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To Ise at All Costs

Religious and Economic Implications of Early Modern *Nukemairi*

If pilgrimages are ideal platforms for contention, nowhere more than in early modern *nukemairi* did tensions come to the fore so prominently, and contrasting interests clash so stridently. This article looks at Edo-period (1600–1868) unauthorized pilgrimages to highlight the inherent disjunctions between the interests of the individual and those of the community, and between the priorities of faith and the practical necessities of the economy. It also follows the evolution of *nukemairi* over time by looking at the repercussions that the fiscal reforms of the late eighteenth century had on the identification of travelers as “runaways.”

KEYWORDS: Ise – *nukemairi* – *okagemairi* – money – alms – pilgrimage – travel – recreation – economy – Konno Oito

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IN A WORK titled *Shokoku nukemairi yume monogatari* 諸国抜参夢物語 [Tale of a dream about *nukemairi* in various provinces, 1771], the author Zedōshi 是道子 describes a distinct type of religious journey that remained popular throughout the Edo or Tokugawa period (1600–1868). He writes:

I do not know at what point in time *nukemairi* began. A long, long time ago, at the end of the Tenshō era [1573–1592], *nukemairi* were widely popular in Kyoto. [...] In this year of the rabbit, Meiwa 8 [1771], spring has come early, and pilgrims from all provinces [have set out], needless to say, in large numbers. We hear rumors that even cows and dogs have sneaked out. In the middle of the fourth month they have come to Kyoto and Osaka from their regions. Young and old, men and women alike, they all have run away.

(ZEDŌSHI 1771, folios 2 and 3)

As Zedōshi's passage suggests, *nukemairi* 抜け参り were unannounced, unauthorized travels to centers of faith (almost always, but not exclusively, to Ise 伊勢 shrine) undertaken by individuals who frequently dropped their tools or walked out of their shops on the spur of the moment (or, as another work put it, "faster than a caterpillar can turn into a butterfly"; NSSSS 11, 81), disappearing for weeks, even months on end. The term *nukemairi* is generally rendered in English as "stealing away on pilgrimage" (VAPORIS 1994, 367), a term which conveys the notion of an unplanned and hurried departure that occurred "spontaneously and surreptitiously" (DAVIS 1983–1984, Part 1, 103).

With the term *nukemairi* Zedōshi was actually referring to mass pilgrimages to Ise known as *okagemairi* お陰参り, which occurred periodically in the course of the Edo period (Table 1), roughly following the sexagenary cycle of the Chinese calendar.¹ Aside from these large-scale phenomena, cases of individual travelers taking to the road to various religious centers without notification and at any given time are also numerous, and are also referred to as *nukemairi*.

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1. SHINJŌ Tsunezō (1982, 1290) has pointed out that the first appearance of the term *nukemairi* in a document dates back to Keian 3–4 (1650–1651): a diary titled *Kanmei nikki* uses the term in reference to Ise pilgrimage under the dates 1650/3/1/ and 3/14, and 1651/1/25. Though not exactly synonymous with each other, the terms *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* are often used interchangeably. FUJITANI Toshio (1972, i, 143–45), for example, argues simultaneously that "*okagemairi* [are] also known as *nukemairi*," and that they are not exactly the same because *nukemairi* occurred at all times, even during non-*okage* years. According to Constantine VAPORIS (1994, 206), *okagemairi* were pilgrimages to Ise undertaken with permits (unlike *nukemairi*) but without money.

TABLE 1: Main Mass Pilgrimages of the Edo Period

<i>Nukemairi</i> of	Started from	Specifics
1650 (Keian 3) <i>Kanoe Tora</i> (Elder Metal Tiger) ♦	Kantō, Edo	Began early in the first month. Pilgrims were mostly Edo merchants who wore white outfits and carried banners (NSSSS 12, 85; FUJITANI 1972, 37)
1705 (Hōei 2) <i>Ki-no-to tori</i> (Junior wood rooster)	Kyoto, Kinai	Started in the middle of the fourth month in Kyoto and the Kinai area by amulet showers. Recorded presence of children who ran away without permission (NSSSS 12, 86)
1771 (Meiwa 8) <i>Ka-no-to-u</i> (Rabbit Junior Metal) ♣	Yamashiro, Tanba	Started by villagers in Yamashiro around 4/7. By 4/20 it had spread to Echizen, Echigo, Shinano, Hitachi, then to Izumo, Chikuzen, Hizen. The year prior, a tidal wave had hit Nagasaki, a typhoon Kyoto, and a fire had ravaged Edo. Amulet showers recorded. About 2,000,000 participants.
1830–1831 (Bunsei 13) <i>Kanoe Tora</i> (Elder Metal Tiger) ♦ <i>Ka-no-to-u</i> (Rabbit Junior Metal) ♣	Awa (Shikoku)	Started in the third month. Amulet showers reported. About 5,000,000 participants overall.

Note 1: ♦♦ and ♣♣ are one full calendar cycle (or multiples thereof) apart (60 years and 180 years).

Note 2: FUJITANI Toshio (1972) mentions two other *okagemairi* episodes in 1718 and 1723, of which little is known and that did not have the nationwide impact of the ones listed above. I therefore chose not to include them in the table, which is only intended to provide a basic reference for the main mass pilgrimages.

Note 3: For reasons of conciseness, this study does not concern itself with the 1867–1868 episodes of dancing frenzy and virtual anarchy known as *eejanaika*, which are traditionally related to the same religious, cultural, and social context as *okagemairi* and *nukemairi* (WILSON 1992, 100).²

Does Faith Really Pay? Pilgrimages and Socio-Economic Conflict

Religious journeys of all types—in Tokugawa Japan as well as in other cultures—traditionally provided individuals who had scarce resources or limited freedoms a concrete option to remove themselves from the ordinary and experience, however temporarily, a sense of detachment and even liberation. Anthropologist Victor TURNER first identified this peculiar characteristic of sacred travel—emphasizing how pilgrimage historically allowed “the individual to distance himself briefly from inherited social constraint and duty” (1974, 177). Historians focusing on the specific case of Tokugawa Japan have also made the connection between religious space/time and the release from the constraints of “normalcy” (SCREECH 1993; TOTMAN 1993; HUR 2000; VAPORIS 1994, just to name a few). In

2. WILSON 1992 offers a thorough interpretation on the role of *eejanaika* in the closing years of the Tokugawa, especially in Chapter Six (95–121).

a society as compartmentalized and controlled as that of early modern Japan, the opportunities for commoners to step out of their status-given roles and obligations were few and far between. Against such scenario, religious travels (and religious spaces in general) represented one of the few loopholes to bypass the strict regulations the government had placed on the freedom of movement.

Given such identification of pilgrimage with escapism and non-conformism, there has been a natural tendency to emphasize the social marginality of most participants in Tokugawa-period religious travel. Unauthorized pilgrimages in particular have been identified with “a way for *the underlings of society* to enjoy a temporary respite from their toil” (DAVIS 1983–1984, Part 1, 103, italics mine; see also SHINJŌ 1982, 1297–1303). More recent studies, however, have largely challenged such notion. Nathalie Kouamé, for instance, has called into question the traditional representation of the Shikoku pilgrim as outcast and rejected, labeling it a form of “intellectual conformism” and a “romanticized image” concocted through the mystique of folk studies (KOUAMÉ 2001, 65–68). Indeed, the participants in Tokugawa-period sacred journeys included men and women of all ages and from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. As FUJITANI Toshio has pointed out (1972, 153–58), the driving force behind some of the earlier mass pilgrimages were primarily the merchants and the wealthy urbanites of the three metropolises, and it was only after 1771 that the rural villagers came to dominate the social component of pilgrimages.³

Despite their social diversity, many of the *nukemairi* pilgrims had one thing in common: the determination to beg their way to Ise.⁴ As Zedōshi tells us, and as some scholars have emphasized, mass pilgrimages almost inevitably involved begging on the part of the pious travelers, and alms-giving on the part of compassionate community members:

On the streets and crossroads of Kyoto and Osaka the reception and the [amount of] alms are extraordinary: cash, towels, handkerchiefs, fans, [...] rice cakes, rice gruel, all sorts of food supplies, and, on top of that, tributes of various kinds—packhorses, palanquins, carts, hot baths, and [accommodation at] inns.
(ZEDŌSHI 1771, folios 2 and 3)

Another work published in 1771, Ōe Fumihirō's 大江文坡 *Nukemairi zanmubanashi* 抜參殘夢嘶 [*Nukemairi*, tale of a lingering dream], emphasizes the connection between *nukemairi* and begging in an illustration depicting a family of runaway pilgrims (father, mother, and three children, one of them an infant) receiving food at a roadside stand (Fig. 1).⁵ Nineteenth-century travel fiction

3. Specifically, Fujitani indicates a massive participation of Edo merchants in the 1650 *okagemairi*, and of merchants from the Gion ward of Kyoto in the 1723 pilgrimage.

4. On *nukemairi* and begging see also FUKAI 1977, 132–56. SHINJŌ calls begging a “necessary expedient” for many of the *nukemairi* pilgrims (1982, 1303).

5. From ŌE 1771, scroll 2, folio 50.



FIGURE. 1: A family of *nukemairi* pilgrims begging for alms. From ŌE (1771). Courtesy of University of California, Berkeley, East Asian Library, East-Asian Library Collections.

confirms that *nukemairi* pilgrims included children who begged for alms—two such characters encounter Kita 喜多 and Yaji 弥次 of *Shank's Mare* fame near the post town of Hodogaya 保土ヶ谷 (Musashi Province) along the Tōkaidō highway, and beg for an offering of one copper coin (SATCHELL 1960, 28–29). While for the young and the poor begging was certainly a way of paying for the trip, the affluent among pilgrims did not need to collect alms, but chose to do so anyway as a show of devotion. Moreover, as Ian READER has observed in the case of Shikoku pilgrimage, by becoming beggars pilgrims effectively constructed their identity “apart,” an identity based on humility and on detachment from all worldly matters (2005, 124).⁶ In this respect, *nukemairi* pilgrims used begging to buttress their unique status not only vis-à-vis their homebound peers, but also in relation to other pilgrims engaged in more

recreationally oriented types of journeys. At the same time, the particular connotations of pilgrimage as a time apart, and of pilgrims as individuals momentarily bestowed with a special aura, inevitably inspired a number of individuals to provide alms and to perform other such acts of random kindness (KOUAMÉ 2001, 141–86). Collecting alms in ladles and bowls, *nukemairi* pilgrims thus made their way to temples and shrines around the provinces, supported by the generous offerings of local volunteers who, through donations and care, experienced vicariously the benefits and merits of pilgrimage.⁷ Pilgrims functioned as a direct connection with the sphere of the sacred, and brought back amulets that extended the gods’ blessings (*okage*) to the entire family or village.⁸ Consequently, many preferred to call the escapes *okagemairi* rather than *nukemairi*. While the latter emphasized the illegal and disruptive nature of the enterprise,

6. Nancy L. FREY (2004, 94) makes similar observations in the case of contemporary travel along the Camino de Santiago in Spain. One of her informants defined herself as a pilgrim, yes, but “a pilgrim with money”—assuming poverty to be the norm.

7. This process is not at all dissimilar to the “pilgrimage by proxy” (*daisan* 代参) performed by a selected number of confraternity members on behalf of the entire group—a practice still existent today. For Edo-period confraternities (*kō* 講) that engaged in pilgrimage by proxy, see SHINNO 2002, 458–60 and 463–64. For the use of ladles as alms-collecting implements, see SHINJŌ 1982, 1304.

