

SHAKING UP JAPAN: EDO SOCIETY AND THE 1855 CATFISH PICTURE PRINTS

By Gregory Smits

Pennsylvania State University

At about 10 pm on the second day of the tenth month of 1855 (November 11 in the solar calendar), an earthquake with a magnitude estimated between 6.9 and 7.1 shook Edo, now known as Tokyo. The earthquake's shallow focus and its epicenter near the heart of Edo caused more destruction than the magnitude might initially suggest. Estimates of deaths in and around Edo ranged from 7,000 to 10,000. Property damage from the shaking and fires was severe in places, destroying at least 14,000 structures. As many as 80 aftershocks per day continued to shake the city until nine days after the initial earthquake. Despite a relatively low 1 in 170 fatality rate, the extensive injuries and property damage, lingering danger of fires, a long and vigorous period of aftershocks, and the locus of the destruction in Japan's de facto capital city exacerbated the earthquake's psychological impact.¹

Two days after the initial earthquake, hastily printed, anonymous broadsheets and images began to appear for sale around the city. After several weeks had passed, over 400 varieties of earthquake-related prints were on the market, the majority of which featured images of giant catfish, often with anthropomorphic features.² These metaphoric catfish did not necessarily correspond to an actual species of fish, and I refer to them here by their Japanese name, *namazu*. The general name of catfish prints, which included visual elements and text, is *namazu-e*, with "e" meaning picture.

Namazu images appeared because of the folk image that movements of a giant subterranean *namazu* cause earthquakes. This point, however, is not sufficient to explain why *namazu-e* appeared in such large numbers and in such variety after this particular earthquake, especially in light of the paucity of *namazu* images in prints connected with other destructive urban earthquakes in Japan. The *namazu-e* of 1855 are a window on the political and social consciousness of Edo's residents during the final decades of the Tokugawa period. Noguchi Takehiko points out that natural disaster often serves as a catalyst, accelerating and bringing to the fore problems, contradictions, and tensions below the apparently calm surface of societies.³ The Ansei Earthquake shook the social and political foundation of Edo along with the earth's crust, and the *namazu-e* were the reaction of the common people to this event in its broadest sense.

Cornelis Ouwehand published a study of *namazu-e* in 1964 as part of a structuralist examination of Japanese folk religion.⁴ The present essay does not attempt to improve on Ouwehand's analysis of religious phenomena, although religion plays a key role in parts of my analysis. Instead, I discuss *namazu-e* in the context of Japanese urban society at a time when the existing social and political order was weakening, ultimately to be replaced by a modern-style centralized state in 1868. My focus is on the state of political consciousness among Edo's commoners in 1855, and I argue that they used *namazu-e* to express an

emerging consciousness of Japanese national identity and to make veiled political statements. In this way, I seek to augment the small but growing body of literature in English that examines the final decades of the Tokugawa period (1603–1867) from the standpoint of ordinary people.⁵

The people of Edo did not view the earthquake of 1855 as a random event. Instead, they understood it within a context of other recent earthquakes and recent political events, especially the visits of Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853 and 1854. For Edo residents, the earthquake of 1855 was an act of *yonaoshi*, or “world rectification.” In this view, the Ansei Earthquake literally shook up a society that had grown complacent, imbalanced, and sick. Regarding the earthquake as *yonaoshi* had political implications, and many *namazu-e* dealt with these implications.⁶

To contextualize popular perceptions of the 1855 earthquake, I summarize the situation in Japan from the 1830s onward and discuss briefly the prevailing understanding of earthquakes. Following these preliminary discussions, I examine select aspects of Edo society expressed in the *namazu-e* and conclude by discussing the broader implications of these prints for our understanding of *bakumatsu* Japan and the Meiji Restoration, the period of approximately 1850–1870.

A World in Mounting Turmoil, 1830–1855

Crop failures, natural disasters, and epidemics swept through Japan with severity during the time of the Tempō Famine, 1833–1837. The famine triggered riots (*uchikowashi*) in Edo and a popular revolt led by a former government official, Ōshio Heihachirō (1793–1837). In 1830, mass religious pilgrimages to the Ise Shrine (*okagemairi*) took place on an unprecedented scale. The pilgrims were mostly farmers, and they often became unruly as they passed through towns and villages. Similar outbursts of spontaneous pilgrimage activity continued during the 1830s and later, especially at twelve year intervals. The pilgrimages were not overtly political, but they demonstrated the potential power of emotionally-charged masses of ordinary people.⁷ Because these pilgrimages helped to create narratives of a deity setting a world-gone-awry back in order, they were one manifestation of the theme of redemption, which George M. Wilson has highlighted as a key characteristic of *bakumatsu* society.⁸ The Ansei Earthquake took on additional meaning for some Japanese because it occurred during a traditional pilgrimage year (*okage-doshi*).

