Sino-Japanese Relations in the Edo Period¹

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Part Four. The Inspectorate of Books

The Inspectorate of Books. In the previous chapter I described the subject of banned books in some detail, but research on banned books is now being done in a thorough manner by scholars of Edo-period thought and the history of Christianity in Japan. My interest is in the books brought to Japan aboard Chinese vessels--in a narrow sense, these were the books permitted importation and thus books that were not banned. These effectively represent the other side of the banned volumes. Because prohibited books were the concrete manifestation of the Edo Shogunate's policies of thought control, they are an extremely important topic for research. However, ironically the great concern and interest they elicited were proportional to the fact that they were not open to the general public, for they belonged to the realm of the secret during the Edo period. Thus, books ordinarily imported aboard Chinese ships, insofar as they were unexceptional or unremarkable, do not remain engraved on the historical record. In other words, what in this era was common and ordinary in later ages has become difficult to ascertain.

When looking for materials concerning books brought on these Chinese ships, one frequently finds them related in some fashion to the Inspectorate of Books. We need now to explain how this Inspectorate of Book operated. Namely, we need to clarify what procedures of importation Chinese vessels underwent when they arrived in port laden with books.

Generations of the Mukai Family First, in instances in which vessels calling at the port of Nagasaki were carrying books as cargo, a list known as a *Sairai shomoku* 齋 $* 書 \equiv 0$ or a *Dairai shomoku* 帶 來 書 $\equiv 1$ (Listing of Books Transported as Cargo) was presented. These were lists of freight naming the books imported aboard one's ship; the titles and quantities of each item were given; finally, they noted that they were importing no proscribed books. Also, the captain signed a statement indicating that, in the event of a prohibited book being found among his cargo, no matter what treatment was accorded his vessel, he would accept it without objection. This constituted an important basis for dealing with instances of the discovery of banned works. I have been able to verify the existence of book cargo lists of this sort for 35 vessels.

^{*}Unless otherwise noted, all notes are the translator's.

¹ Edo jidai no Nit-Chû hiwa 江戸時代の日中秘話 (Tokyo: Tôhô shoten, 1980), pp. 70-82.

As pointed out in the previous chapter, the Inspectorate of Books began with the opening of the Shuntoku Temple 春徳治in Kan'ei 7 (1630). Following the discovery by Mukai Gensei 向井元成 of the Huan you quan 赛有詮[a translation of Aristotle's De coelo et mundo] in Jôkyô 2 (1685), the Mukai family became hereditary Inspectors of Books. From this time forward, it seems, the positions of the Shuntoku Temple and the Mukai family were reversed. Accordingly, whereas until then books had been immediately transported to the Shuntoku Temple when they arrived as cargo, now they were taken to the Seidô 聖堂. In any event, at the time of cargo inspection, all other cargo was placed in a warehouse, while books alone were taken to either the Shuntoku Temple or the Seidô where the inspection of books was carried out promptly

Mukai Gensei was permitted to retire in 1726 (Kyôhô 11), and his adopted son Bunpei 文平 (Genkin元 欽) succeeded him. The latter died at age 18, and the son of Mukai Genkei 向井元桂, Kanekazu 兼般 (Genchû元仲) of Kyoto, who had been made his adopted son prior to his death, assumed the post. Genchû retired in the eighth lunar month of Meiwa 3 (1766), and his heir, his son Kaneyoshi 兼美 (Saikyû 齋宮), succeeded him. Saikyû died in the eleventh intercalary month of Kansei 6 (1794), and his son, Tomi 富 (Genchû元仲), assumed this position in the fourth month of Kansei 8 (1796). During this period, because this post was hereditary, Saikyû had earlier requested and was now granted the right to retire in the seventh month of Kansei 7 (1795). Tomi died in the twelfth month of Kansei 10 [early 1799], and his adopted son Masajirô Kaneaki 雅次郎兼哲(Geki 外記) succeeded him; the latter retired in Ansei 4 (1857), succeeded by his adopted son, Takanosuke Kanemichi 鷹之助兼通, who held the position into the Meiji period.