8. Judith ADLER (2002) discusses a similar case of holy men as mediators between communities and the sacred in the context of early Christian pilgrimage.

the former stressed the worldly benefits bestowed by the deities, as well as the generosity of the various communities (YOSHIOKA 1943, 60–61).

Scholars have placed great emphasis on the positive interaction between pilgrims and communities. Conrad TOTMAN observed how Ise pilgrimages “served their function of renewal not only by providing the pilgrims with a major break in quotidian life but by giving their neighbors something to anticipate and by providing the amulets, blessings, and stories that pilgrims brought back to their village” (1993, 444). Winston DAVIS concluded that unauthorized pilgrimages were “tacitly accepted by society,” so much so that “masters who were afraid of losing their servants when they ‘ran away’ to Ise organized parties for them on their return,” all economic losses caused by their escapes notwithstanding (1983–1984, Part 2, 214). In a similar vein, SHINJŌ Tsunezō has argued that there existed a sort of tacit approval of *nukemairi* on the part of the authorities and of society in general, particularly in the second half of the Edo period (1982, 1314).

As the importance of donations demonstrates, *nukemairi*, like many other religious phenomena, combined a devotional aspect with a very distinct economic character. Money is in fact a recurring theme in most descriptions of these journeys: the money runaway pilgrims did not have, the money they begged for, the money almsgivers donated, the money communities, employers, and landlords lost as a result of the escapes, and the worldly benefits—money was no doubt included—they could reap by supporting, rather than condemning, the pilgrims. I therefore wish to revisit early modern unauthorized pilgrimages by looking at the crucial interplay between religious and economic interests, and at the debate that ensued between the religious establishment and the local communities. While the focus of this article is mostly on early modern unauthorized pilgrimages, some of the general conclusions, I believe, sustain findings pertinent to religious journeys of other time periods and of other cultures: their nature as platforms “in which group conflicts may be played out and social and cultural divisions intensified” (READER and SWANSON 1997, 257; see also EADE and SALLNOW 1991).

An examination of *nukemairi* through the lens of economic considerations reveals first and foremost the existence of profound ruptures in the purported alliance between religious and social interests. Rather than treasuring *nukemairi* as a valve against the restrictions imposed by the Tokugawa, pressing economic interests prompted many communities to actually side with the authorities in condemning the practice. While many merchants benefited from the transit of thousands of pilgrims, the inhabitants of towns and villages located along the routes of *nukemairi* sometimes saw the custom of almsgiving as a financial burden. Moreover, the unannounced departures of the runaway devotees, far from being uniformly accepted and condoned as commendable acts of faith, often stirred up controversy at home, where employers, landlords, and family members resented the disruption of economic balance brought about by the disap-

pearance of employees, tenants, and co-workers. Many voiced strong opposition to the practice, often succeeding in having the pilgrims return home before the completion of their journeys. The idyllic picture of complacent or anxious masters eagerly waiting to throw a party for their fugitive employees upon return, I contend, needs to be reassessed, as *nukemairi* generated ferocious controversy and tension between the spiritual and practical needs of each community.

Economic preoccupations also helped prompt a dramatic change in the definition and applicability of the term *nukemairi*. Following the mass pilgrimage of 1771 and the widespread governmental fiscal reforms of the 1790s, local authorities took notice of the financial repercussions of such phenomena and acted accordingly, curtailing some of the exemptions they had historically granted to religious travel. With authorized journeys severely limited or altogether banned, many people who wished to take to the road had to do so against the law, thus falling under the category of runaway pilgrim. As a result, the typology of *nukemairi* participants became increasingly varied. By the nineteenth century some of the people who slipped away on self-proclaimed *nukemairi* did not necessarily conceive of their journeys as extemporaneous shows of devotion, never gave a thought to the idea of begging, planned their departures well in advance, and carried with them substantial amounts of cash. Although pilgrimage had always entailed a recreational component (HUR 2000, HIGUCHI 1980a and 1980b, SHINNO 2002), among the various takes on religious travel *nukemairi* was the one that best approximated the laymen version of a test of endurance akin to ascetic training (*shugyō* 修行). The late eighteenth-century institutional efforts to stifle travel, however, added new members to the cohorts of *nukemairi* pilgrims, people who made no effort whatsoever to dress up their journeys as sacred acts, save for calling them pilgrimages in the title pages of their memoirs. The gap that had hitherto existed between planned expeditions of prayer and play and spur of the moment flights to Ise narrowed significantly as *nukemairi*, like their legal counterparts, came to include more and more variations on the theme of leisurely travel (*yusan tabi* 遊山旅).

Angry Masters, Upset Husbands: Nukemairi as Sites of Contention

The government viewed either large-scale or individual *nukemairi* as infringements of the law that required travelers to obtain permits and as sources of economic disruption, and actively cracked down on the practice. Resistance on the part of the authorities has already been studied, and will be only introduced briefly here.⁹ Official ordinances prohibiting unauthorized religious travel existed since the seventeenth century, when the first large-scale *okagemairi* of the

9. VAPORIS discusses various ordinances against *nukemairi* (1994, 207). For a list of edicts from different domains cracking down and/or denouncing *nukemairi* in the late seventeenth century see SHINJŌ 1982, 1290–91.

Edo period took place. More appeared following a second wave of pilgrimages (1661) in such places as far away from Ise as Aizu 会津, Sendai 仙台, and Kaga 加賀 (FUKAI 1977, 134). During the Jōkyō 貞享 era (1684–1688), for instance, the lord of Aizu ordered the creation of local replicas of famous pilgrimage circuits, of Ise shrine, and of Kumano 熊野 shrine, in an effort to discourage his subjects' journeys to the original sites and to curb the depletion of domain funds (MAEDA 1971, 147). In 1702, the Nanbu 南部 of Morioka 盛岡 domain in Ōshū 奥州 issued edicts against the unauthorized pilgrimages of children and youngsters:

It has come to our attention that the number of people who go on unauthorized pilgrimage from our domain rises every year. It is announced that henceforth even young people [are required to] carry an official seal when crossing the borders. Although we have not informed post stations about children on *nukemairi* before, they are firmly prohibited from leaving. (FUKAI 1977, 134)

More edicts followed in Morioka in the Kan'en 寛延 era (1748–1751) and in Okayama 岡山 in 1760 (YOKOYAMA 1976, 104). An edict issued by the Edo government in conjunction with the great *nukemairi* of Meiwa 明和 8 (dated 1771/5/4) formally prohibited the practice in Osaka.

The representatives of officialdom tended to keep their intrusions into the sphere of the sacred to a minimum, intervening only when public order was at stake (VAPORIS 1994, 4; HUR 2000, 25). The Nagoya samurai Asahi Monzaemon 朝日文左衛門 recounts an episode from the 1705 *nukemairi* that is indicative of the ambivalent attitude of officialdom in regards to matters of faith. As the story goes, the eleven-year-old son of a lacquer master from Kuwana 桑名 (Ise province) ran away to Ise with four other local youngsters. When he came back two days later, the neighbors immediately rushed to his house to hear what had happened and see if he had brought back any amulets. The boy apologized for not being able to buy any, but when his mother went to change her kimono a box filled with amulets fell out of the pocket. Everyone was moved to tears, and news of the miracle spread “like wildfire” (*kaji no gotoki* 如火事). Everyone, “men and women, young and old,” rushed to worship the talismans. In light of the chaos that ensued, the city magistrate dispatched a policeman to investigate the issue, but in the end the inquiry concluded that it was indeed a miracle, “and even the magistrate venerated [the amulets]” (ASAHI 1968, 54–55). As the magistrate's decision reveals, the logic of faith had sufficient authority and credibility to defeat even the reasoning of officialdom. Tension between the two discourses arose only when public order was compromised.

The authorities reacted against *nukemairi* to prevent disruptions in the social fabric and in the economic equilibrium of communities. They criticized *nukemairi* pilgrims for “leaving the elderly and the infants behind,” “going out into the fields and into the mountains,” and “abandoning their cultivation” (KODAMA 1979, vol. 9, 40–42, n. 574). Also troubling to the authorities was the fact that

spur of the moment departures caused “various acts of carelessness, . . . such as [leaving] without taking care [to extinguish] the fires in the homes” (KODAMA 1979, vol. 9, 220–21, n. 736). Another document issued in Osaka on 1830/int.3/7, at the time of the last large scale mass pilgrimage, condemned the practice as a voluntary (*zui-i* 随意) departure of which no notification had been made to one’s master, parents, husband, or head of the household/landlord, or, in the case of unmarried people, as the voluntary vacation of a rented house. The edict denounced the fact that the behavior during such pilgrimages “has become exceedingly unacceptable and rowdy” and threatened to punish those responsible for the circulation of rumors about strange omens and amulet showers (*ofudafuri* お札降り), which were often the cause of mass departures toward Ise (KODAMA 1979, vol. 9, 220–211, n. 736). Officialdom, in short, strove to prevent *nukemairi* as a form of a disruptive socio-economical behavior and threatened to punish those who were found guilty of engaging in, or promoting, such a practice (KODAMA 1979, vol. 9, 40–42, n. 574).¹⁰

Resistance to unauthorized pilgrimage, however, did not stop at the official level. On the home front, at the village and household level, many remained equally aware of the economic repercussions of *nukemairi*. The identification of unauthorized pilgrimages with economic distress extended from the high levels of officialdom all the way down to the basic village unit, as the story of Tatsuno たつこの, the daughter of a farmer from Ōbata 大幡 village (in modern-day Yamanashi Prefecture), reveals. Tatsuno took off “without informing anyone” (*mudan* or *kotowarinaku* 無断) to tour the various sites of the Chichibu 秩父 circuit in Musashi Province (TSSK 1994, 367).¹¹ She suffered from pulmonary tuberculosis and hoped to appeal to the deities for a speedy recovery. Because hers was an unannounced and unauthorized departure, she was considered a fugitive. When she reappeared in town some six months later, she had to appeal to the village head (*nanushi* 名主) in order to be readmitted. In turn, the headman petitioned the intendant (*daikan* 代官). In his appeal, the *nanushi* begins by recounting the various stages of Tatsuno’s ordeal. He mentions her ailment and specifies that, at the time of her disappearance, a report had been filed. He then reassures the intendant that not only is Tatsuno “remorseful for her mistake,” but also that “she never did anything bad before she ran away. Moreover, she has had a change of heart, and says that [from now on] she will devote herself zealously to agriculture.” We do not know whether the intendant accepted the appeal, but it is interesting to note how part of the headman’s plea centered on an economic

10. The registers of Okayama domain include a list of individuals (one of whom was a woman) punished for leaving on an unauthorized pilgrimage (1760) (see FUKAI 1977, 151).

11. Although the word *nukemairi* does not appear in the records documenting her case, this is without question a clear-cut example of unauthorized pilgrimage, as the term *mudan* suggests. The year is unknown.

argument—the explicit hint that by reintegrating instead of punishing her, the community would gain a productive and by now very conscientious worker.

Economic considerations played a key role both in the condemnation and in the justification of unauthorized journeys, as the story of the farmer Zenbei 善兵衛 from Shishihara 宍原 village in Ibara 庵原 district (modern-day Shizuoka Prefecture) also illustrates. After his son Kōsuke 幸助 returned home following an unauthorized trip to Konpira 金比羅 in 1852, Zenbei found himself hard pressed not only to explain the protracted absence of his son and have him reintegrated into the community, but also to deflect any suspicion that he may have been involved in the incident. He appealed to the local authorities explaining that Kōsuke had become stranded in a distant region because “he had no money on hand for the road,” and had simply received alms from a generous innkeeper, a devotee of Konpira. Zenbei’s argument to justify his son’s long absence was, again, permeated with economic undertones. Aware that the alteration of economic equilibrium caused by his son’s *nukemairi* was the chief concern of the authorities, Zenbei, like the headman in Tatsuno’s case, appropriated their language and their logic to make his plea more effective. His appeal ends with the solemn promise that,

Hereafter we will be more considerate, and it goes without saying that we will abstain from heavy drinking. As farmers, our first priority is agriculture (*hyakushō nōgyō sen’ichi* 百姓農業千一) and we must work diligently (*okotari-naku* 不怠) from morning till sunset. Moreover, should wanderers come up to us, we will not mingle with them. We will not give our officials any trouble.