Detailed theories of purposeful cosmic intervention in society are found in specific philosophies such as Confucianism or *tentō* thought (a syncretic system of religious and philosophical ideas), but the general idea that cosmic forces intervene to correct human societies gone awry had become widespread by the nineteenth century. The key realm was government, which in early nineteenth-century Japan consisted of an Edo-based bakufu (military government), headed by a shōgun (general), which directly administered about 20 percent of the country's land area. The bakufu also asserted hegemony over, but did not administer, more than 250 semi-autonomous domains (*han*) of varying sizes. An “emperor” (*tennō*) reigned in the traditional capital of Kyoto, functioning mainly as a religious and cultural figurehead. In the prevailing world view, an effective and ap-

propriately benevolent government would enjoy the legitimacy of cosmic sanction. By contrast, governments addicted to luxury and unable to maintain social order moved out of alignment with the moral principles built into the fabric of the cosmos.

As this divergence between cosmic moral principles and the state of government increased, strange atmospheric phenomena, crop failures, epidemics, earthquakes, and other natural disasters became the concrete manifestations of cosmic "displeasure." By the nineteenth century, a rich rhetorical palate of symbols characterizing such misalignments was widely known. In the context of discussing popular urban media (*kawaraban*) at this time, Gerald Groemer points out that:

Kawaraban hermeneutics could rely on a complex system of signs, symbols, analogies, correspondences, and metaphors that existed in the context of everyday life and effortlessly crossed the fluid borders of science, magic, astrology, folk belief, political/moral ideology, literature, poetry, and religion. This context of interpretation allowed explicators with sufficient insight and imagination to apprehend cryptic messages of Heaven, and to endow the seemingly accidental with a meaning and causal necessity that spoke directly to the concerns of reader or listener. Conveniently enough, heaven often communicated through newsworthy events. Sudden and disastrous natural phenomena could signal blunders of an inept government that had set nature out of balance with society. Similarly, large-scale social phenomena such as fads, crazes, and rumors might also be interpreted as a portentous sign.⁹

Governments failing to heed these warning signs would likely face popular uprisings, invasions from abroad, and other serious challenges that would eventually bring them down. Classical Chinese political theory regarded this phenomenon as the passing of Heaven's mandate from one dynasty to another, and most Japanese interpreted the politics of natural disasters in a similar light.

Organized society never collapsed on any large scale in nineteenth-century Japan, but serious strains gradually became apparent to all. Social anxiety levels in many parts of Japan began to rise, reaching crescendos in 1866, a peak year for rural uprisings and urban riots, and 1867, during which frenzied outbursts of dancing called *ee ja nai ka* (a refrain chanted by the dancers) swept through large areas of urban and rural Japan. The Ansei Earthquake was an important milestone in these rising anxiety levels because it literally shook the residents of Edo out of a relatively insular mind set and into a heightened awareness of broader problems facing themselves and Japan as a whole.¹⁰ Furthermore, the 1855 Ansei Earthquake may even have conditioned popular expectations of major change in 1867 owing to a coincidence of the twelve-year calendar cycle. The first indication for Edo's residents that major change was in the offing was the arrival of Matthew Perry's fleet.

Tokugawa Japan (1603–1867) was not closed to the world, but its limited foreign relations were under tight bakufu control.¹¹ During the seventeenth century, the bakufu developed trade and/or diplomatic relations with Korea, the Ryukyu Kingdom (present-day Okinawa Prefecture, Japan), Holland, and China. The basis of these foreign relations was a combination of bakufu military power and Chinese-derived notions of foreign relations as status-affirming

ritual (Ch. *li*; Jp. *rei*). By the nineteenth century, these early patterns of limited foreign relations had become rigid bakufu traditions, at odds with an increasingly interconnected world.