In accordance with a contract tendered as the time that the position of Inspector of Books was passed on to the next generation, just as with the contract of the aforementioned *Shomotsu mekiki* 書物目利 (Book Inspectorate), the new man vowed to perform his duties to report speedily on any rare works of any sort, especially military texts, and any texts with any Christian content at all, of course; he also swore to carry out his duties preserving secrecy and not to leak matters of a secret nature even to members of his immediate family. Only one portion of the Mukai family documents remain extant, though there is a group of materials entitled "Seidô bunsho" 聖堂文書 now held in the Nagasaki Municipal Museum. Investigation of this material indicates that, when there was mention of Japan within a given Chinese text, a special report was filed, and that this was one of the more important reporting tasks.

We know from the Keiô gannen chôsa meisai bungenchô 慶応元年調査明細 分限帳 (Detailed Investigative Social Register of 1865) that the Inspectorate of Books employed four assistant inspectors, three scribes, and two additional officials (one additional scribe and one licenser). This number of personnel was not uniform from the beginning. It seems to have been gradually increased, with the assistant inspectors added in 1693 (Genroku 6).

The book inspectors in charge of books transported to Japan aboard Chinese vessels investigated the contents of each work in turn, and in the process they copied out the prefaces and bibliographies of works and prepared an explanation of the contents. Mukai Gensei then affixed to the memoranda prepared in this manner the names of those who oversaw the inspection procedures. Then, one page was written up describing the

content of each work with attention paid to there being no banned phrases within it. At the same time, they watched to see if any pages were missing, if any notes had been additionally made in red or ochre ink, and if anything else was written into the text. Of course, if there was anything that pointed to a proscribed item, and even if there was anything of dubious content, it had to be reported to the Administrator. Then, for each work as necessary a general report on content was filed, and these were known as the "Taiisho" 大意書 or Outlines. One example would be the "Teikyô keibutsu ryaku taiisho" 帝京景物略大意書 (Outlines of the *Dijing jingwu lüe*), described in the previous chapter.

The Outlines. These "ordinary books with no banned phrases" in them were books brought to Japan on Chinese ships. However, not every volume required the composition of an Outline. Books were handled in batches, and a simple entry was put down for each. I have been able to verify ten such items, including partial lists. Since they were without proscribed language, these could naturally go on sale. Tenri Library holds a document, dated Hôreki 10 (1760), entitled "Tatsu ichiban tôsen mochiwatari shôbai shomotsu mokuroku narabi ni taiisho" 辰壹番唐船持渡商賣書物目錄#大 意書 (The List of Books Brought for Sale Aboard Chinese Vessel Number One in the Year of the Dragon and Outlines) which gives the fullest description of content. At the end of each Outline it concludes with: "The abovementioned volume is being imported for the first time and contains no banned phrases." On this basis, the Nagasaki Adminitsrator would then permit the works to be placed on sale.

Each of the Outlines for the most part arranged the works' prefaces in a suitable order and offered summaries of the text, and they devised techniques for styles of prose. A Chinese ship that drifted ashore at Hachijôjima 八丈島 in Izu 伊豆 domain in Hôreki 4 (1754) was treated as an extra vessel for that year, and the Outlines for the books aboard it have been preserved in four stringbound volumes in the Naikaku Bunko under the title "Hakurai shoseki taiisho inu bangaisen" 舶來書籍大意書 戌番外船(Outlines of the Books in Cargo, Extra Vessel in the Year of the Dog). There is, incidentally, a manuscript in the National Diet Library entitled "Hachijôjima hyôchaku Shinshô hakusai shoseki torishirabesho" 八丈島漂着清商舶載書籍取調書(Investigative Report on the Books Brought as Freight for Sale Aboard the Chinese Vessel Shipwrecked at Hachijôjima)--it carries the following title on its inside: "Inu bangaisen shôbaisho taiisho" 戌番外船商賣書大意書(Outlines of the Books Brought for Sale Aboard the Extra Vessel in the Year of the Dog). It is a draft from an earlier stage which would later produce the Outlines held in the Naikaku Bunko. Here and there marks have been inserted to move sentences around, and signs of the inspectors' polishing of the text can clearly be seen. When we put the two together, it is fascinating, for we can see how sentences were altered or, indeed, improved.