(SKSK, 1151–52)

In defining pilgrimages as “social processes,” anthropologist Victor Turner captured the essence and importance of reintegration into one’s circles. As extra-normative as the space and time of the sacred were, eventually most pilgrims returned to their homes and communities, reinvigorated and forever transformed by their experience. The quintessential liminality of pilgrimage, in other words, was made possible by its being performed in “an interval between two distinct periods of intensive involvement in structured social existence” (TURNER 1974, 175). More recent anthropological studies (MORINIS 1992; FREY 2004) have also argued that pilgrimage does not necessarily end with the completion of the journey; in fact, the reentry of travelers into their established social lives is, ultimately, the true test of the pilgrimage: “Has there been change? Will it last?” (MORINIS 1992, 27). Sarah Thal has looked at the relation between travelers and home-based peers in the case of early modern Konpira pilgrimage, arguing that despite its characterization as a relief from the everyday religious travel occurred “within broader structures that inevitably still link[ed] the “escapee” to reminders of his or her political, economic, or social position” (THAL 2005, 340 n. 46 and 114). Likewise, in a recent study of Shikoku

pilgrimage Ian Reader has remarked that pilgrimages are not “just transitory performances”, but “may be points of departure for their participants, impacting on and influencing their lives thereafter” (READER 2005, 7).

Communities in early modern Japan acknowledged the transformative power of travel as a rite of passage and as a culturally accepted watershed in one person’s life. Shinno Toshikazu, for example, has pointed at the bonds crafted during Ise pilgrimage by Tōhoku villagers who had successfully completed the long and arduous journey. They would call themselves “Ise brothers” (*Ise kyōdai* 伊勢兄弟) and “were seen as sharing a tie for life, in good times and bad, a tie that was said to be closer than that with relatives and or even immediate family” (SHINNO 2002, 459).¹² Simply put, travelers were expected to leave, be transformed, return, and be reintegrated into their circles with an implicit understanding that they had been forever changed by their experience. As long as this process unfolded within a socially accepted, in fact even socially mandated context, readmission was a given. However, returning home after being labeled a fugitive presented a few extra challenges. By running away without permit, *nukemairi* pilgrims had first and foremost defied the law, and faced punishment on the part of the authorities. Moreover, they had betrayed the trust of their peers, and were faced with the intricate task of easing the tension generated by their acts of selfishness. Acceptance and readmission within one’s village, or at one’s job, depended largely on the resolution of this conflict. Because practical preoccupations and spiritual zeal coexisted in what was at times a precarious balance, returning fugitives had to argue their cases carefully, making sure they did not tip the scale one way or the other. Kōsuke and Tatsuno succeeded in their plea by cleverly and subtly exploiting the gray area at the intersection of religious and economic principles. They both stressed how the pilgrimage experience had been a transformative one (Tatsuno had “a change of heart,” Kōsuke and Zenbei promised to abstain from alcohol and to be more considerate), and at the same time argued that the rite-of-passage had made them into more productive members of the economic community.

Large-scale pilgrimages could potentially devastate the economic life of towns and villages. Aside from chaos, the sudden arrival of thousands upon thousands of people immediately brought about a steep rise in the price of basic items such as food and straw sandals. Clever business people quickly devised stratagems to benefit financially from the invasion of pilgrims. Motoori Ōhira 本居大平, Norinaga’s 宣長 adopted son, wrote about the 1771 mass pilgrimage, denouncing how “merchants did not know compassion and thought cleverly. They sold supplies at a very high price.... When they heard about it, the local officials warned

12. Similarly, in her study of contemporary Compostela pilgrims Nancy FREY (2004, 106) argues that many of the travelers who have completed the route to Santiago create associations of “Friends of the Camino” and organize reunions, as they feel they belong to “an informal transnational community of ‘Santiago pilgrims.’”

them and issued a prohibition against selling goods at inflated prices” (NSSSS 12, 101). During the mass pilgrimage of 1830 some ingenious entrepreneurs in Ise Yamada 山田 crafted palanquins out of winnowing machines in order to make a profit by providing transportation (YOSHIDA 1976, 140). Inns were overcrowded, and ferry services could hardly handle the request. For some *nukemairi* equaled profit, so much so that “as soon as a word of a new pilgrimage began to spread, innkeepers, ferrymen, merchants and laborers became excited about the wind-falls they hoped would come their way” (DAVIS 1992, 56). For everyone else, however, *nukemairi* caused only disruption and financial distress. Asahi Monzaemon, the Nagoya samurai who penned *Ōmurōchūki* 鸚鵡籠中記 [Records from a parrot’s cage], witnessed first hand the economic turmoil brought about by the large mass pilgrimage of 1705. Larger than any other previous *nukemairi*, the 1705 movement was fueled by a series of inexplicable miraculous events, and from the Kinai 畿内 region spread rapidly throughout the country. In his journal, Monzaemon noted how, hearing of the strange events in Kinai, wives, children, and servants began to flee their homes “without even requesting leave” (*itoma o mo kowazu* いとまをも乞ず), and “let their feet lead them all the way to [Ise] shrine.” As a consequence, “the retailers at Osaka Tenmangū have shut down their businesses.... Because all the artisans’ apprentices [also] have gone on pilgrimage, inevitably the production of goods has been halted. Even the theaters have shut down at this time” (ASAHI 1968, 40–42). The severe economic consequences of mass migrations to Ise represented such a widespread concern among the populace that they even found their way into the realm of poetry:

<i>Hito wa ima</i>	人は今	These days everyone
<i>Kokoro mo chirazu</i>	心も散らず	has the same resolve:
<i>Ise mairi</i>	伊勢参り	To go to Ise on pilgrimage.
<i>Hama ya noyuki o</i>	浜や野行きを	Nobody goes to work
<i>Suru mono mo nashi</i>	する者もなし	By the shore or in the fields.

(YOSHIOKA 1943, 118)

Among the forms of financial distress generated by mass pilgrimages—authorized or not—were not only price inflation and the momentary suspension of goods production, but also the costs involved in the reception of travelers. The elderly and the sick represented a particular burden because of the necessity to secure lodging and medical care, and, in the event of their death, because of the costs involved in contacting the families and repatriating the bodies. In 1690, Tokushima 徳島 authorities dealing with Shikoku pilgrims had expressly required local villagers to provide free food to travelers stranded by illness (KOUAMÉ 2001, 190). It was not infrequent for local communities situated along pilgrimage routes to be forced into co-paying some of the costs of faith. In Shikoku, for example, the authorities targeted wealthy households, demanding they make a contribution to a common village fund which was then employed as a

form of organized almsgiving for the circuit pilgrims (KOUAMÉ 2001, 161–75). Many other people “spontaneously” granted pilgrims free hospitality, meals, and services not so much out of compassion as for a more practical reason: to avoid confrontations and “hurry them along lest they pay their way, as sometimes happened, by extortion or intimidation” (TOTMAN 1993, 444). Finally, fear of divine punishment, combined with the desire to partake in the blessings of the deities, also prompted a great many villagers to voluntarily disburse offerings of various kinds to the pilgrims in transit. Legends about the divine retribution that befell upon misers who refused to provide pilgrims with alms circulated, for instance, in Shikoku, where every pilgrim was believed to be a potential manifestation of Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師. In this case, some pilgrims used begging as a form of “sacred manipulation” (READER 2005, 59–61, 118–121, and 124).

Whether spontaneous or induced, the practice of almsgiving had the potential to turn into massive outpourings of cash when pilgrims transited by the millions. Asahi Monzaemon describes entire communities turned upside down by the 1705 pilgrimage frenzy and frantically striving to provide food, fans, hats, umbrellas, lanterns, and free transportation for thousands of pilgrims at a time. Certain shops, he writes, put out barrels filled with money for the pilgrims to grab. At a capacity of twenty *to* 斗 (approximately ninety gallons), each barrel, when filled with cash, required the efforts of seven or eight people to be moved outside (ASAHI 1968, 41). On any given day during a mass pilgrimage a community could spend as much as three hundred *kanmon* in alms, says Monzaemon, who also provides a list of the most munificent donors:

Kōnoike Zenzaemon 鴻池善左衛門: one thousand four hundred *kanmon*

Amabeaya 海部屋: two hundred *kanmon*

Hinoya Kyūbei 日野屋九兵衛: two hundred and sixty *kanmon*

The ward of Hiranochō Icchōme 平野町一丁目: two hundred *kanmon*

Kōnoike Dōi 鴻池道意: nine boxes containing ten silver *kanmon* each.

(ASAHI 1968, 41)¹³

In 1771 Kōnoike Zenzaemon, a wealthy Osaka merchant, was still providing generous contributions to the *nukemairi* pilgrims, this time giving alms to some 184,000 people in six days, for a grand total of four hundred and sixty *ryō* (SHINJŌ 1960, 155).

13. One *kanmon* equaled 1,000 *mon*. In the late Edo period the conversion rates for the various denominations of money were as follows:

1 (golden) *ōban* (金)大伴 = 10 (golden) *koban* or *ryō* (小判 or 両)

1 *koban* or *ryō* = 4 *bu* 歩 or 分 or 4 *kan* 貫

1 *bu* = 4 (golden) *shu* 朱 = 1 *kan*

1 *shu* = 250 (copper) *mon* 文 or *zeni* 錢

One hundred *mon* or *zeni* was the equivalent of one day's wage for a day laborer (WALTHALL 1998, 155.)

While on the surface religious expectations seemed to triumph, the thin veneer of acceptance and support concealed a solid preoccupation for the cost of such treatment, as “everyone in every ward was troubled with the reception of *nukemairi* [pilgrims]” (ASAHI 1968, 41). The silent resentment for the implicit obligation to provide free transportation and free meals sometimes found subtle ways to come to the surface. In *Ōmurōchūki* a series of comical verses ironically titled *Gosangū hyakunin isshu* 御参宮百人一首 [Ise Pilgrimage, one hundred pilgrims, one poem each] hints at the friction between active and passive participants, or, in other words, between the expectations of religious discourse and the practical needs of the local economies, by modifying some of the celebrated verses included in Fujiwara Teika’s 藤原定家 thirteenth-century anthology:

<i>Sugegasa no</i>	菅笠の	When I see the whiteness
<i>Shiroki o mireba</i>	白きを見れば	Of a sedge hat,
<i>Nukemairi</i>	ぬけ参り	Then do I know, indeed, that even
<i>Wataseru hashi mo</i>	渡せる橋も	At the bridge the <i>nukemairi</i> pilgrims cross
<i>Zeni o torarezu</i>	銭をとられず	They take no toll. ¹⁴
<i>Korekore wa</i>	此此は	This is it! That
<i>Yuku mo kaeru mo</i>	行くも帰るも	The ones going, too, and coming, too
<i>Nukemairi</i>	ぬけ参り	Are on <i>nukemairi</i> .
<i>Shiru mo shiranu mo</i>	知るも知らぬも	Those known and those unknown,
<i>Osaka no hito</i>	大阪の人	They are all from Osaka. ¹⁵

So generous were the offerings of compassionate supporters that not a few clever individuals actually made a profit out of begging. Troublemakers mingled with the Ise pilgrims to surreptitiously collect money in 1771 (NSSSS 11, 82). In 1830, scarcely pious swindlers from Nagoya traveled to nearby Ise over and over again to collect as much cash as possible from unsuspecting donors—some

14. ASahi 1968, 42–43. The original poem (n. 6), by Chūnagon Yakamochi 中納言家持 (718–785), reads:

<i>Kasasagi no</i>	鶺鴒の	When I see the whiteness
<i>Wataseru hashi ni</i>	渡せる橋に	Of the frost that lies
<i>Oku shimo no</i>	おく霜の	On the bridge the magpies spread,
<i>Shiroki o mireba</i>	しろきを見れば	Then do I know, indeed,
<i>Yo zo fukenikeru</i>	夜ぞ更けにける	That the night has deepened.