Throughout the 1800s, increasing numbers of American whaling and trading vessels, and sometimes shipwrecked sailors, began to appear in Japanese waters. Ships in distress sometimes made their way into Japanese ports, where the typical response was to provide minimal assistance and send them on their way with a warning not to come back. When their vessels were damaged beyond the possibility of repair, repatriation of shipwrecked U.S. sailors usually took place via Chinese or Dutch ships sailing out of Nagasaki. As American whaling activity and trade with China increased, pressure in congress grew to establish formal diplomatic and commercial relations with Japan. In 1852, Commodore Matthew Perry began preparations to sail to Japan, and his small fleet arrived in Uraga Bay (near Edo) in July, 1853. There, Perry marched ashore, conveyed formal letters from the U.S. president, stated his intention of negotiating a treaty and, when asked for time to think the matter over, told bakufu officials that he would return the next year. After several months in China, Perry returned to Edo in February, 1854 with a much larger fleet, one purpose of which was to intimidate the bakufu. Perry's strategy worked, and the bakufu reluctantly signed a diplomatic treaty with the United States in March, 1854.

Some Japanese welcomed this expansion of traditional foreign relations, others deeply resented it, and many had no strong opinion but were vaguely uneasy about contact with powerful and strange foreign countries. In any case, Perry's activities made clear to all that the bakufu had become too weak to keep foreigners out of Japan. In Edo, there was a delayed reaction to Perry among ordinary people. His first visit took place outside of Edo and was brief. The popular press reported on it, but for most residents of Edo Perry's flotilla was an exotic sideshow of passing curiosity.¹² Among *samurai*, however, especially government officials, Perry's initial visit caused consternation. Talk of the possibility of war increased, commodity prices rose, and wealthier residents of Edo sought to hide or otherwise secure their possessions. A briefly popular 1853 image by Utagawa Kuniyoshi illustrates this state of consternation among social elites through symbols and allusions. It depicts scenes of confusion around a bewildered painter, who likely represents the shōgun or the bakufu in general.¹³ In one of these scenes, a monkey is trying to pin down a *namazu* with a smooth bottle gourd, an image with roots in Japanese iconography dating to the early fifteenth century. In this case, the monkey is trying, without success, to restrain the upheaval resulting from Perry's visit.¹⁴

The bakufu's hurried attempt to construct offshore artillery batteries to defend the approach to the shōgun's castle, more than Perry's first visit, impressed on Edo's residents the potential gravity of the situation. Staring in the ninth month of 1853, the bakufu sought to build eleven such batteries, but high costs quickly reduced the number to five. Even the scaled-down project strained bakufu finances. The guns were not functioning by the time of Perry's second visit, during which some of his ships sailed ominously to within cannon range of Edo Castle.

The Japanese islands lie in a zone of frequent seismic activity, and the many small earthquakes that occur there occasion little notice, now or in the past. A series of major earthquakes, however, or earthquakes occurring in parts of the

country that rarely experience them, would have been an ominous portent. In 1830, an earthquake of about magnitude 6.5 shook the imperial capital of Kyoto causing about 280 deaths, 1,300 injuries, and an unusually large number of aftershocks.¹⁵ Minor earthquakes in Kyoto were common, but the city rarely experienced deadly earthquakes. The 1830 earthquake was an occasion for worry in part because of popular press reports that exaggerated the damage and because the shaking occurred almost in concert with the promulgation of a new era name, Tempō. Matsuzaki Kōdō, a Confucian scholar living near Edo, took anxious notice of both the Kyoto earthquake and the unseasonable blooming of cherry trees. Writing in his diary a day after the Tempō era started, he said "Our ruler is virtuous, and our habits upright . . . so there should be no reason for any disasters. . . . All we can do is pray for the Heavenly Protection of yesterday's new era name."¹⁶ Such a view of the relationship between natural phenomena and earthly political authorities was widespread at the time, not limited to Confucian scholars or other elites.¹⁷

Although living far from Kyoto, Matsuzaki quickly learned of the earthquake because of the fast intercity news network.¹⁸ This network, and the urban popular press that depended on it, informed the residents of Edo of several severe earthquakes close enough in time to Perry's arrival to seem especially meaningful in hindsight. The 1847 magnitude 7.4 Zenkōji Earthquake got its name from a Buddhist temple in Shinano, present-day Nagano Prefecture.¹⁹ Estimates of the death toll vary widely, ranging from about 2,500 to 10,000. According to one newspaper account:

