About Some Japanese Historical Terms

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Translator’s Forward

It may seem strange to publish a translation of what is merely the preface of a book. The book is Higashi Aria no 6ken to shis6 東アジアの王権と思想 (East Asian Kingly Authorities and Ideologies, University of Tokyo Press, 1997) by Watanabe Hiroshi 渡辺浩 of the Faculty of Law at the University of Tokyo. It is a collection of many essays previously published separately in journals about Edo-period Tokugawa authority, and comparative intellectual history of China, Korea, and Japan. The essays are fascinating, and if I had the time and skill I would like to translate more. The preface alone, however, is of great interpretive importance, because it presents both theory and research on the use of anachronistic terminology in the history of early modern Japan. The reason why this is presented in the preface is that the author chose to change some of the terminology previously used in these essays and he explains why in the preface.

Another odd aspect of this translation is the retention of many Japanese terms. This is perhaps not appealing in a translation but is necessary because the meaning and importance of the essay hinges on the precise meaning and usage of terms. Words in brackets and the dates of individuals and some of the books are my own explanatory additions.

Preface: About Some Japanese Historical Terms

In this book I will not use some terms commonly used in the narration of Japanese history. I will use different terms to refer to their objects. This may on occasion look very strange to the reader. However I do not do this just to be strange or different. Some commonly used historical terms are an obstruction to correct historical understanding. Below I will give examples of these words and explain why I choose not to use them.

1. Bakufu 幕府
A certain historical chronology of Japan says in the entry for the second month of 1603 "Ieyasu became sei i taishogun 征夷大将軍 [barbarian-subduing great general] and
created the bakufu in Edo.”¹ It is fine to say that he became the seii taishōgun, but what does it mean to say that he “created the bakufu?”

If it means that there was a consciousness that becoming a shōgun meant creating a government called a bakufu, it is well known that this is not the case. Ieyasu and his successors did not call their government a bakufu. The term is not used in the laws and proclamations. Neither did the Kamakura nor the Muromachi military authorities make use of the term.² Tokugawa Ienobu’s chamberlain Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725) wrote at the head of his Tokashi yoron 読史余論 (Lectures on Readings of History, 1712): “Concerning the military houses, Yoritomo 藤原 created a bakufu and for three generations held administrative authority over the rights of warriors and military preparedness throughout the realm... Takaui 尊氏 made Kōmei 光明院 the head of the Northern Court and created his own bakufu.” This offers a very rare example of the usage of the phrase “created a bakufu” (bakufu o hiraku 幕府を開く).

Secondly, if this is meant to say that the polity under the authority of the shōgun was commonly called a bakufu, this is also not correct. Of course, there was from ancient times a Chinese term “myfū” referring to the general who protects the emperor, and the term bakufu does appear in the Azuma kagami 吾妻鏡 (Mirror of the East, 13-14th century) to denote the shōgun and to denote his residence along with other terms such as ryūei 柳栞, bakka 幕下, and tajfu 大樹.³ Because of this, there are a few rare examples of pedantic usage of the term from the earliest years of the Edo period. Hayashi