SUZUKI 1975, 19. The English translation is taken from MOSTOW 1996, 158.

15. ASahi 1968, 43. This is a variation on poem n. 10 of the original anthology, penned by Semi-maru 蟬丸 (n.d.):

<i>Kore ya kono</i>	これやこの	This is it! That
<i>Yuku mo kaeru mo</i>	行くも帰るも	Going, too, and coming, too,
<i>Wakaretewa</i>	別れては	Continually separating,
<i>Shiru mo shiranu mo</i>	しるもしらぬも	Those known and those unknown,
<i>Ōsaka no seki</i>	あふ坂の関	Meet at the barrier of Osaka.

SUZUKI 1975, 26. English translation in MOSTOW 1996, 171.

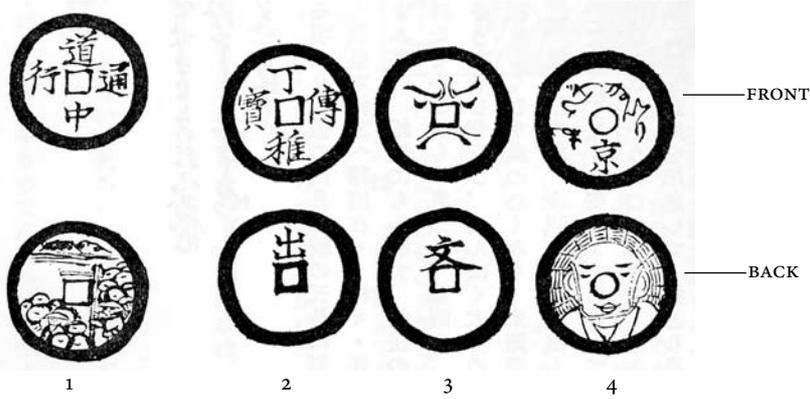


FIGURE 2: *Okage* money poking fun at runaway pilgrims and at the miserly conditions of many *nukemairi* escapees (NSSSS 11, 125). Courtesy of San’ichi Shobō.

1. Front: Transiting on the roads (*dōchū tsūkō*); Back: [image] throngs of pilgrims
2. Front: Currency for the shop boy (*decchi denbō*); Back: He’s out the door! (*deguchi* 出口)
3. Front: [image] sad face; Back: Miserly! (*shiwaki* 吝)
4. Front: *Okagemairi*, Kyoto; Back: [image] face of a pilgrim

FIGURE 3: Visualizing and lampooning the interconnectedness between faith and money (NSSSS 11 121). Courtesy of San’ichi Shobō.



making the rounds up to six times (SHINJŌ 1960, 156). “Professional beggars” and “fake pilgrims” also traveled the route of Shikoku (READER 2005, 123; KOUAMÉ 2001, 145). Comical verses quickly caught on and denounced the scam. The opening lines of a *kyōka* 狂歌 poked fun at the quest for cash of certain *nukemairi* pilgrims by declaring “It’s not the bells they shake, it’s the ladle” (*Suzu yori wa shaku furiyuke yo* 鈴よりは杓振り行けよ). Another satirical poem, composed after the great mass departure of 1830, simply suggested:

<i>Michimichi no</i>	道々の	Collecting alms
<i>Segyō o ukete</i>	施行を受けて	Along the roads
<i>Sukkurito</i>	すっきりと	Is an easy way
<i>Nurete de Awa no</i>	ぬれ手で阿波の	To make money:
<i>Oise sangū</i>	お伊勢参宮	Ise pilgrimage. ¹⁶

16. YOSHIOKA 1943, 114 and 120. The pun in the second *kyōka* is based on the homophony between the word foam (*awa*) in the expression *nurete de awa* (to pick foam with wet hands, meaning to make easy money) and Awa province, from which the *okagemairi* of 1830 had originated. A tentative English rendition of the pun may be “Be aware that collecting alms along the road is an easy way to make money—Ise pilgrimage.”

Further testimony to the profound economic implications of mass pilgrimages are some of the passages and illustrations included in *Ukiyo no arisama* 浮世の有様 [The state of affairs in the floating world], an anthology of anecdotes collected between the Bunka 文化 and Kōka 弘化 eras (1804–1840s) by an anonymous author, most likely a doctor from the Osaka area. An entire book in the collection (book 2 of 13) is dedicated to mass pilgrimages. A section titled *Dōchū tsūyō okage saisen* 道中通用御陰賽銭 [Okage offering money in circulation along the roads] includes illustrations of various hundred *mon* coins allegedly given out as alms (Fig. 2), satirizing on the interconnectedness between religious journeys, poverty, and the financial repercussions of unauthorized escapes. Elsewhere the same work reiterates the inextricable link between faith and money in another poignant image, that of Ise pilgrims whose traditional sedge hats are replaced by gigantic coins (Fig. 3).

Preoccupied with the possibility that they would face not just a financial crisis but also punishment, many employers and family members actively tried to discourage, prevent, or halt any attempt to flee away to Ise. Their concerns were well justified: although certain domains allowed for grace periods during which a fugitive, *nukemairi* pilgrim or otherwise, could return without facing severe penalties, after the window of opportunity closed the authorities promised to punish “not only the person in question (that is, the fugitive), but everyone down to the family head or members” (AM 1972, vol. 2, 362).¹⁷ On certain occasions landlords and masters acted swiftly to reach the fugitives and demand their immediate return. Once it was discovered that he had left on a *nukemairi* in 1833, Yūemon 友右衛門 from Tamachi 田町, a ward in Ueda 上田 castle town (Shinano 信濃 Province), was recalled “because he did not ask permission to his employer” (FUKAI 1977, 137). Zedōshi, the author of *Shokoku nukemairi yume monogatari*, harshly criticizes the unauthorized departures of those who “leave on a pilgrimage without having obtained their parents’ consent,” labeling them as “people who have not an ounce of filial devotion” (*ikkō kōshin no naki mono* 一向孝心のなき者). “When you have a father and a mother”—he reminds his readers—“the proverb says, do not stroll too far.” Zedōshi was informed by the principles of *shingaku* 心学 with their emphasis on hard work, frugality, devotion to one’s business, and filial piety.¹⁸ As a consequence, he lashes out with equal zeal against the *nukemairi* of individuals who disregard their economic responsibilities, subordinating obedience to their employer to selfish religious impulses:

Those who serve under a master must strive to be loyal. It is normal for a samurai to sacrifice his life for his lord. But even for townspeople there is only

17. The ordinance cited here is dated 1806.

18. According to *Kokusho sōmokuroku*, Zedōshi is the author of two *shingaku*-informed works, *Shōfūdōwa* 松風道話 (n.d., published in Hagi Mōrika 萩毛利家) and *Honshin hayagaten* 本心早合点 (1781). KS, vol. 4, 486, and vol. 7, 384.

one way to serve their masters. [...] Leaving on a pilgrimage without permission from one's employer is a major offense. (ZEDŌSHI 1830, folio 8, verso)

Similar calls for the necessity to find a balance between religious and financial considerations are made in *Nukemairi zen'aku kyōkun kagami* 抜け参り善悪教訓鑑 [A mirror of precepts on the good and bad of *nukemairi*], a work produced at the time of the 1771 mass pilgrimage. The work initially seems to side with the expectations of religious discourse, emphasizing how it is everyone's duty to show gratitude to the kami by going on a pilgrimage to Ise:

The Land of the Rising Sun (*hi no moto* 日の本) is the country of the gods (*kami no kuni* 神の国). We were raised near the waters of the Mimosuso River,¹⁹ and once a year we travel to thank the gods for their blessings. We must revere their divine virtue by leaving our jobs behind or at least by worshipping from afar.

After this premise, however, *Nukemairi zen'aku kyōkun kagami* acknowledges that in recent years unauthorized Ise pilgrimages have increased in frequency and gotten out of control, and shows a veiled preoccupation for the possible economic consequences of such acts:

However, people these days take off unexpectedly for periods of time, even those who are unfit to travel, even those who have no money for the road, or have no travel gear, or have nobody to whom they can entrust their affairs. As they go on a pilgrimage they turn their backs to their households, their dependants, their parents, their brothers. (NSSSS 11, 82)

The author's attitude is respectful of the sacred, yet firmly pragmatic. While he recognizes the existence of a great many stories of miraculous events associated with the pilgrimage, he also warns that "they are what they are—stories—and unless one sees it with his own eyes, nothing is certain" (NSSSS 11, 82). *Nukemairi zen'aku kyōkun kagami* attempts to reconcile religious impulses and financial obligations by promoting the idea that filial devotion, loyalty to one's parents, and commitment to one's business could be just as effective a way to pay homage to the gods as actual travel to the Great Shrine:

Put your heart in the hands of the gods (*kokoro o kami ni uchimotare* 心を神に打もたれ), for virtuous people have the gods' blessings, do not disobey the will of your parents and masters, respect the laws of the government, spend time taking good care of the affairs of the household with compassion and righteousness: isn't this truly a way to show consideration for the gods? (NSSSS 11, 82)

19. Another name for the Isuzu 五十鈴 River, near Ise, which is celebrated in the *Shinkokinshū*.

The work ends with the assurance that religious and economic logics can in fact find a right balance, and that by supporting the latter on earth, one would reap the full rewards of the former in the afterlife:

In short, the teachings of the kami and of the Buddhas say nothing more than, “Promote good, chastise evil.” Take care of your family business with rectitude and compassion, show loyalty toward your master and filial piety toward your parents, live in harmony with your brothers, carry on the will of heaven, and then you may ask to go on a *nukemairi* even all the way to the realm of the gods in the sky (*takamagahara e nukemairi nashitamae to koso negau koto nari* 高天原へぬけ参なしたまへとこそねかふ事なり). (NSSSS 11, 84)

