese-punctuated editions and Japanese commentaries demonstrated scholars' high degree of independence. The *I Ching* was also used by some Tokugawa intellectuals to advocate the unity of Confucianism and Shinto. Late *kokugaku* scholars even attempted to give it Japanese origins. It also played a considerable role in the development of many "indigenous" cultural practices, like the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, popular drama, and martial arts.

I Ching studies also demonstrated a high quality of scholarship. There were many brilliant scholars and ground-breaking writings on its philosophy and divination. In particular, *kogaku* and the eclectic school were famous for their efforts to reconstruct its ancient meaning through sophisticated research methods.

I Ching scholars had a strong preference for Sung commentaries, evidence of the dominance of the Sung school in the Tokugawa intellectual world. Chu Hsi's and Ch'eng I's commentaries were overwhelming in their influence. The *bakufu*, the domains, and most private academies adopted Sung commentaries as their main reference.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ In Ch'ing China, the government adopted Sung commentaries, whereas many scholars favored Han commentaries.

I Ching scholarship underwent three dramatic changes, but did not show a clear direction or continuity.⁴⁵ The early period was the heyday of the Chu Hsi school and produced the greatest number of scholars and writings. In mid-Tokugawa times, the eclectic school, *kokugaku*, and the oracle school emerged and stole the limelight. During the *bakumatsu* (last decades of the Tokugawa) period, different schools put emphasis on practical aspects of the text. *I Ching* scholarship demonstrates the vitality and discontinuity of Tokugawa intellectual developments.

Finally, *I Ching* scholarship put emphasis on the practical aspects of the text. In general, *I Ching* scholarship was textual and historical in Ch'ing China, was philosophical in Yi Korea, and was eclectic and practical in Tokugawa Japan. The *I Ching* penetrated into different areas of the culture and the lives of Tokugawa Japanese. It had a strong impact on medicine, politics, martial arts, sciences, performing arts, literature, agriculture, commerce, religion, and folklore.⁴⁶ In particular, during the last decades of the Tokugawa period, people drew wisdom from the *I Ching* to find solutions to political, economic, and cultural crises.

⁴⁵ Ch'ing scholarship on the text also underwent three stages, but showed a clear direction toward reconstructing a "Confucian *I Ching*." See Wai-ming Ng, "*I Ching* Scholarship in Ch'ing China: A Historical and Comparative Study," *Chinese Culture* 37.1 (March 1996), pp. 57-68.

⁴⁶ See Wai-ming Ng, "The *I Ching* in Military Thought of Tokugawa Japan," *Journal of Asian Martial Art* 5.1 (April 1996), pp. 11-29, and Wai-ming Ng, "The *I Ching* in Tokugawa Medical Thought," *East Asian Library Journal*, forthcoming.