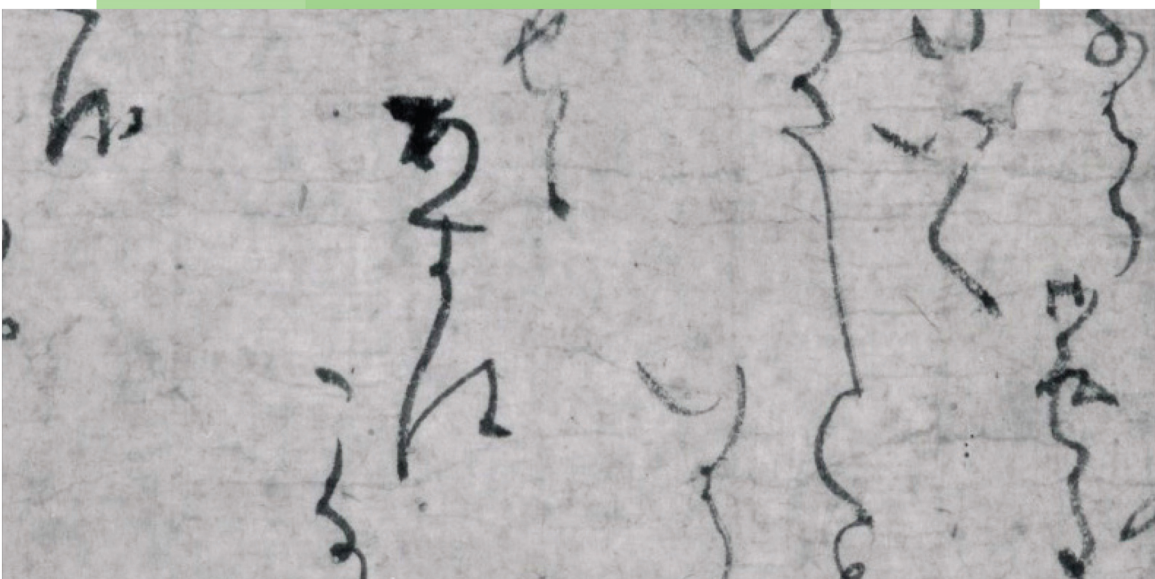


Letters from Japan's Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

Correspondence of Warlords,
Tea Masters, Zen Priests, and Aristocrats



Morgan Pitelka,
Reiko Tanimura,
and Takashi Masuda

JAPAN RESEARCH MONOGRAPH 20

Notes to this edition

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Errata:

- | | | |
|---------|--|---------------------------------|
| p. vi: | 18. Shōkadō Shōjō (1584–1639), Shingon Priest and Calligrapher | |
| p. 14: | Sekigara → Sekigahara | p. 15: 1564–1647) → (1547–?) |
| p. 16: | Kugō bu'nin → Kugyō bu'nin | p. 18: Tomohito → Toshihito |
| p. 63: | 1552–1587 → 1556–1588 | p. 70: 666 → 669 |
| p. 76: | Sōza → Sōze | p. 83: Kimura → Murai |
| p. 94: | gomyō → gomei | six struts → five struts |
| p. 101: | Jōjitsu → Jōshi | ōi-men → ōhi-wata |
| | kise-men → kise-wata | kiku-men → kiku-wata |
| p. 106: | 1596 → 1569 | p. 118: Gyokushū Sōshitsu → |
| p. 119: | Sō'ō → Sōbo | Gyokushitsu Sōhaku |
| p. 143: | Sotan → Sōtan | Toshihiro → Toshihito |
| p. 151: | Shōkadō Shōjō (1584–1639), Shingon Priest and Calligrapher | |
| p. 154: | remove “an” after Kokushi | Manhō → Manbō |
| p. 156: | haboki → habōki | p. 160: Ogura → Kokura |
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Foreword

Outline of This Volume

This volume collects and translates twenty-three letters written during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is intended primarily as a text for undergraduate students of Japanese history, as well as general readers, graduate students, and scholars with a particular interest in this vibrant period of transition between the medieval and the early modern ages. The introductory essays may serve as framing devices for the collection. Each letter and commentary can be read individually, in any order. The goal of the volume is simple: to make the voices of letter writers from this period available in English. We also hope to highlight the mechanics of reading letters from this period.