Given such emphasis on the necessity to maintain one’s obligations and remain loyal to one’s business, it seems highly unlikely that the offended employers would “organize parties” to welcome back their runaway workers. A collection of miraculous tales associated with the Ise pilgrimage of 1705, *Ise daijingu zoku shin’iki* 伊勢太神宮統神異記 [Records of the miracles by the gods of Ise Shrine, a sequel] includes episodes that well illustrate how frosty, if not downright hostile, the reception of returning fugitives could in fact be. One such episode narrates the story of a female servant from a household in Settsu 摂津 Province who sets out for Ise without notifying her master. Enraged, the master’s wife accuses the servant of having committed “a punishable act” (*kusegoto* 曲事), and vows to reprimand her accordingly. When the servant comes back, she brings amulets and souvenirs, and reassures her masters that she prayed for them at the shrine. Utterly unimpressed, the two kick the amulet box across the room and punch her. Out of the amulet box comes a small snake that rapidly grows in size to horrifying monster-like proportions. Terrified by the supernatural occurrence, husband and wife forgive the servant, beg for mercy, recant their faith in the *Lotus Sutra*, and vow to go to Ise to expiate their sins (NSSSS 12, 88). A very similar story associated with the same 1705 *nukemairi* appears in *Ōmurōchūki*: Gin ぎん, a female servant at the Izumiya Sakubei 和泉屋作兵衛 teahouse, flees on a pilgrimage (*nuke mōdesu* ぬけ詣す). When she returns, her angry master ties her upstairs as punishment. Later, Gin materializes downstairs apologizing for her escape. Perplexed, the master runs upstairs to check, only to find Shinto paper offerings (*taima* 大麻) where Gin had once been tied up. He and his wife, overcome by the miraculous event, decide to go on pilgrimage to Ise themselves (ASAHI 1968, 42). As the two episodes suggest, *nukemairi* often tipped the balance between practical economic interests and intangible religious inspirations, as in both stories some form of divine intervention is required to placate the wrath of the angry employers. The tales betray a real concern for resistance against the sanctity and above-the-law character of religious journeys coming not so much from the authorities as from the home front. Collected by members of the Ise clergy (hence the reference to recanting the faith in the *Lotus Sutra*),

these tales inevitably end with the triumph of the kami and of religious logic, effectively serving as propaganda for the claim that faith ought to exist above and beyond the practical needs and the laws of “this” world, and would have its ways in the end. But even outside the realm of faith-fueled fiction, the offering of charms and souvenirs on the part of returning pilgrims unquestionably represented a token of compromise between two spheres whose equilibrium had been altered. The exchange of amulets was thus the first step in a complex process of forgiveness and reintegration. According to Winston Davis, gift giving served a specific social purpose, “the resumption of the social interaction of everyday life” (DAVIS 1983–1984, Part 2, 214). As such, it was not exclusive to, but certainly played a significant role in, Edo period unauthorized pilgrimages.²⁰

Because men and women had specific roles as producers of goods, part of the complex web of economic relationships at the community level interweaved with gender-based considerations. Women faced not only harsher legal restrictions to their mobility but also heavier social expectations that tied them ever so tightly to the household. Often cited as the quintessential example of a general discourse that called for female confinement are the precepts outlined in *Onna daigaku* 女大学 [The greater learning for women], a work derived from the writings of Kaibara Ekiken 貝原益軒 (1630–1714) but not directly attributable to him: “without her husband’s permission, [a wife] must go nowhere,” for she should “be constantly in the midst of her household, and never go abroad but of necessity” (TAKAISHI 1905, 42 and 43). As a consequence of such restrictions, women may have been especially tempted by the idea of sneaking out on a journey.²¹ Their disappearance, it goes without saying, was likely to generate even greater turmoil and embarrassment within the household and in the smaller communities. One scholar has pointed out that husbands “naturally doubted the intentions of wives who slipped away as [stealth] pilgrims, apparently with good reason. *Nukemairi* offered many women the once-in-a-lifetime chance to be rid of both husband and children” (DAVIS 1983–1984, Part 1, 108). Comical verses (*senryū* 川柳) of the time poked fun at the sense of loss felt by the abandoned husbands even when their wives only momentarily left the house:

<i>Nyōbō ga</i>	女房が	His wife away from home
<i>Rusu de ichinichi</i>	留守でいちにち	He spends the entire day
<i>sagashigoto</i>	さがしごと	Looking for things.

(UEDA 1999, 122)

20. An example from pilgrimage other than *nukemairi* is that of a certain Amano Monzaemon from Ōmikami village (modern-day Shizuoka Prefecture), who compiled a long list of souvenirs and of their specific recipients in 1842 after a journey to Ise shrine. It lists more than fifty recipients (including one woman and one temple) from sixteen different villages in the area. KC 1991, 678–81.

21. FUKAI Jinzō (1977, 132) observes that *nukemairi* were preferred by those who were socially or economically disadvantaged: servants, employees, children, and women.

Behind the humorous façade lurks the serious notion of female immobility as one of the pillars of social order, a powerful obstacle for prospective travelers to overcome. Appropriately, Shinjō Tsunezō has referred to the *nukemairi* of wives and daughters as a perceived “collapse of family values” (SHINJŌ 1960, 152 and 1982, 1312). For his part, Zedōshi, in *Shokoku nukemairi yume monogatari*, makes a strong argument against unauthorized pilgrimages on the part of women:

The most outrageous of all are the *nukemairi* of married women. Women learn that in their childhood they must obey their parents, and after they marry they must obey their husbands. Especially when it comes to women, all deviations must be rectified. (ZEDŌSHI 1830, folio 8, verso)

A woman on the road was, with rare exceptions, out of her element, and would almost always be looked at with a suspicious eye. Village records confirm that the appearance of groups of female travelers had the immediate effect of raising eyebrows among villagers. Between 1729 and 1730, the passage through Toda 戸田 village (in modern-day Shizuoka Prefecture) of a number of female

MAP 1: Oito's route, 1862



pilgrims on their way to Ise was deemed unusual enough an occurrence to be included in the village records, alongside other eerie or bizarre events such as the transit of an elephant directed to Edo, an invasion by deer, and the abnormally lush blooming of bamboo plants in the area. While the elephant attracted a curious and enthusiastic crowd,²² the female travelers raised a different type of commotion, as rumors of *nukemairi* immediately began to circulate (SKSK, 498).

The case of Confucian scholar Kiyokawa Hachirō's 清河八郎 (1830–1863) aunt Masa 政 provides a fitting example of how negatively families could respond to a woman's disappearance. In 1855, after entrusting her chores to her brothers in law, Masa had left for Ise with Hachirō's group. However, rumors that she had run off on a *nukemairi* started circulating and her relatives became very upset. Worried about their anger, and also plagued by an illness that forced her to "make one step forward and one backward," Masa reached Niigata 新潟 having enjoyed nothing of the trip, and finally decided to return home. "Since she is a woman, maybe the anxiety over her absence is not without reason," comments Hachirō, confirming how sometimes social expectations antagonized religious undertakings more effectively than legal codes (KIYOKAWA 1993, 41–44; see also VAPORIS 1994, 214).

The misadventure of the Matsuki 松木 lady, another character described in Kiyokawa Hachirō's travelogue, also speaks plenty about popular resistance to the practice.²³ The wife of an innkeeper from Kameda 亀田 (in modern-day Niigata Prefecture), the Matsuki lady made the impromptu decision to run away with Hachirō's party to visit Zenkōji 善光寺 in Shinano. A messenger from the Matsukiya reached the group two days later, and informed the fugitive that her behavior was "inexcusable" (*mōshiwake no naki* 申訳のなき). The woman put up a small fight and attempted to reason that, "because it is a religious journey, it is an exception [to the rules]" (*kami mairi yue kakubetsu nari* 神まひり故格別なり). As the words of the Matsuki lady imply, religious and socio-economic arguments had the potential to collide on the platform of *nukemairi*. In her case, the latter triumphed, as the Matsuki lady was eventually won over by the argument that her aging mother at home worried about her, and despite her ardent wish to see Zenkōji she agreed to go back (KIYOKAWA 1993, 55–66). Legal discourse failed to stop the resolute lady—who had taken off without the required paperwork—and faith-based excuses failed to convince her family members that hers was a just cause. At the end of the day, it was peer pressure that succeeded.

22. The elephant had arrived to the port of Nagasaki in 1728 on a ship from Annam. Marius JANSEN (1992, 37–39) details the odyssey of the animal on its way to Edo.

23. Constantine VAPORIS discusses the Matsuki lady episode as an example of how households succeeded in controlling female behavior (1994, 213–14).

The Economy of Movement: Late Edo Developments

A member of a merchant family (possibly of saké brewers)²⁴ from small Honjō 本莊 domain (in Dewa 出羽 province, modern-day Akita Prefecture), Konno Oito 今野於以登 departed for her *nukemairi* on the 22nd day of the 8th month of Bunkyū 文久 2 (1862). She traveled from her hometown to Niigata and Zenkōji first (int. 8/14 and 15), then followed the Hokuriku road to Kanazawa (9/1), and came down to Kyoto (9/14), Osaka (9/21), Himeji (9/26), and Okayama (9/29). At Tanoguchi 田の口 she boarded a ferry to Shikoku (9/30) and visited Konpira shrine (10/1). She made her way back to the Kansai region, toured the many famous sites of the Kii Peninsula (Mt. Kōya 10/18, Yoshino 10/21, Nara 10/25, Ise 10/29), reached the Tōkaidō (11/4) and followed it all the way to Edo (11/20), where she spent twelve days sightseeing and visiting the officials employed in the local residence of her domain lord. She left Edo on 12/3 heading north via Utsunomiya (12/6), Nikkō (12/7), Fukushima (12/13), and Yamagata (12/16), finally returning to Honjō on 12/24 (Map 1). Oito and her travel companions (the wife of Satō Nagaemon 佐藤長右衛門, ferry *ton'ya* 問屋 at Ishiwaki 石脇, and two male attendants) spent a little more than five months on the road, traveling some 1,900 miles.²⁵

It is Oito herself who characterizes her adventure as a religious journey, as the title of her memoir, *Sangū dōchū shoyōki* 參宮道中諸用記 [Various notes on the expenditures incurred during the pilgrimage to the (Great) Shrine], indicates. Moreover, she also reveals that this was a pilgrimage achieved by means of an unauthorized escape when, at the onset of her travelogue, she declares, “I secretly went out into the world” (*seken e wa mitsumitsuni itashi* 世間へは密々ニ致し) (HSS, 610).²⁶ Her claim notwithstanding, one must notice that there was nothing secret, much less haphazard, about her departure. Not only did she have time to “secure some suitable travel companions” beforehand, as she tells us, but she also arranged to have a packhorse delivered on the day of departure (HSS, 610). Unlike other fugitives who seemed to have disappeared into thin air, Oito kept in touch with her family during her absence by sending occasional letters. On int. 8/7, for example, she records an expenditure of twenty five copper coins to “send a letter back home” (HSS, 613). Oito’s carefully planned and apparently quite public departure and her slow paced trip interspersed with epistolary contacts with her family show that by the nineteenth century some travelers no longer conceived of unauthorized pilgrimages as spur-of-the-moment acts prompted by divine inspiration, but rather as labels of convenience for other-

24. During her journey (8/29) Oito was the guest of Kawachiya Manjirō 川内屋万次郎, a saké brewer from Oyama to whom she had given hospitality in the past. Reciprocal hospitality was not infrequent among members of the same “guild.”

25. Approximately 780 *ri* (1 *ri* = 2.44 miles). Included in the count is one intercalary month.

26. Oito’s journey is discussed thoroughly in KANAMORI 2001. See also FUKAI 1995, 33–35 and 177 for a detailed itinerary.

wise recreational outings, not at all dissimilar from any other type of legally approved pilgrimage. How are we to explain such change?

The perception that religion would function as a protective shield against the impositions of the government, and that simply by conceiving of one's journey within the frame of faith one would be automatically granted the freedom to take to the road may have empowered Oito in making her decision to travel without a permit. The Matsuki lady too, after all, had run away without informing her family and had not bothered to obtain official permission because she considered religious journeys "an exception [to the rules]" (KIYOKAWA 1993, 65). The dichotomy between political and religious interests had historically played a role in asserting the special, above-the-law character of religious travel. Since the seventeenth century travelers had found in pilgrimage a convenient expedient to acquire mobility in spite of constrictive regulations against their freedom of movement, as the authorities were notoriously reluctant to deny requests for travel to sacred sites (VAPORIS 1994, 4).