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² As an exception there is a document entitled “Muromachi-ke onaisho an” 室町家御内書箋 (Drafts of Directives from the Muromachi House) (dated 1336, 8th month, 18th day), which has: “At this point, the bakufu Sahyō-no-kami Takaui 塔由伴任, and his brother Ashikaga Sama-no-kami Naoyoshi 左馬頭直義, had the retired emperor issue a decree declaring that the evil and rebellious retainer [Nitta] Yoshisada [新田]義貞 and his followers be chastised.” Koji ruien 古事類苑 (Categorized Compendium of Ancient Matters), Kan’i no bu 35, “Kamakura shogun” [Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1981-85].
⁴ Hattori Nankaku 細部南郭 (1683-1759) called “Minamoto daishōgun Yoritomo” the “bakufu.” “Nigenron”二源論 (Discurso on the Two Minamotos), in Hino Tatsuo 日野龍夫, ed., Kinsei juka bunshū shūsei 近世儒家文集集成 (Collection of the Writings of Early Modern Confucian Scholars), Vol. 7, Nankaku sensei bunshū 南郭先生文集 (The Writings of Teacher Nankaku) (Tokyo: Perikansha, 1985), p. 79. Also, the Tōshōgū gojikkō 東照宮御実記 (True Record of Ieyasu), kan 5, in Shintei zōho kokushi taikei 新訂増補国史體系 (Revised and Enlarged edition, Collection of the Historical Records of the Country), Vol. 38 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1964), pp. 73-74, includes the phrase “Ordering an imperial messenger to go to the bakufu originates with the Kamakura great general of the right’s house.... From the time of Ōnin, after rebellion beset the bakufu, there were no directives on formal protocol.”
Razan 秋山 (1583-1657) called Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 a “bakufu” on a few occasions. Tokugawa Muneharu 徳川宗春 (1696-1764) wrote, “I was made a lord in the bakufu, received the great love and munificence [of the shōgun], and then quite unexpectedly was made head of the [Owari] main household.” Itō Baiu 伊藤梅宇 (1683-1745) wrote, “Muro Shinsuke 室新助, currently holding office in the bakufu, originally held office as a scholar in Kaga. Forty-two or forty-three years ago he was received into the [Edo] government and remains there to this day.” Takahashi Gyokusai 高橋玉斎 (1683-1760) wrote about the Mito school’s Dai Nihon shi 大日本史 that it was “offered up to the bakufu in the time of Munetaka.” But these are rare exceptions. At least until the Kansei period (1789-1800), bakufu was a very rarely used word. For example the scholar Bitō Jishū 尾藤二洲 (1745-1813) listed in his Shōi shigen 称謂私 言 (Personal Thoughts on Names) in 1800 the following possible terms to describe the contemporary Tokugawa government (tōkon jitate 当今事体) when writing in the Chinese style: daičō 大朝, fuchō 萬朝, daiju 大居, seiifu 征夷府, efu 王府, but not bakufu. A large tome representative of a richly developed almanac tradition, published in 1831 by Suharaya Mohei 必原夜茂兵衛, the Dai Nihon eidae setsuyō mujinzo 大日本永代節用無尽蔵 (Inexhaustable Warehouse Almanac of Great Japan) listed bakka, taiju, daishōgun, kinchī 禁中, and kinri 禁裏, but not bakufu.

In recent years we have seen the usage of the term “Bakufu” in English writings on Japanese history. Although the intent of this usage is correct historical method, indeed it does not, as I argue here, reflect reality.

5 There is a section entitled “Answers to the Questions of the Bakufu,” in Kyōto shiseikai 京都史跡会, ed., Razan sensei bunshū 羅山先生文集 (The Writings of Teacher Razan), kan 1 (Kyoto: Heian kōko gakkai, 1918), pp. 341-43.


My purpose is not to argue that one must use contemporary terms at all times. Historians probably have no need to use *kubōsama* 公方様 instead of *shōgun* 将軍. However, problems of political ideology may lie hidden in the term *bakufu*.

"*Bakufu*" began to become a common term under the influence of the later Mito school of historical philosophy [an "emperor"-centered vision of Edo politics developed by the scholars of the Tokugawa collateral house at Mito]. Fujita Yūkoku 藤田幽谷 (1774-1826) wrote in his *Seimeiron* 正名論 (1791, Discourse on the Rectification of Names): "If the *bakufu* reverses the emperor, then each lord reveses the *bakufu*. If each lord reveses the *bakufu*, then the higher and lesser retainers will revere each lord. If this is carried out then high and low will keep their place and all of the countries will be in harmony."11 Yūkoku’s student Aizawa Seishisai 会沢正志斎 (1782-1863) and his son Fujita Tōko 藤田東湖 (1806-55) used the term *bakufu* consistently. *Bakufu* probably became a common term together with the Mito phrase *sonnō jōi* 尊王攘夷 (revere the emperor and expel the barbarian) in the 1850’s and 1860’s largely due to the appearance in 1847 of Tōko’s *Kōdōkan kijutsugi* 弘道館記述義 (Records of Discussions at the Kōdōkan).

Well, why did the scholars of the later Mito school use this word? As revealed in the *Seimeiron*, they wanted to emphasize that the government was a government of the "*shōgun*" appointed by the emperor in Kyoto. This was to clarify and emphasize its correctness and legitimacy under their increasingly strong self-identity as, and definition of the Japanese as, members of the “country of the termo” (kōoku 皇國).12 The use of the word *bakufu* was a political word to show the legitimacy of the government. When the Mito scholars began regularly using this term, there were probably people who thought it strange. Indeed, in the *Kōdōkan kijutsugi*, Fujita Tōko complains of the following conditions: "Unlearned boors would call the *bakufu* by the name ‘chōei’朝廷 [court], and the worst would call the *bakufu* the ‘ō’王 [king])"13 If the Tokugawa themselves were to use the term *bakufu* it would be a humble, self-explanatory form of expression. From the perspective of anti-Tokugawa people, not using the common terms “*gokōgyō* 御公儀 and “*kōhen* 公辺 was a way of viewing Tokugawa authority more lightly by situating it underneath the authority in Kyoto. Also when emperor Kōkaku 光格 (r. 1779-1817) wrote “With the assistance of the kanpaku’s 関白 way of letters and the *bakufu*’s way of military skills, I have seen my reign continue peacefully for more that 20 years,” it may likely have been with his feeling to raise the authority of the Kyoto side.14