The authors chose these letters based on a range of criteria, including the interest of their contents, the historical significance of their authors, the quality of their calligraphy, and the availability of the original text. Most of the originals are held in private collections in Japan.

A Note on Dates

On January 1, 1873, Japan began using the Gregorian calendar, but prior to that time the official Japanese calendar was lunar. To make the lunar calendar correspond with the length of the year (in other words, with the solar calendar), Japanese officials added a thirteenth month (known as an intercalary month) during some years, which could appear at any point during the year. Months were numbered rather than named, so it was not uncommon for a fourth month to be followed by a fourth intercalary month, or a tenth month to be followed by a tenth intercalary month.

Dates in premodern Japan are given by year, month, and day of the month. Years were usually numbered according to an era (*nengo*). So, for example, the first letter author in this book, Takeda Shingen, was born

in the first year of the Taiei era in the eleventh month on the third day, or, Taiei 1/11/3. Most of the Taiei year corresponds to the Gregorian calendar's year 1521, so it is also common for historians of Japan who are writing in English to record this date as 1521/11/3. We provide dates in this manner throughout the book, with the Western year and the Japanese month and day.

This approach sometimes produces complications. For example, the warlord who is known to history as the third "unifier" and the founding shogun of the Tokugawa military government, Tokugawa Ieyasu, was born in the eleventh year of the Tenbun era in the twelfth month on the twenty-sixth day: Tenbun 11/12/26. Most of the year Tenbun 11 corresponds to the year 1542. However, because the lunar calendar and the solar calendar do not fully correspond, the end of that year spills over into the beginning of 1543 in the solar calendar. As a result, the birth year of Tokugawa Ieyasu is usually, and properly, given as 1543/12/26. When such complexities arise, we will provide the Japanese era name in the notes.

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THREE

Hosokawa Yūsai (1534–1610),
Warlord and Tea Master

9 (端裏上書き) (捻封) 大三品 だいさんぼん 吟案下 ぎんあんか 玄旨 げんし

(紙継ぎ目)

1 良久不懸御目、御床敷存候、
ややしきしくおめにかからず おゆかしくぞんじそうろう

2 このあいだ、吉田草庵立之事候、
よしだそうあんこれをたつることにそうろう

3 毎日、八条殿罷出、講釈仕候、
まいにち はちじょうどのへまかりいで こうしやくつかまつりそうろう

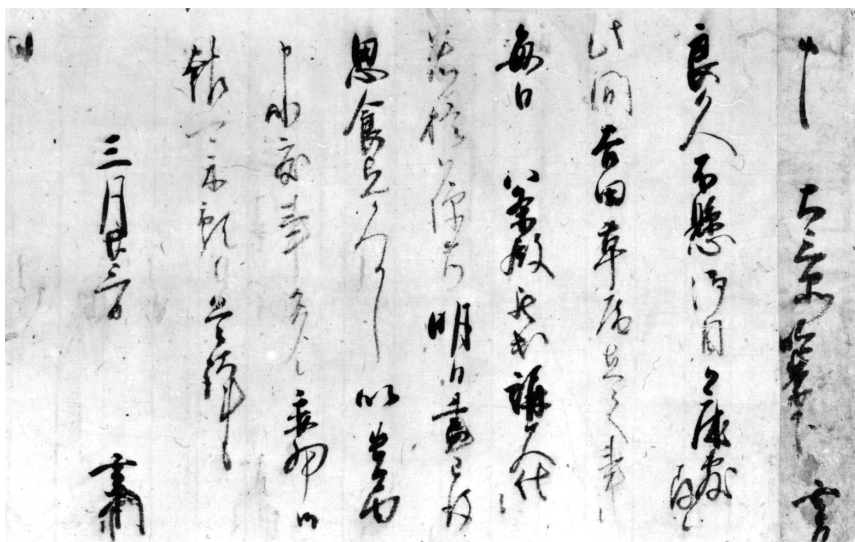
4 若於御隙者、明日昼已後、
もしおひまにおいては あすひるいご

5 思食立候へかし、以貴面、
おぼしめしたちそうら きめんをもつて

6 申承度事多候、委細、御
もうしうけたまわりたきことおおくそうろう いさいご

7 報可示預候、恐々謹言
ほうしめしあずかるべくそうろう きようきようぎんげん

8 三月廿三日 玄旨 (花押)
さんがつにじゅうさんにち げんし



8

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

9

[To] Dai-san-pon [from] Genshi

I have not written in some time. How are you? I have recently built a thatched hut in Yoshida [in Kyoto]. Every day I go to Hachijō no Miya's and lecture. If you have free time, would you please come in the afternoon tomorrow? I would like to see you, and I have many questions as well. Please include the details in your reply to this message.