In the third month of 1847 on the 24th day around 10pm, a large earthquake struck Shinano. Unfortunately, that month the Zenkō Temple (Zenkōji) was displaying a Buddhist statue, and so people from all around had crowded in to see it. A large crowd was milling around, which exacerbated the panic when the earthquake struck. Many of them were pinned down by or crushed beneath collapsing houses. Moreover, fire flew from the collapsed houses in an instant, and before long, the district in front of the temple gate was a sea of flames. Aftershocks sounding like thunder continued without cease, there being more than 80 throughout the night. A fissure appeared in the earth from which flowed mud and sand. A cliff overhanging the north fork of the Sai River collapsed, which cause massive flooding. People say that disasters two or three deep caused the deaths of 30,000. Prior to the earthquake, the temple put up a notice board of regulations for viewing the Buddhist image in front of its gate. It disappeared in the night, as did a second one. After putting up a third one, a guard was posted around the clock. Reflecting on this matter, people claimed that it must have been a way that the main Buddha of the temple tried to warn the people of an impending earthquake.²⁰

Mention of the Zenkōji Earthquake was common in the *namazu-e* of 1855.

The Zenkōji Earthquake does not seem have made a significant psychological impact on people of Edo at the time of its occurrence. Noguchi points out that Edo's residents were remarkably insular in their concerns and paid little attention to events outside of their city. Indeed, soon after the press in Edo reported the Zenkōji Earthquake, an irreverent verse (*senryū*) making a morbid joke about the wide variety of funeral services available in Shinano appeared. It was only after the Ansei Earthquake struck that Edo's residents retrospectively regarded the Zenkōji and other earthquakes as having a significant connection

to their lives.²¹ The Ansei Earthquake violently expanded the consciousness of Edo's residents, prompting them to imagine themselves as part of a broader community that extended well beyond the borders of their own city.

Odawara is a city just south of Edo, which experienced a magnitude 6.7 earthquake on the second day of the second month, 1853. According to one newspaper account, houses "collapsed like chess pieces," and the damage extended well beyond Odawara itself. A corner of Odawara castle collapsed, and the shaking and subsequent fires killed roughly 3,780.²² The next year, an earthquake of approximately magnitude 7.2 occurred on the fifteenth day of the sixth month, 1854. It shook Iga-Ueno in present-day Mie Prefecture and the Ise and Konoe areas in present-day Shiga Prefecture. This earthquake caused widespread property damage, destroying over 20,000 homes and was widely reported in the popular press of the major urban areas.²³

The year of Perry's return visit saw more than its share of major earthquakes. In addition to Odawara, two magnitude 8.4 earthquakes with offshore epicenters shook a vast area along the Pacific coast of Japan on consecutive days. The Ansei Tōkai Earthquake shook a region extending south from the outskirts of Edo to Ise Bay on the fourth day of the eleventh month. The next day, the Ansei-Nankai Earthquake shook a wide area of the coast further south, centered approximately on the Osaka. Both earthquakes generated tsunamis, the first of which severely damaged the Russian warship *Diana*, which had sailed into Shimoda (near Yokohama) to negotiate a treaty. Estimates of the death toll from each quake vary, but 3,000 apiece is a typical figure.²⁴

When Edo shook in 1855, prominent bakufu official Matsudaira Shungaku (1828–1890) reacted in part by writing a memo to Abe Masahiro (1819–1857), the de facto leader of the bakufu. Matsudaira listed recent earthquakes, other natural disasters, and the unwelcome visits of American, Russian, and British naval vessels. Together with the present disaster in Edo, these events "definitely constitute a heavenly warning," he concluded.²⁵ The Edo popular press and the *namazu-e* also retroactively linked the Ansei Earthquake with the series of severe earthquakes going back to 1847 and the recent arrival of Perry's so-called "black ships." Prevented by censorship regulations from stating the same explicit conclusion as did Matsudaira in his memo, the popular press and makers of *namazu-e* left such conclusions to readers' imaginations.

Causes of Earthquakes

Prior to the twentieth century, East Asian theories of earthquakes typically relied on the notion of the five agents of yin and yang. The idea of yin and yang—complementary opposite forces or tendencies underlying the world and its processes—developed in ancient China. By the dawn of the Common Era, Chinese thinkers had come up with elaborations on this basic idea, the most influential of which was that yin and yang make themselves manifest in the universe through the five agents (Ch. *wuxing*, Jp. *gogyō*) of water, fire, metal, earth, and wood. Chinese academics developed elaborate theories of cosmological correspondences in which the five agents played a key role in explaining observed phenomena and predicting future developments in realms as diverse as medicine, politics, astronomy, history, cooking, and agriculture. Over time,

the basic idea of yin and yang operating in a balance regulated by five agents became widely known among people of all walks of life throughout East Asia.