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12 Concerning this point, please see the discussion in Chapter 6 of this [Watanabe’s] book, “Taihei” to “kōoku” (The “Great Peace” and the “Imperial Country”).


Indeed, in the political conditions of the closing years of the Edo period, the term *bakufu* suddenly became very popular and its use spread widely.\(^{15}\) Calling the “kōgi oyakunin” (officials of the government) “bakushin” (bakufu retainers) and “bakuri” (bakufu officials) must have felt rather satisfying or even a bit rebellious. Finally with the *ōsei fukko no daigōrei* (proclamation for the restoration of kingly government) came the declaration that “the sesshō, kanpaku, and the bakufu, etc. will heretofore be abolished.”\(^{16}\) After the Meiji period, with the help of a national education system, the term *bakufu* became wholly entrenched. Without a doubt this reinforced a historical image of the emperor as being the only legitimate ruling authority throughout the history of “Japan,” and at best the Tokugawa clan as having ruled by having been entrusted the government by the emperor—a historical view not held in the early Edo period.

Thus, the use of the word “*bakufu*” is an expression of a historical vision focused on the kōkoku (country of the tennō).

Usage of the term *bakufu* makes it difficult to perceive that there was a major shift in relations between Edo and Kyoto in the middle of the Edo period. Furthermore, it privileges the Mito school’s interpretation of the relation between Edo and Kyoto. It also makes it easy to forget how the imperial house met change after change from ancient times (in its relations with the military houses as well), finally managing to survive into the present. Because of this I have chosen not to use the word *bakufu* and related terms (bakumatsu, bakusei, bakushin, bakuri, bakugi, bakaku, etc.) unless I am intending to express its specific nuance. (I have changed all previous usage of those terms in the articles collected in this book to be consistent with this policy.)

What then should it be called? One can think of *Tokugawa seiken* (the Tokugawa governmental authority). However it would be most natural perhaps to use the word most commonly used then. That term was *kōgi* (public). The “kō” is different from the western word “public” (and the Chinese “gōng” as well).\(^{17}\) Therefore, one cannot simply assume that it contains the nuances of public authority and power (kōkenryoku, state public authority (kokka kōken), or territorial public authority (ryōdo kōken). New research will need to be done on the meaning of the

\(^{15}\) Mitani Hiroshi 三谷博 has, in his *Meiji ishin to nashonarizumu: bakumatsu gaikō to seiji hendō* 明治維新とナショナリズム：幕末外交と政治変動 (The Meiji Restoration and Nationalism: Foreign Relations in the Closing Years of the Tokugawa and Political Change) (Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha, 1997), put the following suggestive footnote between a description of the “early modern Japanese state” and a political history of the aftermath of the signing of the Treaty of Friendship: “From here on, I will stop using the term ‘Tokugawa kōgi’ and begin using ‘bakufu.’ This is because from this time it became the common pattern to use ‘chōtei’ solely for the imperial court in Kyoto, and to distinguish the Tokugawa authority as ‘bakufu,’ giving it the meaning of the ruling seat of government under the authority of the imperial court.”

\(^{16}\) Morisue Yoshiaki, p. 756.

\(^{17}\) Mizoguchi Yūzō 溝口雄三, *Chūgoku no kō to shi* 中国の公と私 (The “Public” and the “Private” in China) (Tokyo: Kenbun shuppan, 1995).
terms kōgi and kubō at least from the time of the middle ages on with these points in mind. However people of the Edo period did use it as a common noun to mean "government" (seifū 政府) -- albeit with more reverence than in the case of the modern term. Indeed it was also possible to replace the term with "kan" 官. The kanpu 官府 of Russia was its kōgi. The kansen 官船 of the Qing dynasty in China were also defined as "kōgi no fune" 反ぎのふね.

It seems more appropriate to use kōgi to label the institutions which functioned as the central government in the Edo period than bakufu.