Very truly yours,
3/23
Genshi [cipher]

Commentary

This letter by the warlord Hosokawa Yūsai (Fujitaka, retirement name of Genshi; 1534–1610) illustrates the rich social and cultural networks found in Kyoto throughout this period, and the role of these relationships even in a time of war. Yūsai was born into the Hosokawa warrior family in Kyoto and was adopted by his father's elder brother Hosokawa Mototsune at the age of seven, a common practice among elite samurai. The thirteenth Ashikaga shogun, Yoshiteru, gave the name Fujitaka to him at the time of his coming-of-age ceremony. The Hosokawa had long enjoyed a close relationship with the Ashikaga shogunate, and Yūsai was said to be the natural son of the twelfth shogun, Ashikaga Yoshiharu. Yūsai was not only a brave warlord but also a highly educated man, talented in literature, Noh, tea, and the elegant court game of *kemari*, among other practices. He served Nobunaga after Shogun Yoshiteru's death, and after Nobunaga's death Yūsai was asked to fight for his son's father-in-law, Akechi Mitsuhide, who had betrayed Nobunaga. He refused, and after Hideyoshi defeated Mitsuhide, Yūsai took the tonsure as a Buddhist monk, with the name Genshi, to avoid any potential conflict with Hideyoshi.¹

The addressee of this letter, Dai-san-pon, or Yamato sanmi nyūdō Sōjo Kajō, was a Buddhist priest in the Age of Warring States. His original name was Yamato Harumoto (1499–1604), and he was born into a family that had served the Muromachi shoguns for generations. He was famous for his broad knowledge of the rituals and protocols of the imperial court and elite warrior households.² He is thought to have been born in 1499, so he would have been over one hundred when this letter was written. Nevertheless, Yūsai asks Dai-san-pon to visit him, because Yūsai was of higher

¹ The archive of the family is found in Hosokawa, *Menkō shūroku*. On Hosokawa Yūsai, see Mori, *Hosokawa Yūsai*.

² Kojima, "Yamato sanmi nyūdō Sōjō Kajō."

Japanese Character List

Ashikaga Yoshiaki 足利義昭

buke 武家

buke mihata 武家御旗

Buke shohatto 武家諸法度

bungo 文語

bushi dan 武士団

chōshi 楮紙

Chōyō-no-sekku 重陽の節句

daijin 大臣

Date Masamune 伊達政宗

Doi Toshikatsu 土井利勝

fudai daimyō 譜代大名

Furuta Oribe 古田織部

fūshin unsho 風信雲書

Fūshinjō 風信状

ganpi 雁皮

gebumi 外文

gekokuujō 下克上

Gomizuno'o 後水尾

Goyōzei 後陽成

Hachijō-no-Miya Tomohito 八条

宮智仁

han ari 判あり

hanko ハンコ

Hime Sōwa 姫宗和

hinerifū 捻封

hirōjō 披露状

hōchōnin 包丁人

Hon'ami Kōetsu 本阿弥光悦

Hōshun'in 芳春院

Hosokawa Tadaoki/Sansai 細川忠
興/三斎

Hosokawa Tadatoshi 細川忠利

Ichijō 一条

Ichijō-in Sonsei 一乗院尊勢

ie 家

Inagaki Toshitsugu 稲垣俊次

inban 印判

inshō 印章

Jōō Enza katatsuki 紹鷗円座肩衝

Kan'ei 寛永

kana 仮名

Kanamori Shigechika, Sōwa 金森

重近・宗和

Kanbayashi 上林

kanbun 漢文

kanji 漢字

kanpaku 関白

kanpenjō 勘返状

kaō 花押

Karasumaru Mitsuhiro 烏丸光弘

katabingi 片便宜

keppū 結封

Kinchū narabini kuge shohatto 禁中
並公家諸法度

kirifū 切封

Kita-no-Mandokoro 北政所

Kobori Enshū 小堀遠州

Kōgetsu Sōgan 江月宗玩

Kokinshū 古今集

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