Moreover, the late Edo-period leniency of the system described by Constantine VAPORIS (1994, 175–80) also helps explain Oito's nonchalance in taking to the road in broad daylight, with a certain degree of pomp, and in open disregard for the official requirement to secure a travel permit. The inability of the late Tokugawa administrators to enforce the strict rules theorized and laid down in the seventeenth century unquestionably empowered her, and many other travelers like her, to defy officialdom. One should also note that at the time Oito took her journey in 1862 the Tokugawa system was well on its way to collapsing. In the fourth month, the Satsuma lord Shimazu Hisamitsu 島津久光 (1820–1887) had marched to Kyoto and handed in to the court a proposal to reform the government. A "reign of terror" had ensued shortly thereafter in the imperial capital (WALTHALL 1998, 148). While Oito was still on the road, in the fall of 1862, retainers of Shimazu Hisamitsu attacked three British merchants in Namamugi 生麦 (Musashi Province) for failing to pay proper homage to their lord, prompting retaliation on the part of Great Britain. Meanwhile, the Tokugawa decided to relax the regulations on the alternate attendance system (*sankinkōtai* 参勤交代) they had vigorously enforced for more than two centuries, now asking domain lords to perform their journeys to Edo only once every three years. By the end of 1862 the female hostages permanently kept in Edo would be sent home, and the entire alternate attendance system would be virtually dismantled in order to allow domain lords to focus their financial resources on defense (TOTMAN 1980, 18 and 64).²⁷ The world was in turmoil, corruption ran rampant, and obedience to the laws of a dying entity was scarcely enforced.

There is no question Oito was well aware that the lack of official authorization would not constitute a major roadblock to her journey. Cash could open

27. For the various edicts concerning the relaxation and dismantling of the alternate attendance system see KODAMA 1978–1979, vol. 9, 241–42, n. 838; 344–45, n. 841; 353, n. 852.

far more doors than official papers, and she was clever in exploiting just such an opportunity. Seven days after “secretly going out into the world” she purchased a permit to transit through Nezugaseki 根津ヶ関 barrier. On int. 8/4 she records spending ten *mon* on a permit for Shioya 塩屋 barrier, and on 9/7 an entry in her journal shows the purchase of a passport for Itatori 板取 checkpoint (fifteen *mon*). En route from Marugame 丸亀 to Tanoguchi she also bought a women’s passport (*tegata* 手形) for twenty-eight *mon* (10/3). When purchasing permits was not an option, cash allowed her to hire guides who showed her how to bypass checkpoints by means of the so-called “women’s roads” (*onna no michi* 女の道). For example, she bypassed the checkpoint of Sekigawa 関川 twice, the first time on int. 8/14 on the way to Zenkōji (paying forty *mon* for the guide), and the second time three days later on her way back (at a cost of thirty six *mon*). She also illegally bypassed the barriers at Ichifuri 市振 (in Echigo 越後, on int. 8/21, sixty *mon*), Daishōji 大聖寺 (in Kaga, on 9/4, twenty five *mon*), Arai 新居 (in Tōtomi 遠江, on 11/9, one hundred *mon*), and Kuribashi 栗橋 (in Kōzuke 上野, on 12/5, cost not given).

Equally crucial in creating such a new type of *nukemairi* pilgrim were the laws enforced in individual domains in the late eighteenth century, particularly after the 1771 mass exodus and the fiscal reforms of the 1790s. As mentioned above, Fujitani Toshio has drawn attention to an important change in the social component of *okagemairi* by pointing out that after 1771 rural villagers became the predominant figures among the crowds who traveled to Ise en masse (FUJITANI 1972, 153–58). Indeed, the opening lines of Motoori Ōhira’s journal confirm that among the participants to the 1771 *okagemairi* were “firewood gatherers from the mountains, saltmakers from the coast, and [people] all the way down to the lowest of the low” (*shimo ga shimo made* 下が下まで) (NSSSS 12, 99). In this respect, *nukemairi* reflected, again, a larger trend that pervaded all types of journeys—religious and secular, authorized and not—after the second half of the eighteenth century: their democratization. Originally exclusive to the aristocracy and to the warrior elites, travels became popular pastimes by the mid Edo period (KOUAMÉ 2001, 19). Maeda Takashi has mapped this transformation with special focus on the Saikoku 西国 circuit. Dedicated to the bodhisattva of mercy, the Saikoku circuit was particularly attractive to the members of the warrior class, who were especially devoted to Kannon. After the Kyōhō 享保 era (1716–1736), Nagasaki merchants joined the cohorts of Saikoku pilgrims, and around the Hōreki 宝曆 (1751–1763) and Meiwa eras (1764–1779) economic changes opened the doors of Saikoku to farmers as well (MAEDA 1971, 144 and 86).

Unlike warriors and wealthy independent merchants, tenant farmers, agricultural laborers, servants, apprentices, and shop clerks needed to receive permission from their employers to leave their work posts. Such permission, as shown in the previous section, was difficult to receive, and even when conceded “it would at best be [for a trip] to the temple or shrine in the neighboring

village” (SHINJŌ 1960, 151). The only chance most of these would-be pilgrims had to travel to Ise was to do so by an act of disobedience. And yet, as the pilgrimage fever swept across more and more provinces, the number of participants kept growing.

The number of people who converged to Ise in *okage* years had always been impressive. If we are to believe Motoori Norinaga’s estimate, 230,000 pilgrims transited through Matsuzaka on a single day (5/16) during the 1705 mass pilgrimage. Norinaga also assessed the total number of visitors to Ise shrine in the fifty days between 4/9 and 5/29 at 3,620,000—an astonishing figure when contrasted with the total population of Japan at the time, which stood at roughly twenty four to twenty six million (SHINJŌ 1960, 154, and FUJITANI 1972, 39). Asahi Monzaemon, another eyewitness to the 1705 mass pilgrimage, estimated that between sixty and seventy thousand people crossed the Miya 宮 River, at the gates of Ise, on any given day during the height of the pilgrimage (ASAHI 1968, 40). In 1771 some 2,077,450 people used the same Miya River ferry between 4/8 and 8/9 according to *Meiwa zokugo shin’iki* 明和続後神異記 [Sequel to the miracles of the gods in the Meiwa era] (in SHINJŌ 1960, 154), while *Nukemairi zen’aku kyōkun kagami* reports that over 700,000 people traveled from the Osaka area, and over 100,000 from Kyoto (NSSSS 11, 83). Multiplied by the millions, the individual cases of insubordination had the potential to turn the economy of entire domains upside down.

To prevent such massive drains of manpower, resources, and money, local lords issued ordinances limiting the number of days a pilgrim could spend away from home, as well as full-on moratoria on travel. The tendency to issue edicts that restricted the movements of people—including religious travel—only intensified during the late Edo period, as economic conditions deteriorated in many regions. Particularly during the Tenmei 天明 and Tenpō 天保 famines of the 1780s and late 1830s calls for frugality echoed from province to province. Nathalie Kouamé, for instance, has observed how local authorities in Tosa strove to regulate Shikoku pilgrimage at such critical junctions. They implemented harsh measures, including arrest and deportation, against pilgrims driven to Shikoku by the Tenmei famine (KOUAMÉ 2001, 127). In the Tenpō era (1837 specifically) the same authorities issued an ordinance forbidding villagers to give alms to pilgrims coming from other provinces. Other documents issued at the same time denounced those who took advantage of the crisis to avoid their responsibilities, and who departed on the spur of the moment counting on the charitable acts of villagers along the Shikoku route (KOUAMÉ 2001, 113–15). The crisis affected every region. For the domains of northern Japan—mostly agricultural and located at a significant distance from the great shrine—control of Ise pilgrimage was particularly critical, for a mass exodus would take away workers from the fields for a protracted period of time. For example, pressure against Ise pilgrimage (authorized and not) was strong in Moriyama 守山 domain (in

the northern Ōshū region) because a round trip to the shrine would require an absence from the fields of at least forty to fifty days (FUKAI 1977, 147).²⁸

Yonezawa 米沢 domain in Dewa Province also had a history of cracking down on *nukemairi*, but in 1795 it took a step further and halted all pilgrimages. While the original prohibition called for a seven-year suspension, it was reissued periodically, so that the ban lasted twenty-six years (BLACKER 1984, 604–605). A domain with a disproportionate ratio of samurai to farmers, Yonezawa was plagued by a chronic imbalance between the salaries it owed and the taxes it received. Particularly after the mid-1700s its treatment of farmers, the most productive segment of the population, became ruthless, and its taxation methods relentless: those who failed to remit their taxes were on occasion thrown into cold water and left to freeze to death. Unsurprisingly, many fled, and by 1792 the population of Yonezawa reached its lowest point: 99,085 people (RAVINA 1999, 76–77). The 1795 crackdown on pilgrimage was no doubt related to the depopulation crisis of the domain.

Akita domain also issued various edicts aimed at controlling and restricting the amount of time people could spend away from their occupations. In 1772 the domain issued a five-year ban on travel to temples, shrines, and hot spring resorts outside its borders, and extended it to farmers, urban commoners, and samurai retainers (AM 1971, vol. 1, 67, n. 56). That samurai became the targets of the same restrictions hitherto reserved for farmers is hardly surprising. As Mark Ravina has shown in his examination of Yonezawa and Hirosaki 弘前, domains with a large samurai population struggled to keep a balance between meager incoming revenues and excessive outgoing stipends, and not infrequently failed to be solvent. Samurai were then not only forced to take salary cuts (or, as the Uesugi 上杉 lords in Yonezawa called them, “borrowings”), but in many cases also to relocate and to do the unthinkable: get a real job (RAVINA 1999, 75, 119–20).

The ban in Akita generated an increase in the number of people who suddenly fell under the category of fugitive, for in 1806 the local authorities put forth another edict, which opened with the following statement:

It has come to our attention that, among the people of the domain, every year many leave the province on what is called an unauthorized pilgrimage (*nukemairi*). This is unacceptable. We have issued prohibitions against such practice numerous times before.

(AM 1972, vol. 2, 362–63)

The edict then established precise guidelines for farmers and urban commoners who wished to travel to Ise. Farmers needed to be males, over fifty years of age, and household heads. Following a petition to the village headman or elder and

28. Fukai compares the case of Moriyama to that of a predominantly commercial town located at a shorter distance from Ise (Ueda, in Shinano) to evaluate how the responses to Ise pilgrimage were determined by different economic and geographic conditions.

an investigation, a maximum of five men per large village, or two per small village, could receive permission to leave the domain for up to ninety days. Towns- men who wished to be granted permission to leave Akita domain also needed to be males, at least thirty years of age, and prompted to travel by pressing house- hold affairs. Following an appeal to the headman and an investigation, they too could leave the province for up to, and no more than, ninety days. How- ever, in the case of townspeople there was no maximum number of people who could leave at one single time from the same ward, revealing the priority that agriculture took over commerce in the economy of the domain. Significantly, women—regardless of status—were not eligible to apply for permission to leave the province under any circumstances.²⁹ SHINJŌ Tsunezō (1982, 1296) argues that the focus on age speaks volumes about the economic concerns behind these edicts, as younger people comprised the majority of able-bodied worker.³⁰

Concerns for the economic repercussions of pilgrimage were expressed fre- quently in Akita. Three years prior, in 1803, another document from the same domain had revealed a preoccupation for the fact that, with numerous agricul- tural workers leaving for Ise, there could be a shortage of men (*hitobusoku* 人不足) in the fields at the time of farming (AM 1972, vol. 2, 296). As Mark RAVINA (1999, 6) has pointed out, in all domains “government finance [...] was closely linked with demography.” Farmers in particular, as the direct providers of taxes and corvée labor, were essential to a domain’s economic stability. Economic considerations, after all, had determined the placement of farmers immediately below the samurai in the ideal Neo-Confucian pyramid adopted by the govern- ment.