In this way the preparation of Outlines and reports began in Genroku 6. A thin, folded document nine centimeters tall and 151 long is now held in the Seidô documents in the Nagasaki Municipal Museum. It bears entries on both sides of the page, one side a list of banned books and the other side a listing of books from Kan'ei 16 (1639) to Kyôhô 8 (1723) of the numbers of said books placed in the Momijiyama Bunko $\underline{X} \cong \underline{U} \times \underline{F}$. In red ink by the entry for Genroku 6 of this list is written: "From this year forward,

Outlines were begun." This document contains a list of banned books, and from the small size it appears to be important notes of a highly secret nature belonging to the Mukai family. It is a reliable document. The fact that materials based on the former records of the Mukai family in such sources as the "Hakusai shomoku" 舶載書目(List of Books Brought as Cargo) held in the Archives and Mausolea Department of the Imperial Household Agency and the "Shôhaku sairai shomoku" 商舶載來書目(List of Books Transported for Sale) all commence in Genroku 6, and that the assistant inspectors came into existence in that year, lead to the conclusion that Genroku 6 was the beginning of the Outlines.

Preparing Book Explanations. The Outlines were prepared in triplicate and presented to the Nagasaki Administrator; the latter then sent them on to the Council of Elders and asked if there were any works they wished ordered. Hence, the Outlines were simultaneously reports based on scrutinization of the contents of works and lists of items for sale. Missing pages, interpolations in old texts, and the like were pointed out in overseeing these items for sale. On this basis, the contents of works imported for the first time were made known, and hence these Outlines have extraordinary bibliographic importance, for they offer explanations of books and describe the contents of rare works.

The transcription and preservation of these Outlines was extremely important. In the entry for Kyôhô 16 (1731) in the Bakufu shomotsukata nikki 幕府書物方日記 (Record of Books for the Shogunate), the Book Administrator investigated 22 Outlines covering the period from the second through the fifth month and abstracted some 300-400 works "worthy of consideration." Copies of Outlines have also been preserved in the Sonkeikaku Bunko尊 經 閣 文 庫 of the Maeda 前 田 family of Kaga 加 賀 and in the library of the Matsuura 松浦 family of Hirado 平戶. In particular, the "Tora jubansen mochiwatarisho aratame mokuroku utsushi" 寅拾番船持渡書改目録寫(Draft of the Checked List of Books Brought to Japan Aboard Vessel Number Ten in the Year of the Tiger) of the Matsuura family is a listing of books brought from China to Japan on vessel number ten in Tenmei 2 (1782), the year of the tiger. It is a manuscript which Matsuura Seizan 松浦静山 (Kiyoshi 清), famed author of the Kasshi yawa 甲子夜話 (Evening Chats from the Kasshi Day [of the Eleventh Month of 1821]), borrowed from Môri Takasue 毛利高標, the well-known book collector from Saeki 佐伯 domain in Bungo 豊後, and copied out. I think this represents a fine example of how interested men of letters were at that time in works brought to Japan from China.

Based upon the Outlines submitted by the Nagasaki Administrator, book orders could be placed in Edo by the Kaedeyama Bunko 楓山文庫--namely, for use by the shôgun or the Gakumonjo--and before the establishment of the Shôheizaka Gakumonjo 昌平坂学間所, surely the Hayashi family in charge of the Shogunal College had special privileges in this regard; also senior and junior councillors working for the shogunal authorities could place orders. At this time, the daimyôs including the three collateral branches of the Tokugawa house could not order books upon reading the Outlines. It seems they had to rely privately on the Nagasaki Administrator or his lieutenant Takagi Sakuemon (d. 1629) to acquire such books. There is evidence that Maeda Tsunanori 前田綱紀(1643-1724) of Kaga clearly used Takagi Sakuemon in this manner. Furthermore, Ichikawa Beian 市河米庵 (1779-1858) reports that it was

exceedingly expensive to ask the Nagasaki Administrator temporarily to defray the cost of items requested. Originally, this defrayal of expense was not limited to books, but concerned all imported items.