2. Chōtei 朝廷

As Fujita Tōko complained, the kōgi was often called chōtei (court). Indeed it would not have been unnatural to call the governmental office of the hegemon (kunshū 君主) who ruled the realm (tenka 天下) by that term. There are not merely the well-known examples of such usage in the Akō gijin roku 赤穂義人録 (Record of the Righteous Retainers of Akō) and Kokusō seigi 国喪正議 (Discussions on Proper Funeral Rites for the Country) by Muro Kyūsō 室鳩巢 (1658-1734),20 the writings of Ogyū Sorai 萩野雅（1666-1728）22 and in the Keizairoku 経済録 (Record of Economic Matters) of Dazai

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18 One good source concerning kubō 公方 is Nitta Ichirō 新田一郎, "Nihon chūsei no kokusei to tenno: rikai e no hitotsu no shiza" 日本中世の国政と天皇: 理解へのひとつの視座 (National Government and the Emperor in Japan's Medieval Period: One Perspective Toward Understanding), Shisō 思想 819 (July 1993).

19 Katsuragawa Hoshū 桂川甫周 (1754-1809) (Kamei Takayoshi 亀井高孝, ed.), Hokusa bunryaku: Daikokuya Kōdayū Roshiya hyōryūki 北鶴関略．大黒屋光大夫ロシア漂流記 (Abridged Tales of a Shipwreck to the North: The Record of Daikokuya Kōdayū’s Shipwreck to Russia) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1990), p. 34. See also on pages 40, 45, 50, 52, 61, 188, and 194 where kan 官 is glossed as "kōgi."


21 "Despite my own inabilities, I have thought of the following for the benefit of the court (chōtei)." Kokusō seigi, manuscript copy held in Tokyo University Library (without folio numbers). "The court (chōtei) subjected the retainers of Akō to the law;" “the Akō retainers would not accept mercy [shown towards Kira Yoshinaka]. Would those who regard the Akō retainers as just regard the court as unjust?” From the preface to the Akō gijin roku. See Ishii Shirō 石井繁郎 , ed., Nihon shisō taisetsu 日本思想体系 27: 近世武家思想 (Thought of the Warrior Houses in the Early Modern Period) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1974), p 343.

22 Some examples are: “Currently the chōtei ranks the lords based on the amount of warriors and fief. Furthermore each lord has his own samurai and all great and small are organized into the military units.” “The chōtei has remote descendents and relatives offer worship to their ancestors who performed outstanding labors at the time of [shogunal] dynastic change” (teimei 鼎命). Hiraishi Naoaki 平石直昭, ed., Kinsei Juka bunshū shūsei daisankan Sorai shū 近世儒家文
Shundai 太宰春台 (1680-1747) 23 Yuasa Jōzan 湯浅常山 (1708-81) wrote about Kumazawa Banzan 熊沢蕃山 (1619-91): “He submitted his policy proposals to the chōtei in the Eastern capital, setting out to reform the government of the land.” 24 Matsura Seizan 松浦静山 (1760-1841) wrote of Tokugawa Tsunayoshi 徳川綱吉 (1646-1709): “Because at this time there were no children in the chōtei...” 25 And, Minamikawa Isen 南川維邁 (1729-81) wrote: “Because the current system is feudal, although there are the great laws of the court, each domainal country has its own law codes.” 26 The nativist scholar Takada Tomokiyo 髙田與清 (1783-1847, also known as Oyamada 小山田Tomokiyo) criticized “scholars,” writing: “There are people who say this and that about the government of the court” (ōyake no matsurigoto o korekare to ronzuru mono ari 朝廷 [glossed おはやけ] の政事 [glossed まつりごと] をこれかれと論ずる者あり). As his gloss reflects, he used court with nearly the same meaning as ōyake 公, okami お上, and kōgi 公儀 27 Takano Chōei 高野長英 (1804-50), writing about the events of the imprisonment of Dutch scholars in 1837, used language such as “the august anger of the authorities” [kami no gyakurin 官 [glossed かみ] の逆鱗] Note: this term means only imperial anger in Chinese] and “criticize the chōtei” and other expressions also in this vein of usage. 28


23 “For want of a better way, I will write kenkan 省官. Although kenkan is used to refer to the son of heaven (tenshi 天子), in truth it is like saying kōgi in this age. It is certainly more broad a term than tycoon (taikun 大君). I will sometimes also use kokka 国家 and chōtei.” “Such terms as kokuchō 国朝, honchō 本朝, and wagachō 我朝 are all ways of referring to the current court (chōtei).” Keizairoku, “hanrei” 経泥錄 凡例, in Rai Tsutomu 順惟動, ed., Nihon shisō taisei 37, Sorai gakuha 索派 (The Sorai School) (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1972), pp. 11, 13. Examples from Akō gijin roku and Keizairoku have been previously noted in the additional notes, p. 466, of the source cited in footnote 13.