The Akita authorities identified pilgrimage not only with a possible drain of manpower and resources, but also with an excuse to indulge in extravagant behavior unbecoming one’s status. The 1806 edict, for instance, took on the char- acter of a sumptuary law in clarifying that during pilgrimage farmers were not allowed to travel on horseback, that in case of rain they could only use simple straw raincoats, bamboo hats, and straw sandals, but not, as in recent occur- rences, cloth raincoats, umbrellas, and wooden clogs. Equally inappropriate to their status was the use of leather-soled sandals.³¹ Exceptions were granted to village headmen and to those with enough authority and prestige to have a last name and carry a sword. Women of farmer status, though not allowed to

29. A similar edict outlining different specifications for farmers and *chōnin* who wished to go on a pilgrimage was issued in the western domain of Okayama in 1813. From very early on (the first edict dates back to 1685) Okayama had tried to regulate the outflow of farmers to another major center of faith, Konpira in Shikoku. YOKOYAMA 1976, 104–05.

30. Along with the 1806 Akita edict, SHINJŌ cites a similar case from Nobeoka 延岡 in Hyūga 日向 domain, dated 1748, according to which both men and women were forbidden to exit the domain to go on pilgrimage if under the age of seventeen (1982, 1296).

31. As Herman OOMS (1996, 265 and 290) indicates, identical limitations were regularly imposed on another prominent category of undesirables, the outcastes.

leave the domain, were reminded that the use of parasols during sunny days was also inappropriate for their rank. Sumptuary laws of course had little to do with ethics and much to do with the economy, as domains took notice of extravagance “whenever it affected the ability or willingness of commoners to remit taxes” (RAVINA 1999, 46). Such leisurely activities as travel were not deemed bad per se, but seemed nefarious from an economic standpoint. In a study of the ways in which the debate on public morals and behavior affected mobility, Yokoyama Toshio points out that from very early on the edicts of many domains denounced the association of leisure with non-productivity, and that upholding the customs of farmers was “the primary goal of the administrators” simply because farmers “constantly provided tax in rice” (YOKOYAMA 1976, 86 and 93).

It was again in the economically unstable, depopulated, and famine-prone northeast that domains seemed particularly keen on solving pressing fiscal problems by promoting austerity and frugality, echoing similar calls made by Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信 (1758–1829) in the course of the 1790s Kansei 寛政 reform. We know for a fact that the lines of communication between the architect of the Kansei reform and the lord of Akita domain were open. Irritated at the satirical comments a high-ranking samurai from the northern domain (a man by the name of Hoseidō Kisanji 朋誠堂喜三二, 1735–1813) had made against his *bun-bu* 文武 policy, in 1789 Sadanobu interceded with the lord of Akita to have Kisanji banished from Edo, effectively terminating his inappropriate career as an author of comical fiction (IWASAKI 1983, 18).³²

The strict stance of the Akita authorities only intensified with time, with a new wave of bans arriving in conjunction with the 1830–1831 mass pilgrimage. In 1831 an ordinance forbade once again urbanites and farmers from using Ise as a cover-up to travel to temples and shrines across the country, arguing that “to use faith as an excuse to break the laws of the domain is reproachable” (AM 1973, vol. 3, 245–46, n. 2065). The same document addressed other economy-related preoccupations. It prohibited farmers from crossing over into other domains in search of temporary employment and threatened to consider them as fugitives, responsibility and punishment for which would fall on their village headmen and elders. The document clearly stated that the authorities’ main concern was with the recent flow of people leaving the domain and using either Ise pilgrimage or unemployment as an excuse.

More edicts followed. In 1853 the authorities of Akita issued a three-year moratorium on travel that also affected the members of the samurai class, and in 1856 they extended the ban for another three years. As restrictions piled up, the number of runaways seemed to multiply. The 1856 decree from Akita reiterated the point that

32. Given Sadanobu’s own flirtation with comical fiction (thoroughly explored in Iwasaki’s article), his censorship of Kiseiji is of course quite ironic.

TABLE 2: Oito's final list of purchases

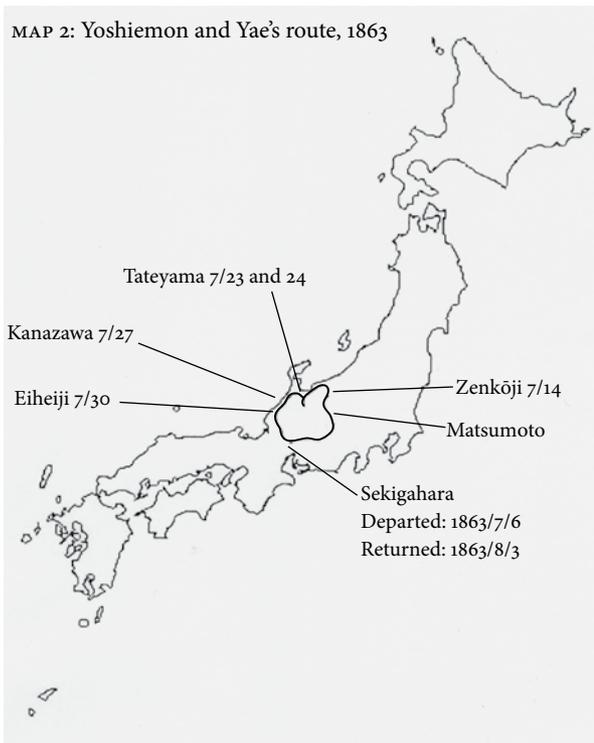
DATE/PLACE OF PURCHASE	ITEM	QUANTITY	PRICE (IN MON UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED)
8/23	Gauze to strain water	7 <i>shaku</i>	265
8/ 27	Sakada oiled paper	1 roll	250
9/14 Kyoto	Purses at Kiyomizu	2	100
	Combs	5	100
	Velvet collars for kimono	2	2 <i>bu</i> 200 <i>mon</i>
	Crepe (<i>ichirimen</i>)	n.a.	1 <i>ryō</i> 1 <i>shu</i> 30 <i>mon</i>
9/30 Hizen	Kokura <i>obi</i>	4	1 <i>kan</i> 900 <i>mon</i>
	same	1	500
	same	1	250
	Leather case	1	1 <i>bu</i> 1 <i>shu</i>
Osaka	Tea colored cloth (<i>muku</i>)	1 roll	n.a.
	<i>Nosaji</i> [meaning unclear]	5	1 <i>bu</i> 1 <i>shu</i>
Nara	Deer <i>makifude</i> (brush)	n.a.	200
Yokohama	Sashes	3	1 <i>ryō</i> 2 <i>shu</i> 500 <i>mon</i>
	<i>Koshiobi</i> (under sashes)	2	2 <i>kan</i>
	Scarlet silk gauze	n.a.	2 <i>bu</i> 2 <i>shu</i> 200 <i>mon</i>
	Plates	10	1 <i>kan</i> 70 <i>mon</i>
Edo	Neckband	1	108
	Gift wrappers (cloth)	20	5 <i>kan</i> 200 <i>mon</i>
	Folding fans	30	1 <i>kan</i> 100 <i>mon</i>
	Daimaru towels	3 rolls	2 <i>bu</i> 391 <i>mon</i>
	Towels	4 rolls	4 <i>kan</i> 460 <i>mon</i>
	Towels	2	240
	High quality illustrations on paper	93	3 <i>kan</i> 100 <i>mon</i>
	Same, medium quality	170	2 <i>kan</i> 140 <i>mon</i>
	Amulet bags	700	2 <i>shu</i> 384 <i>mon</i>
	Tobacco boxes	5	3 <i>shu</i>
	White face powder and rouge	n.a.	410
	String of beads	1	350
	Comb(s)	n.a.	244
	Shichitō rush [used for tatami]	1 sheet	374
	n.a.	n.a.	2 <i>bu</i> 200 <i>mon</i>
	Oiled paper to wrap luggage	n.a.	220
	same	n.a.	230
	Silk floss	n.a.	1 <i>kan</i> 700 <i>mon</i>
	Chestnuts	2 <i>shō</i>	200

women, be they farmers or *chōnin*, have always and repeatedly been forbidden to leave the province. However, it has come to our knowledge that in recent years not a few of them have disobeyed [the law] and have secretly left the province. This is unacceptable. (AM 1973, vol. 3, 364, n. 2320)

In reality, the increase in the number of people who “secretly left the province” was a consequence of the drastic limitations on travel and money-squandering imposed by Akita and other domains since the late eighteenth century. Would-be travelers who were prevented from journeying legally had no recourse but to slip away, thus falling under the category of *nukemairi* even though they were neither beggars nor religious zealots. Oito’s case proves that among the throngs of unauthorized pilgrims who walked the roads of nineteenth-century Japan there were individuals who did not need, nor intended, to beg for alms to craft their identity.

Souvenir Shoppers and Demanding Farmers: The Other Nukemairi Pilgrims

Ever the efficient merchant, Oito recorded the various expenditures she incurred while on the road, showing how her party was not only able and willing to pay for the bare necessities of a journey (such as tolls, food, and lodgings), but also



determined to enjoy a comfortable trip inclusive of extra services and the purchase of numerous “luxury” items. For instance, on the day of their departure the pilgrims visited Hama Niō Konpira 浜仁王金比羅 shrine (access fee, fourteen *mon*), crossed a toll bridge (ten *mon*), rode a ferry across the Serita 芹田 River (seventy *mon*), tipped the pack-horse driver and his attendant (fifty *mon*), bought lunch (two hundred and fifty *mon*), and spent the night at an inn (nine hundred and sixty *mon*) (HSS, 610). On particularly steep mountain passes they hired porters to carry their luggage (int. 8/3, eighty-five *mon*). In Hakone 箱根 Oito rented a packhorse and a palanquin to cross the pass. Atop the mountain she hired a guide for one hundred *mon*. It is unlikely that she planned on bypassing the barrier. Since she was traveling toward Edo she was not the object of much scrutiny (she was not, in other words, a female hostage sneaking out of Edo, or *deonna* 出女). KANAMORI Atsuko has suggested that the hundred *mon* fee may have been a small bribe to the local guards so that she could pass without having to dismount the palanquin, as rules prescribed (2001, 236). Once she safely made it past the checkpoint, Oito paid for the palanquin to take her all the way down the mountain (one *bu* and two *shu* = one thousand five hundred *mon*), while a packhorse carried her luggage (three hundred and thirty *mon*). Overall, the cost of crossing Hakone pass alone added up to two thousand one hundred and eighty-two *mon*, an impressive amount of money. Oito made no effort to spare on river crossing expenses either. When she came to the Ōi 大井 River, she rented a palanquin at the cost of six hundred and sixteen copper coins rather than crossing on foot, a much cheaper alternative at ninety-five *mon* per person. On top of that, she paid two hundred and twenty-five *mon* for her attendant and her luggage to be transported, and rewarded the porters with a hefty tip (11/11). A palanquin was the solution of choice also at the Abe 阿部 River (11/12), far less treacherous than the Ōi River. For both her and her travel companion, plus luggage, the final price tag came up to two hundred and fifty-seven *mon*.³³

A few days into the pilgrimage (8/28) the party reached Mt. Haguro 羽黒 (one of the three sacred peaks of the Dewa Sanzan 出羽三山 complex), where they hired a tour guide, bought votive candles, and enjoyed an array of refreshments for a grand total of over one *kan* and six hundred *mon* (HSS, 611). Part of the Haguro experience consisted in trying the local specialty, the “rice cakes of strength” named after Dainichi. Oito would indulge in this kind of gastronomic pleasure other times during her journey. On Yoneyama 米山 pass (int. 8/11) she tried the “Benkei rice cakes of strength,” in Kashiwazaki 柏崎 she bought the local noodles, and in Kusatsu 草津, at the gates of Kyoto, she did not pass on the opportunity to sample the famous *ubagamochi* うばが餅 (9/13, one hundred *mon*).