Books placed on shogunal order would be sent to Edo by post station. Books to be purchased immediately were paid for with money set aside for shogunal travel, but there were cases when books were reserved or when payment was not forthcoming, and if payment was not made the item in question would be sent back to the Nagasaki Administrator. We see in a government notice of the first month of Kyôhô 13 (1728) that payment could be made in Edo from that time forward.

Simplification of Procedures. As we enter the Hôreki period (1751-64), a number of changes transpired in the inspection of books. The aim of these revisions was to try to reduce the excessive amount of time it took to inspect books. It was no easy business to scrutinize every single page of the texts transported from China. For example, vessel number one in the year of the dragon (Hôreki 10, 1760) brought a copy of the Gujin tushu jicheng 古今圖書集成 (Compendium of Works Old and New) in 10,000 juan; its Outline was completed in the ninth month of the year of the horse, thus having required nearly two years to prepare. This both hindered the business of trade and led to considerable dissatisfaction when even books transported to Japan on order would arrive in Nagasaki and then not show up in Edo for some time. In Hôreki 3 (1753), books whether on order or for sale were placed in the hands of Takagi Sakuemon, and separating out the books on special order, he sent only those to be placed on sale to the Seidô. He did this to speed up the completion of work carried out at the port of landing. From the sixth month of Hôreki 6 (1756), he ceased the practice of having Outlines made for all books, old or new, brought to port; the titles of items that had already been imported and were now being transported again were checked, and Outlines were prepared solely for books being brought to Japan for the first time. This seems to have reduced their labors considerably.

In the years of the Kansei reign period (1789-1801), the desire to see new items promptly was expressed more strongly in Edo, and a plan to simplify the treatment of officially ordered books, enhance the efficiency of the inspection process, and see that payment to the Chinese merchants was made with all due alacrity was implemented. Head of the Shogunal College Hayashi despatched a letter to Senior Councillor Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信(1758-1829) in which he expressed the wish that, as Chinese merchants frequently imported even a small number of books, these books be forwarded to him. This was not meant to say that he wanted the process done just to save time, but he was requesting that they change what always seemed to consume so much time and thus speed the process along. His point was that once a work was on official order, "to look into the process of book inspection whereby every page undergoes scrutiny and every character in worn away lines of texts has to be made out. If necessary, additional insertions, of course, as well as bindings and covers can be fixed up for preparation. It is best to treat officially ordered books as important, but the trend of the times has been recently to treat everything with great seriousness. Let us simplify matters." After dividing into groups the books that came into their hands, the book inspectors then put aside the books on official order, and from this time forward a

simplification in the inspection procedure was effected. For example, if there had been a page missing in a text, an additional page would have been placed in the work, if the written form of characters had been too long or had become blurry, they were cut and restored to form. Thus, ordered books would have taken two or three years before they would reach Edo.

Officially Ordered Items. The least attention to the collection held in the Naikaku Bunko reveals that works on order were carefully restored. Among the books transported on Chinese vessel number four in the year of the sheep, Kôka 4 (1847), were three copies of a work entitled Baozhonglu 褒 忠 錄 (On Praising Loyalty). One copy went to the Momijiyama Bunko, another was ordered by the Shôheizaka Gakumonjo, and both are now held in the Naikaku Bunko. Looking at these two copies that came to Japan at the same time, the title of the Momijiyama Bunko text was written on a piece of white paper pasted into it, while the title in the Shôheizaka text was directly written in the work, with no extra paper affixed. The title as added in the latter case was known as uchitsukegaki 打ち付け書き(bluntly affixed writing). The two works came from the same printing, and they are indistinguishable in this regard. However, when you examine every page, in the upper portion of the fourth leaf of juan 1 of the Shôheizaka text can be found a small red imprint from the paper mill. This is how the two texts can be differentiated. It is evident that the text in the Momijiyama Bunko was gone over with great care, and that this fell within the tasks of the book inspectors. Furthermore, this practice did not exist in the Kyôhô years (1716-36). As I will describe in detail later, at the time of Shôgun Yoshimune 吉宗 (r. 1716-51), works were sent directly to Edo, and these differed based on the fashions of the times and the tastes of the shôgun.