Furthermore, scholars of Chinese learning thought that the word "kōgi" would not be understood by foreigners, because it was a uniquely Japanese term. That is why when the kōgi authorities wrote an order to Rezanov to leave Nagasaki in 1805, they wrote of themselves: "This is the intent of the chōtei." And Sakuma Shōzan 佐久間象山 (1811-64) repeatedly used the words "my/our chōtei" (waga chōtei 吾朝廷) in writing a draft of negotiations in 1858 with Townsend Harris. Neither thought that this was overreaching one's status vis-à-vis Kyoto.

To think that it is only natural to call Kyoto the court (chōtei) and Edo the bakufu is highly "modern" and in keeping with the views of the Mito school. Is it not strange that modern historians who may have no sympathy for Mito scholarship nevertheless are engaged in a debate described as being about "court-bakufu relations in the Edo period?"

What then should be the appropriate terminology for the imperial court? In the Edo period the most common term was kinri 禁裏 (forbidden quarter) or kinchū 禁中 (inside the forbidden quarter). Rather than saying court and bakufu, a different image is conjured up when we use the terms kōgi and kinri, “government and forbidden quarter.”

3. Tennō 天皇

In a certain sense the tennō did not exist in Japan from the middle of the thirteenth century until the end of the eighteenth century. From the time of Juntoku 順徳 tennō (r. 1210-21) until its revival at the time of Kōkaku tennō (r. 1779-1817), the posthumous title (shigō 諡号) tennō was not officially used either before or after death. While regnant they were called by such terms as kinri(sama) 禁裏(様), kinchū(sama) 禁中(様), tenshi(sama) 天子(様) (son of heaven), tōgin 当今 (the current [reign]), and shujō 主上, (my lord), after retirement were called Sentō 仙洞 (Sentō retirement villa), shin'in 新院 (newly retired), hon'in 本院 (the currently retired), and the like, and after death were called for example Gomizunoo-in 御水尾院, Sakuramachi-in 桜町院, Momozono-in 桃園院 [i.e., name with "in" appended]. In the previously mentioned Dai Nihon eidai setsuyō mujinzō (1854), the section called “Honchō nendai yōran” 本朝年代要覧 (Era Names of Our Court) also refers to Kōkaku and Jinkō 仁孝 and all before (with the exception of the ancient period, Juntoku, and a few other tennō) faithfully as somebody-in 何々院. People of the Edo period would not have said something like “Gomizunoo tennō” 御水尾天皇.

Such scholars as Nakai Chikuzan 藪井竹山 (1730-1804) and Yamagata Taika 山崎 太華 (1781-1866) lamented this situation in which “propriety of naming” was
unclear. Indeed, when we consider that there was someone in Edo called while in office such terms as "kubō-sama, tenkasama, shōgunsama," and who after retirement was called "ōgoshosama" 大御所様 and the like, and who after death was called majestically, for example, Daitoku-inden 徳院殿, Daito-inden 徳院殿, Jōken-inden 常憲院殿, then the relationship between Edo and Kyoto was indeed unclear. However, that was the actual situation of the structure of the state. It is said that not until 1925 were all of the former "Somebody-in" [officially] retroactively made into "Somebody-tennō." From the perspective of the official government historical perspective of the day, this was an appropriate measure. But does current historical terminology need to be in accordance with that measure? Is there a need to obscure such fascinating historical phenomena?

In this book, for all emperors before Kōkaku I will use the term "in." Furthermore, I will not use the term "tennō" but rather "kinri(sama)."

4. Han 藩

It is a well known fact that the term han was not officially used in the Edo period, but rather was officially used only during the period from the hanseki hōkan 版籍奉還 (return of the fief registers from the lords to the emperor) of 1869 to the haihan chiken 廃藩置県 (abolition of the domainal han and creation of the prefectures) two years later. Unofficially, it became a common term only after the middle of the eighteenth century.