By the nineteenth century, nearly all Japanese regarded earthquakes as resulting from a temporary imbalance in the proportions of the five agents of yin and yang within the earth. Not everyone agreed on the details, but the basic idea had long been intellectual and social common sense. The *Ansei kenmon-roku* (Accounts of the Ansei era) contains a typical explanation of earthquakes. Normally, water (purely yin) overcomes fire (purely yang). Furthermore, water is the agent normally holding sway in the subterranean environment. Earthquakes occur when fire overcomes water underground, thus reversing the normal state.²⁶ Popular newspapers often started their accounts of earthquakes with a brief statement of yin and yang forces being out of balance. For example, the text of an account of the Odawara Earthquake (1853) explains that a clash of yin and yang forces resulted in thunder in the skies and shaking of the earth. An account of an earthquake in Ise (1854) employs the same explanation verbatim.²⁷ The text of one large *namazu-e* provides a lengthy explanation of the causes of earthquakes that combines yin-yang correlative cosmology, popular morality, and geomancy (Ch. *fengshui*, Jp. *fūsui*), visually enhanced by exotic looking Chinese deities.²⁸ Another print even features a denial by several *namazu* that mere fish have the power to cause earthquakes. Instead, the *namazu* protest, earthquakes are caused by imbalances in yin and yang forces.²⁹

Various folk explanations for earthquakes co-existed with explanations based on the five agents of yin and yang. Most five agent based explanations were sufficiently vague that they did not necessarily contradict folk explanations based on popular deities or supernatural creatures moving around under the earth. Metaphoric thinking was common whereby the supernatural creatures, deities, and other mechanisms of folk theories were concrete representations of the abstract processes of academic theories. For example, a broadsheet issued just after the Ansei Earthquake explained its cause in terms of both yin and yang forces and the subterranean movements of a giant *namazu*, but it called the *namazu*-based explanation an “unsophisticated theory.”³⁰ Japanese folk explanations during the late eighteenth century attributed earthquakes to such things as: 1) the movement of a giant creature (an ox, a dragon/snake, or a giant fish) supporting the earth; 2) the movement of a deity or giant supporting the earth; 3) movement or shaking of a pillar or band supporting the earth; 4) the wild sex acts of male and female deities; and 5) careless movements of human ancestors. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the notion that a giant serpentine dragon moving under the earth caused the earth to shake was especially popular. This dragon gradually transformed into a giant *namazu* in the popular imagination.³¹

Starting in the seventeenth century, conceptual links among *namazu*, earthquakes, and the Kashima Shrine became increasingly evident.³² A picture scroll from 1793 depicting the Kanda Festival parade in Edo depicts a huge *namazu* float pulled, pushed, and otherwise attended by 57 people. Atop the *namazu*'s head is a replica of the Kashima Shrine's foundation stone (*kaname ishi*).³³ By this time, the notion that earthquakes result from the subterranean movements of a giant *namazu* pinned under the Kashima Shrine by an oval-shaped foundation stone had become well established. Today, most Japanese are vaguely aware

of some kind of a folksy link between catfish and earthquakes, but science education at the end of the nineteenth century undermined any lingering literal belief in the *namazu* as a cause of earthquakes.

Some Initial Reactions to the 1855 Ansei Edo Earthquake

Within two days of the Ansei Earthquake, entrepreneurs set up makeshift printing presses and began producing broadsheets containing information of immediate interest such as news about the extent of the earthquake damage and information about which parts of the city were on fire.³⁴ *Namazu-e* were part of this initial round of commercial print production. Prints produced within roughly the first ten days to two weeks of the initial shaking generally reflected the emotions of fear, disgust, and anger. Fear of further damage generated talismanic *namazu-e*, many of which featured an image of the Kashima deity reasserting control over the earthquake *namazu*. One typical example is a print with the title “Jishin o-mamori” (Protection against earthquakes, Figure 1).³⁵ Here the thunder deity employs his mallet to help the Kashima deity pin down a giant *namazu* (with a dragon-like tail) with a sword. At the top left of the print is “Kashima” written in a special spirit writing script associated with popular Daoism. Directly above it is an iconographic depiction of the Big Dipper constellation, thought to be an especially lucky set of stars.³⁶ The small *namazu* in the foreground wear robes with characters on their backs identifying four place names: Ise, Shinshū (=Shinano), Odawara, and Kyoto. These names correspond to the major earthquakes from the recent past. The text accompanying the print indicates that it should be hung up in the home to ward off further earthquake damage.