If I may be permitted a short digression from the topic of book inspection, let me say something about the awe one feels when examining the former holdings of the Momijiyama Bunko, now held in the Naikaku Bunko. The preservation has been extraordinary; even today there are numerous volumes in excellent condition to the extent that the odor of camphor is still apparent and none of them bears the library's imprint. With the change in the management of the library, a seal of the collection was affixed in the Meiji period, but not the seal of the Momijiyama Bunko. By contrast, the collection of the Môri family of Saeki, noted above, which remains extant as it was later presented to the Shogunate, has a red imprint in large, inelegant characters reading "Saeki kô Môri Takasue azana Baishô zôshoga no in" 佐伯侯毛利高標字培松蔵書之印 (seal of the collection of Môri Takasue, style Baishô, lord of Saeki). When I saw this, I felt the authority of the shôgun. Whether or not it reflects the shôgun's self-confidence, affixing this large red seal he effectively was saying "This is my book!"

The Negumichô. Now, once a book had passed inspection, it could go on sale, and thus as a commodity the book would be passed to the control of the Nagasaki Commercial Hall. There the task of setting a price (negumi 值組) would be carried out. Before the promulgation of the New Shôtoku Laws 新正德令, this process had been applied only to raw silk thread, but afterward it was used for handling all imported items by the appraisers (mekiki 目利) at the Nagasaki Commercial Hall. A book appraisal-known as a neire 值入れ--was carried out for books, and after considering such things as

the market price in Kamigata, the quantity being imported, and the original prices the previous year, they established an expected price. Then, a register of appraisals was prepared, and it would be sent to the wholesaler's office. They would there confer about the price by seeing if the procurement and investigation had been properly handled. On this basis a *negumichô* 値 組帳 (Register of Prices) was then prepared. The Chinese merchants would be summoned to the wholesaler's hall where the hall officials would meet and through the interpreters discuss valuation of the cargo and market conditions. Through the interpreters the Chinese then offered their views. If they failed to come to an agreement on price, the item would simply not be sold. What they finally determined at this stage was the sale price, and this was the price that they would pay the Chinese. When a sale price had been determined, they had the Chinese affix a seal indicating sold in the Register of Prices.

I have only been able to verify the existence of *negumichô* at two places: the *Motouri negumichô* 本賣 値 組帳 (Bunsei 12-13 [1829-30]) held in the library of the Nagasaki Municipal Museum; and the *Motokata negumichô* 本方 値 組帳 of the first lunar month of Kôka 2 (1845) held in the collection of Tsuda Hideo 津田秀夫. There are no books given on the list in the Tsuda collection. Above each title in the former, a small character for "sale" *uri* 賣 (Ch. *mai*) is written in, and above it a small, black, square seal about seven or eight milimeters to a side and a circular seal about one centimeter in circumference have been affixed. Within these seals are what appear to be Chinese names and styles, such as "Aiting" 藹亭 (Luxuriant Pavilion) and "Yiting" 藝亭 (Pavilion of Culture). Where no character for "sale" appears, it would seem that no price was agreed upon.