33. She forded other smaller rivers, such as the Okitsu River shortly before Yūi on 11/13.

Transit permits, accommodation at inns, access fees to religious centers, and food were among the many basic necessities Oito was able to afford. The same holds true for acupuncture, moxa treatments, and medicines, of which she bought bundles (phlegm remedies on int. 8/22 and int. 8/24—at the cost respectively of fifty and one hundred *mon*, and pills on int. 8/29 for fifty *mon*). Other expenditures in her travelogue include what appear like relatively low priced “luxury” services—a twenty *mon* massage (8/29), and numerous trips to the hairdresser (8/29, int. 8/4, int. 8/21, 9/5, 9/14, 9/21, each costing anywhere between twenty-four and thirty-two *mon*). At the same time, a number of vanity purchases Oito makes seem decidedly over the top, and further remove her from the prototypical image of the *nukemairi* pilgrim who took to the road on the spur of the moment and relied on charitable donations to survive his or her journey. At Eihei-ji 永平寺 Oito spent one golden *shu* (= two hundred and fifty *mon*) on an illustrated map, while in Konpira (10/1) she forked out three times as much in amulets. A few days after arriving to Kyoto she dished out the equivalent of a one-night accommodation at an inn to see an exhibit of sacred images in Saga 嵯峨 (9/18); the following day she hired a local guide (five hundred *mon*) to show her around the famous sites of the capital. While in Osaka, Oito visited a local theater (an entry on 10/14 records an expenditure of one *kan* nine hundred and sixty-one *mon* for the ticket), purchased four sheets of silk floss (four hundred *mon*), cotton cuffs (two hundred and ninety *mon*), a towel (one hundred and thirty *mon*), and one bundle of rice paper (thirty-two *mon*). The list of purchases she includes at the end of her travelogue (Table 2) is an impressive show of wealth, speaks volumes about a journey whose financial implications had been minutely calculated, and flies in the face of the traditional association between *nukemairi* and extemporaneous, disorganized adventures. The magnitude of her expenditures suggests she had possibly left Honjō with certificates redeemable for hard cash, a degree of financial sophistication uncommon, if not altogether absent, among earlier *nukemairi* pilgrims.³⁴ While many of the items included in the roster may have been for her own use, the twenty gift wrappers, thirty folding fans, over two hundred illustrations and seven hundred amulet-bags were certainly destined for distribution among acquaintances upon return. In this respect, Oito situates herself half way between the “true” *nukemairi* pilgrims using amulets to regain acceptance within communities betrayed by their disappearance, and the leisure travelers acquiring mementos of their journeys to share the pleasures of the road with their supportive homebound peers.

By the time Oito “secretly went out into the world” *nukemairi* remained, for some, the unplanned, marginal, and rebellious acts of defiance they had been throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For others, however,

34. A recorded expenditure of five coins as “exchange rate” on 8/28 may be evidence of one such transaction.

they became another element of a larger culture of commodification and hedonism. Wealthy travelers like Oito redefined *nukemairi*, substituting misery with opportunism, the unexpected with the calculated, and the marginal with the near-mainstream. Her being a *nukemairi* pilgrim took a back seat to her being first and foremost a nineteenth-century merchant loaded with cash. Oito's journey was a self-proclaimed unauthorized pilgrimage, but it was also the product of a travel culture that, as we know, hardly ever drew the line between faith and recreation (HUR 2000; SHINNO 2002). As pointed before, the transformation of travel into a leisurely experience affected every type of religious journey in the late Tokugawa period, a time by which "the unruliness of consumerism was part and parcel of the worship of the gods" (THAL 2005, 36). In a day and age when even the relatively austere Shikoku *henro* 遍路 provided pilgrims with ample opportunities to enjoy the trip in a comfortable fashion (READER 2005, 130), *nukemairi* too began to approximate a more standardized format of movement.

It is also important to point out that cases of self-proclaimed *nukemairi* pilgrims that undermine the basic association with improvisation and unpretentiousness are not limited to the members of the wealthy merchants class. Just as interesting as Oito's is the story of a couple of farmers, Miyake Yoshiemon 三宅嘉右衛門 and his wife Yae 八重 from Sekigahara 関ヶ原 (modern-day Gifu Prefecture), who ran off to Zenkōji and Tateyama 立山 in 1863. They considered themselves *nukemairi* pilgrims because they carried no permits and often had to pay "*nukemichi* guides" to help them make their way around official barriers (GKS, 544). For instance, they sneaked past the checkpoints at Sekigawa on 7/16 and Sakai さかい (Ichifuri) on 7/20 (the cost for this last one is entered as sixty *mon*), but in Kanazawa 金沢 (Kaga Province) they obtained a permit to transit across the barrier at Daishōji (GKS, 545). When everything else failed, they used their cash to bribe the guards. At Yanakase やなかせ barrier they made a first attempt to pass without permits, pretending to know nothing about the law. The stratagem failed, and they were sent back. They then asked around, and were told that all they needed to do was to "wrap up fifty *mon* to buy cakes, and make an offering," at which Yoshiemon commented:

<i>Arigataya</i>	ありかたや	How grand!	
<i>Tōren tokomo</i>	とをれんとも	Whether you pass or not	
<i>Zeni shidai</i>	銭次第	depends on your money.	
<i>Sekimorisan mo</i>	せき守さんも	Even the guard's heart	
<i>Kokoro gojūka</i>	心五十か	is only fifty <i>mon</i> ?	(GKS, 546)

Like Oito, Yoshiemon and Yae hardly fit the mold of the prototypical stealth pilgrim. Although their journey was shorter than Oito's both as far as mileage and time are concerned (Map 2), they too departed at their own leisure ("We thought we'd go on a pilgrimage to Zenkōji, so we picked an auspicious day and we went"), traveled in relative style, and carried enough funds for brief

diversions, including visits to hot spring resorts and souvenir shopping (GKS, 541–46).

They, too, studiously avoided discomforts: not only did they sleep with a roof over their heads every night, Yoshiemon also complained for the lack of adequate facilities along the road. For being a *nukemairi* pilgrim and a farmer, he displays unusually high standards for comfort. The day after departure, for instance, he laments the lack of teahouses along the Kiso 木曾 road, writing a haiku to voice his complaint:

<i>Yamaji kite</i>	山路来テ	I came to the mountain road	
<i>Hara herakaite</i>	腹へらかいて	and my belly's empty.	
<i>Fushimi yado</i>	伏見宿	Fushimi post town.	(GKS, 541)

In Tonomura との村 village on 7/11 he grumbles, “the Edoya inn is large, but has no thatched roof, which is a nuisance”; the hygienically challenged Futamiya 二見屋 in Ōshima 大嶋 again prompts him to vent his frustration as a disappointed customer in verses:

<i>Ame furite</i>	雨ふりて	It is raining, so	
<i>Ōshima tomari</i>	大嶋とまり	we stop in Ōshima:	
<i>Iyana secchin</i>	いやな雪院	Some nasty toilet!	(GKS, 542)

Yoshiemon and Yae carried enough cash to pay for complete tours of religious complexes. In Tateyama they enter the following expenditures in their journal:

350 <i>mon</i>	“money scattered on the mountain” (<i>makisen</i> 蒔銭 ³⁵)
1 <i>kan</i> and 600 <i>mon</i>	lodging
250 <i>mon</i>	guide

The consumer-oriented nature of their unusual *nukemairi* is best summed up in the series of four haiku Yoshiemon, ever the poet, composes at the gates of Zenkōji. Having reached one of the holiest sites in the country, the verses Yoshiemon writes celebrate not so much the sacredness of the site, as the importance of its commercial amenities in revamping the spirits of weary travelers:

<i>Isogi kite</i>	いそぎきて	We rushed out here.
<i>Ase fukinagara</i>	汗ふきながら	Puffing and sweating
<i>Gonenbutsu</i>	御念仏	We pray to the buddhas.
<i>Monzen ni</i>	門前に	How beautiful!
<i>Amazake uri no</i>	あまざけうりの	A stand selling sweet saké
<i>Kireisa yo</i>	綺麗さよ	At the temple's gate.

35. Offerings placed at various sites in sacred areas such as Ise or numinous mountains in lieu of rice grains.

<i>Ki no kiita</i>	気のきいた	Now, that's good!
<i>Amazake uri no</i>	あまざけ売の	The clever sweet saké vendor
<i>Furi no yosa</i>	ふりのよさ	Is swinging by.
<i>Juzu katta</i>	しゆず買った	The girl at the shop
<i>Mise no musume no</i>	店の娘の	Where I bought my rosary:
<i>Rikō sawa</i>	りこふさわ	What a smooth talker she was!

(GKS, 543–44)

Conclusion

Early modern pilgrimages—authorized and not—were complex phenomena that generated debate and contention as they stood at the intersection of often divergent logics (READER and SWANSON 1997, 260–61). To better understand the nature of sacred routes as platforms of debate one needs to “reconsider the chaos of pilgrimage and to listen again to the cacophony” (NAQUIN and YU 1992, 7). This is achieved, among other means, through a cross examination of religious and economic factors. An examination of early modern mass pilgrimages that takes into account their financial implications reveals how *nukemairi* were not solely—and not mainly—acts of defiance against officialdom, but also acts of insubordination against one’s family and community, frequently perceived as betrayals and sources of disruption by many. Economic preoccupations on the part of employers, landlords, and families antagonized and reshaped the expectations of religious discourse far more directly, pervasively, and vociferously than the government—which intervened against *nukemairi* only when the semblance of order and equilibrium was threatened. More than the central authority, local communities and, by the late Edo period, regional domains, reacted against the hassle and disruption brought about by the sudden departures of stealth pilgrims.

Some of the measures enforced at the local level actually generated a change in the definition of *nukemairi*. As local authorities issued more and more restrictions to travel following the reforms of the 1790s, more people found themselves labeled as “fugitives.” For these people, the choice to “secretly go out into the world” did not come out of the sudden, uncontrollable desire to pay homage to the gods. It simply was the inevitable result of legislations that did not make room for any other way out. Motivated to take to the road, these travelers carried the label of *nukemairi*, but never internalized the essence of it. On paper, they added to the growing numbers of Ise devotees pouring to the great shrine in the closing years of the Tokugawa period, but in reality they hardly fit the bill of the “seemingly possessed” religious traveler (NISHIYAMA 1997, 133). Their journeys were not unrehearsed, their absences not absolute, and their preoccupations were practical but by no means unsophisticated: quality souvenirs, comfortable inns, sanitary facilities, and strategically located saké stands. According

to a popular motto of the Edo period, everyone was supposed to go to Ise at least once in a lifetime (SHINNO 2002, 456; SHINJŌ 1982, 1313). Be that by storming out the door with little more than a begging bowl in hand or by setting out on a premeditated, fully funded expedition, a great many Edo travelers managed to go to Ise at all costs.

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- GKS *Gifu kenshi, Shiryōhen, Kinsei 7* 岐阜県史 史料編 近世 7. Gifu-ken: Gifu, 1971.
- HSS *Honjō shishi shiryōhen* 本荘市史史料編 iv. Honjō-shi, 1988.
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- TSSK *Tsuru shishi, Shiryōhen, Kinsei 2* 都留市史 資料編 近世 2, ed. Tsuru Shishi Hensan Inkaï 都留市史編纂委員会. Yamanashi-ken: Tsuru-shi, 1994.

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