Kitani Makoto has analyzed *namazu-e* from the standpoint of the broader Japanese practice of *yakuharai*, the removal of misfortune by ritualistic behavior and appeals to deities. He points out that a typical procedure when a child would come down with smallpox was for the parents to welcome the smallpox deity to their home and speak kindly to it. Then, they would politely bid it to return to its own dwelling, in the hope that the deity and its associated disease would soon depart. There was no attempt to fight with the deity or to regard it explicitly as an enemy. The talismanic *namazu-e* served as similar attempts to influence a powerful force in nature, thereby avoiding serious harm from it.³⁷ There were instances, however, in which *namazu-e* took a different posture vis-à-vis these forces.

Although comparatively rare, some *namazu-e* convey an irreverent sense of disgust that the deities would have so badly mismanaged the balance of cosmic forces. In *Namazu to kaname-ishi* (*Namazu* and the foundation stone, Figure 2),³⁸ fires rage and the earth shakes above the sinister-looking figure of a giant *namazu*. Ebisu, a lesser deity filling in for Kashima, who is out of town, looks tired as he dozes against the foundation stone.³⁹ The strange looking man to the left of the print is the thunder deity, engaging in a peculiar pastime of some Edo residents, which we might call “extreme farting,” or perhaps “thunder farting.” The basic object of this sport was to make more noise than one’s opponents. According to the scholar Hiraga Gennai (1729–1779) in his treatise *Hōhiron* (On farting), thunder farting made its debut in 1774 at the Ryōgoku Bridge, a major site of

Figure 1
Jishin o-mamori
Protection against earthquakes



Figure 2
Namazu to kaname-ishi
(*Namazu and the foundation stone*)



popular culture displays in Edo. Small drums issue forth from the thunder deity's posterior, no doubt to emphasize the booming sonic element in his performance. The man on horseback at right is Kashima, rushing back from his meeting with other major deities in Izumo. These incompetent deities have allowed a major disaster to unfold in the form of a fire-ravaged, post-earthquake Edo.⁴⁰ Money (large gold coins) is falling from the burning city, presaging a theme that became prominent in *namazu-e* produced during the rebuilding phase of the earthquake's aftermath: the redistribution of wealth.

This disgust at the Kashima deity's ineptitude sometimes manifested itself in a different manner: demoting the Kashima deity and replacing him with Amaterasu, the solar deity located at the Ise shrine far to the south of Edo. Prior to the Ansei Earthquake, all indications are that the people of Edo had little interest in or knowledge of Amaterasu, who was the clan deity of the imperial family and therefore better known in Kyoto. One characteristic of the Tokugawa period was the political and cultural eclipse of the imperial court by the bakufu. Only after the arrival of Perry did bakufu opponents advocating a policy of *jōi*, "expel the barbarians," began to look to the imperial court as a symbolic counterweight to the bakufu. These *samurai* dissidents later took up the slogan *sonnō-jōi*, "revere the sovereign, expel the barbarians" as anti-bakufu rhetoric. The sovereign of this slogan was the mysterious emperor in Kyoto, not the shōgun in Edo. The term Meiji Restoration refers to the ostensible restoring of the emperor to his allegedly proper role as both civil and religious sovereign in the wake of the bakufu's collapse.