A Song Edition That Got Away. On the third day of the eighth month of Kyôwa 3 (1803), on orders from Edo the Nagasaki Administrator conveyed a shogunal book order to Inspector of Books Mukai Genchû. The order was for eighteen works selected from those books brought to China aboard vessels number five, six, seven, eight, and nine in the year of the dog, the previous year. Among these works was a "Song Edition of the Five Classics" (Sôhan gokyô 宋板 五經). Yet, when the Nagasaki Commercial Hall received this order and selected through the stock on hand--this was called ukekomi 請込 --the work in question, according to the report prepared by officials of the Hall, had been returned home due a disagreement over price. When the investigation was pressed further, they learned that this set of books had been imported to Japan aboard vessel number eight in the year of the dog and had been returned as cargo on the ninth day of the third month. However, it was to be found on the list of books ordered by the shogunate tendered by Genchû in the fourth month, and Edo had listed it as a necessary item. A letter demanding an explanation (now among the Seidô documents) was received from the Administrator and read in part: "In spite of the fact that the aforementioned item of cargo [namely, the Song edition of the Five Classics] was sent back in the third month, thereafter the set of books was added to the list of works presented for shogunal order in the fourth month. What is going on here? Clarify this matter in detail." Shogunal orders for books particularly flourished in the Kansei and Kyôwa reign periods, and this probably was due to the power surrounding the head of Shogunal College, Hayashi Jussai 林 流 齍 (1768-1841). Although there is no way now for us to determine if the books in

question were really a Song edition, the Nagasaki Administrator's request for a reply seems to indicate that Jussai, for one, was disappointed.

Shoseki motochô and Bidding. Once prices had been set, a list of books to be placed on sale at the Nagasaki Commercial Hall was drawn up. This was known as a shoseki motochô 書籍元帳 (register of book prices), and in it were transcribed the price for each item once it had been established. Irrespective of the transporting vessel, a register lumping all cargo together by portions bid upon was filled out. In the library of the Nagasaki Municipal Museum, there are thirteen stringbound volumes of shoseki motochô covering the years Tenpô 12 (1841), 13, Kôka 2 (1845), 3, 4, 5, Ka'ei 1 (1848), 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and Ansei 2 (1855). From this we get an almost complete picture of the books imported to Japan in the bakumatsu period. These registers apparently form one part of the documents handed over to the Nagasaki Prefectural Office by the office of the Nagasaki Administrator and the Nagasaki Commercial Hall. Among them are entries for books orders from the Momijiyama Bunko and the Shôheizaka Gakumonjo, of course, as well as those from senior and junior councillors. It is thus possible to examine against it one by one the books presently held in the Naikaku Bunko, and it would be extremely useful to do so for research on the books transported to Japan from China.

On the same day that the pricing was completed, sometimes a day or two later, bidding was carried out. The Five Main Merchants (gokasho honshô 五 r所本商) were the ones able to take part in the bidding, although they had an opportunity to view the merchandice in advance to prepare their bids. This was known as "viewing the cargo" (*nimise* 荷見 せ), and at this time they wrote out a list of every item with its distinctive characteristics and estimated generally what they would bid on it. As memoranda the merchants prepared what were known as *kenchô* 見帳 or "viewing ledgers." Two *kenchô* for books, each one stringbound volume--one for Tenpô 14 (1843) and one for Tenpô 15 (1845)--are now held in the collection of Miyamoto Mataji 宮本又次, professor emeritus of Ôsaka University. There were included in the *Murakami bunsho* 村上文書 (Murakami Documents), a batch of materials formerly belonging to Murakami Tôbee 村上藤兵衛 who particpated in bidding as a merchant of the Edo Commercial Hall from the middle years of the Edo period. After each title, he lists with various symbols the qualities of each book and the estimated amount he will bid; he also gives the actual results of the bidding from the first through the third bids.

The results of the bidding were made public through the third bids, though among the aforementioned *shoseki motochô* only in the "Tatsu shigorokushichibansen narabi ni tatsutoshi shinto shoseki motochô" 辰四五六七番船並辰歲新渡書籍元帳(Register of Book Prices on Newly Imported Works in the Year of the Dragon Aboard Vessels Number Four, Five, Six, and Seven in the Year of the Dragon) of Kôka 2 (1845) are the contracted prices and the names of the successful bidders added, making this as well a register of the successful bids. At the Nagasaki Commercial Hall, a register of successful bidswas added to the listing of overall amounts of outgoing silver payments, and it was presented to the Nagasaki Administrator. I have as yet, however, not seen this formal register. A document entitled "Gaihakusairai Tôsho Ransho nyûsatsuchô" 外舶齋來唐 書蘭書入札帳 (Register of Bids on Chinese and Dutch Books Imported as Cargo) held in the Motoyama Bunko 元山文庫 in the Institute on the Cultural History of Kyûshû,

10

Kyûshû University, is one of the Murakami Documents. In it eleven records of bidding from Tenpô 14 (1843) through Bunkyû 2 (1862) have been tied together; although the time frame skips around, it is a unique document concerning books. Inasmuch as documents detailing the original prices of books are extremely few and hard to come by, this one, together with the *shoseki motochô* and the *kenchô*, are extremely valuable.