Early examples are when Kinoshita Jun'an 木下順庵 (1621-98) wrote: "The revered han, lord of Kofu, loved scholarship and found pleasure in the good"; and "Lord Hosokawa of Hizen Province is an important han of the western provinces" [referring to the lords themselves by the term]. Kinoshita's student Arai Hakuseki referred to the one voice would argue likewise. "Sōbō kigen teki gi 草茅危言摘議 (Selected Discussions on Sōbō kigen), in Nihon keizai taiten, Vol. 38 (1930), p. 501.

32 In his Kokushi sanron 国史纂論 (Collection of Discourses on the History of the Country) (Okadaïa Kashichi 江田嘉七, Izumiya Kinemon 和泉屋金右衛門, 1846), Vol. 4, folio 9 verso.


34 Yamada Hideo 山田英雄, "Shigō" 誉号, in Kokushi daijiten 国史大辞典 (Great Dictionary of National History) (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunsha, 1985), Vol. 6, p. 728. I should note that although this is recorded in many works as fact, no such entry appears in the appropriate years of Kanpō 官報 (Government Notices) and Hōrei zensho 法令全書 (Complete Laws), and I have not yet seen a clear documentary basis for this point.

35 Shi gokyō shishi ki 賜五經四子記 (A Record on the Five Classics and Four Books Bestowed by the Lord), p. 561; and Seišō sekishinzu 静女赤心圖 (Concerning a Painting of the Sincerity of
residential palace of Tokugawa Tsunatoyo 徳川綱豊 (1662-1712, later Ienobu 家宣) as a “hanter”36 藩邸 and then wrote the Hankanpu 藩翰譜 (Lineages and Letters of the Lords).37 However on the other hand Itô Tôgai 伊藤東涯 (1670-1736) wrote such phrases as “honchin” 本鎮 (this lord/domain), “chinpei” 鎮兵 (warriors of the lord/domain), “became a servant of Zeze-chin 鎮在 Ōmi province,” and the like.38 In the Kyôhô period (1716-35) “han” was not a commonly used term.

However, it likely began to be a fashionably pedantic phrase inasmuch as Itô Tôgai’s contemporary, Ogyû Sorai, enjoyed using the term. He frequently used in his letters such terms as kihan 貴藩 (your han), heihan 弊藩 (my han), wagahan 吾藩 (my han), shinpan 親藩 (Tokugawa collateral han), tohan 外藩 (outer han [tozama]), daihan 大藩 (great han), iippan 一藩 (one han), hantaiju 藩大夫 (minister of a han), han yûshi 藩有司 (a han official), and so forth. His disciple Hattori Nankaku 服部南郞 (1683-1759) also followed this practice. After that, its flavor of being a pedantic expression probably lessened.39

This is not merely a question of wording. The household and the han are different. “Somebody’s retainer Somebody” 誰々家來 誰々 is different from “Some han’s somebody” 何々藩 誰々. “Somebody fleeing from the authority/protection of Lord Somebody” 誰々様の下より出奔 is different from “fleeing the han” 脫藩. In the background there is the reality that over the course of the Edo period retainers shifted from being “a warrior in service of a lord” to “an official employed in a han,” and their method of organization shifted from being a private oath of fealty to a “stockholding” federation of households.40 A new word was needed to fit this new condition. It just happened to be “han” and not, for example, “chin.”


39 The Dai Nihon eidai setsuyô mujinzô, noted above, lists “han” and explains it as: “means a castle town.”

40 From a different perspective on the issue, Asao Naohiro 荒尾直弘 has written the following comments about the early seventeenth century: “Until this point I have written ‘the Hosokawa clan’ and ‘the Shimazu clan’ and did not necessarily use Hosokawa han and Shimazu han. This is because up until this time there was not a meaningfully independent han government, nor the concept of a han economy or han retainer band. There were just individual lords and their retainer bands, individual lord’s household governments, and individual lord’s civil governments. However, around this time a territorial, politically unified body came into being, although a distinct economy had not yet formed.” Nihon na rekishit, 17 han, Sakoku 日本の歴史 17巻 鎮国 (The History of Japan, Vol. 17, The Closed Country) (Tokyo: Shôgakkan, 1975), p. 350.
This being the case, if we set aside the issue of the latter half of the Edo period, calling something in the early Edo period by the term _han_ is likely to invite misunderstanding by the use of anachronistic terminology. In this book the term _han_ will be used with this point in mind. Furthermore, insofar as the term “_bakuhan taisei_” includes the two problematic terms _bakufu_ and _han_, I will not use it. I will simply call the political structure of the Edo period “the Tokugawa political structure” ( _Tokugawa seiji taisei_ ).