We see in some *namazu-e* the first signs in Edo of a significant expansion of popular consciousness to embrace Amaterasu as a savior figure. Some of these prints also imply a link between Amaterasu and the imperial family, but the connection is tenuous and the emperor an abstraction. The image of a quasi-divine but earthly emperor in military uniform as head of state began to take hold in the popular imagination only after the Meiji Restoration, propagated with considerable energy by the new state. As Takashi Fujitani has pointed out, insofar as pre-Restoration residents of Edo were even cognizant of the emperor's existence, they tended to see him as a popular, wish-granting deity.⁴¹ In the *namazu-e* of 1855, Amaterasu appears as an abstract savior deity, usually represented by the symbol of the sun (often as a person whose head is the shining sun) and/or the white horse of the Ise shrine. *Namazu o kerichirasu Ise jingū jinme* (sacred horse of the Ise shrine kicking away the *namazu*, Figure 3)⁴² is a good example of this type. The powerful horse, with sacred paper (*gohei*) substituting for a rider, kicks away several *namazu* who groan in pain. Notice the many short, slender lines around the horse. They are its hair. According to rumor, people reported seeing a white horse (or three horses) passing over Edo just after the earthquake. The horse(s) shook off strands of hair, the possession of even one of which would protect the human bearer against death and injury.⁴³ This falling hair is reminiscent of the falling paper talismans (*ofudafuri*) that touched off the frenzied *ee ja nai ka* dancing of 1867.⁴⁴ The man at left trying to control the powerful horse is probably the Kashima deity in his typical *samurai* guise (compare with Figure 1).

Figure 3

*Namazu o kerishirasu Ise jingū jinme*The sacred horse of the Ise shrine kicking away the *namazu*

There are other *namazu-e* depicting the Kashima deity in supporting roles subordinate to Amaterasu or in a mildly antagonistic relationship with Amaterasu. In one image, for example, Amaterasu, Kashima, and Hachiman (a popular deity with strong Buddhist connections) ride horses across the sky of a devastated Edo. Amaterasu orders the *namazu* to depart from Edo quietly and dispenses strands of horse hair, his back turned to Kashima. Kashima comments on the severity of the destruction and holds the foundation stone aloft, but the stone is of no use up in the sky.⁴⁵ In this image, Amaterasu and Kashima are of roughly the same size and occupy the same height in the sky. In a different print, however, Amaterasu, called the “imperial ancestor of great Japan” (*Dai-Nippon teiso*), towers above the smaller figure of Kashima, who assists in distributing divine horse hair along side of six other local Edo deities.⁴⁶ Clearly the Kashima deity has been demoted in this print. The text of the print refers to Japan as a “divine country” (*shinkoku*), whose people are fortunate that Amaterasu, the emperor (*Mikado*), the shōgun, and the domain lords (*daimyō*), are all benevolent and concerned for their wellbeing.⁴⁷ Here we see a vision of Japan that includes land, deities, and rulers, similar to that which the Meiji state would start promoting slightly over a decade later. While few *namazu-e* are as explicit as this one in positing Amaterasu’s superiority over the deities of Edo, many do reveal a degree of tension between Kashima and Amaterasu, as well as the sugges-

tion that the impact of the earthquake was felt not only in Edo but throughout Japan.⁴⁸

Korashimerareru namazu (Subdued *namazu*, Figure 4)⁴⁹ reflects raw anger directed at a giant *namazu* itself, with the Kashima deity as one member of a small crowd gathered to assail the beast. A courtesan attempts to strike the *namazu* with her long smoking pipe, a shopkeeper beats the *namazu* with his abacus, and a traveling book seller moves in menacingly. The Kashima deity is about to thrust the foundation stone on top of the hapless *namazu*. In the foreground, the spirit of a dead man pulls on one of the *namazu*'s whiskers. Amidst this commotion, two members of the construction trades are trying to restrain the angry crowd. One of them, identified as a carpenter by the characters on his jacket, is himself being attacked by a charred, skeletal man, someone who was burned to death in the fires. Why are the construction workers defending the *namazu*? As we will see in detail below, they and others enjoyed an economic windfall from the earthquake. This motif of an angry crowd attacking a giant *namazu* while members of the construction trades attempt to defend it is common in the *namazu-e*.

The *namazu-e* described above indicate ambivalence vis-à-vis the local deities. On the one hand, residents of Edo urgently looked to Kashima, the thunder deity, and Ebisu to reassert control over the earthquake *namazu* and restore the cosmic forces to a peaceful balance. On the other hand, even in *namazu-e* not explicitly critical of the deities, it was obvious that they had permitted

Figure 4
Korashimerareru namazu
Subdued *namazu*



vast destruction to take place by failing to do their usual work or at least not doing it diligently. Therefore, another possibility implicit or explicit in some of the *namazu-e* was to demote Kashima and rely instead on the saving power of Amaterasu.