The Price of Books. Each item that had been successfully bid upon was to be claimed, and the price was calculated by adding charges for brokerage fees, packaging costs, interest, and shipping fees. They would then be sent to Edo, Kyoto, Ôsaka, and the like, and be supplied by local merchants to bookstores and users. The routes of circulation and final prices remain unclear, however.

The following original prices are given for freight on a Dutch vessel in the *Motouri negumichô* for the first month of Kôka $2(1845)^2$:

Wall clock 208 monme Eyeglasses 9.88 monme Gold pocket watch 1 kan, 690 me Small pocket watch 741 monme Telescope 364.585 monme Telescope with magnetic needle 438.1 monme Theater glasses 72.8 monme Music box 722.8 monme Coffee beans (one catty) .5135 monme

We also just happen to have the *Shoseki motochô* for this year, and we can see several of the works that fetched 150 *monme* or more [original prices followed by successful bids].

Peiwen yunfu 佩文韻府 (Rhyming Compendium of Refined Literature) 1 kanme, 1 kan 710 monme; Siku quanshi tiyao 四庫全書提要 (Outlines of the Complete Works of the Four Treasures) 450 me, 520.3 me; Wubian tongjian 五編通鑑 (Complete Mirror in Five Editions)³ 400 me, 1 kan 234 monme; Zhibuzuzhai congshu 知不足齋 叢書 (Compendium from the Hut of Insufficient Knowledge) 300 me, 345 monme; Shisan jing zhushu 十三經注疏 (Thirteen Classics with Commentaries) 250 me, 465 monme; Qinding sijing 欽定四經 (Four Classics, Imperially Approved Edition) 180 me, 411.5 monme; Huangchao jingshi wenbian 皇朝經世文編 (Essays on Statecraft of the August Dynasty) 150 me, 310 me; Ming shi gao 明史稿 (Draft History of the Ming) 150 me, 352.1 monme.

Any scholar of East Asian studies will recognize the texts cited here as basic works. Hence, the *Peiwen yunfu* cost nowhere near the price of a pocket watch at the time, and the *Siku quanshu tiyao* went for about the same price as that of a telescope with a magnetic needle. One single music box had an original price comparable to the cost of the *Zhibuzuzhai congshu*, the *Shisan jing zhushu*, and the *Qinding sijing* combined. Because there was a shortage of Dutch goods, they fetched higher prices, but the market

² One monme 匁 (or me 目) is the equivalent of 1325 ounces or 3.75 grams; one kan 貫 or kanme 貫 目 is 1000 monme. All weights are in silver.

³ It is not entirely clear what was contained in this set of books. It surely included the Zizhi tongjian 資治通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government) of Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-86) and then four other works that built on it, perhap the Xu zizhi tongjian 續資治通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government, Continued) compiled under Bi Yuan 畢 沅 (1730-97).

price for Higo rice in the first month of the year when this *negumichô* was prepared was 80.4 *monme* for one *koku* Ξ [44.8 gallons or 180 liters], while it was 83 *monme* in the fifth month when the *Shoseki motochô* was written up. An accurate comparison of commodity prices is hard to do well, but we can detect here something of a boom.

Among the cargo brought to Japan aboard Chinese vessels in the Edo period, books underwent a rigorous process of inspection. Aside from book inspectors, other merchandise was imported relatively smoothly. Because of the inspection of books, and then because of the great scholarly interest stimulated by the Outlines prepared of these books, far more materials about them remain than do for other commodities. In other words, the circumstances surrounding the importation of other merchandise are extremely difficult to get a handle on.