A Complex Society

Much of the ambivalence in the *namazu-e* derived from mixed views of the earthquake itself. Not all residents of Edo saw it as a disaster or tragedy. After the earth stopped shaking and the fires died down, it became increasingly clear that the earthquake had harmed some social groups while benefiting others. Anyone seriously injured or killed, of course, would have been among those harmed. Otherwise, one's occupation became the critical factor in viewing the earthquake as either a setback or an opportunity for profit. *Ō-namazu-go no namayoi* (Tipsiness following the great *namazu*, Figure 5)⁵⁰ depicts a large group still somewhat disoriented in the immediate wake of the earthquake. The Kashima deity vigorously skewers the giant fish, laid out on a table, with a sword. The suppressed *namazu* divides the print into upper and lower sections. The dozens

Figure 5

Ō-namazu-go no namayoi
Tipsiness following the great *namazu*



of people depicted in the print thus divide into two groups. Those at the top are labeled “smiling,” while those at the bottom are “weeping” and “have plenty of free time” that is, they are unemployed. The smiling group includes a carpenter, a plasterer, a seller of lumber, a blacksmith, a roof tile merchant, an elite courtesan, an ordinary prostitute, a physician, and sellers of certain types of ready-to-eat foods. In total, the print depicts about 30 specific occupations as profiting from the earthquake. The crying group includes a teahouse proprietor, a seller of eels, a variety of entertainers such as musicians, comedians, and storytellers, a seller of luxury goods, a diamond seller, and a seller of imported goods—25 specific occupations in all.⁵¹ Other *namazu-e* taking up the theme of society divided along the lines of economic winners and losers portray similar sets of occupations, though the elite courtesan sometimes ends up in the “idle” category.⁵²

Although the earthquake has divided this society, it has also brought people together. A print like *Ô-namazu-go no namayoi* displays the characteristic ambivalence already noted in other contexts. The people on each side of the *namazu* are dressed similarly and assume similar postures. The winners are not celebrating, and everyone looks more dazed than anything else (despite the “smiling” label, nobody is actually grinning). The earthquake has united them in a common terrifying experience. Certainly the sellers of luxury goods, for example, will suffer from the diversion of money to such basics as building supplies and constructing work. There is no suggestion in this print, however, of censure or that those on the crying side of the *namazu* deserve any sort of cosmic punishment. On the contrary, those on the losing side deserve compassion and assistance.

Strong Medicine

That there was an element of random chance behind the fate of individuals caught in the earthquake did not mean that event itself was random. In the larger scheme of things, many residents of Edo regarded the Ansei Earthquake as a purposeful attempt by the cosmic forces to rectify a society out of balance. One reason for this imbalance was a stagnation of currency caused by Edo’s elite merchants hoarding wealth. The label “merchant” can be misleading, however, particularly because of the inaccurate tendency to view Tokugawa Japan as a society of four social classes with merchants at the bottom. Merchants did not constitute a legally-defined social class, and they ranged from itinerate peddlers barely eking out a living to business tycoons so powerful that they managed the finances of large domains. It was these extremely wealthy merchants, at least in the thinking of many of Edo’s common people, who caused problems by hoarding goods to manipulate prices and by storing up large quantities of coins, thereby preventing specie from circulating in society. In short, these great merchants caused something akin to constipation in the social body, and the earthquake was strong purgative medicine.

The idea of the free circulation of vital essences as the basis of bodily or social health was a core concept in Tokugawa Japan, embraced by intellectuals and ordinary people alike. For example, nearly all Tokugawa Confucian scholars stressed the need for wealth to circulate in a healthy society. “The wealth of

the realm," wrote Yamaga Sokō (1622–1685), "belongs to the realm. It is not the wealth of a single person. Well should it circulate."⁵³ In typical Confucian microcosmic-macrocosmic thinking, Kaibara Ekken (1630–1714) likened the flow of wealth in society to the flow of vital fluids through the body and the flow of vital energy through the cosmos:

If the flow of material force (*ki*) through heaven and earth is obstructed, abnormalities arise, causing natural disasters such as violent windstorms, floods and droughts, and earthquakes. If the things of the world are long collected together, such obstruction is inevitable. In humans, if the blood, vital essence (*ki*), food and drink do not circulate and flow, the result is disease. Likewise, if vast material wealth is collected in one place and not permitted to benefit and enrich others, disaster will strike later.⁵⁴

In this way of thinking, the proper and essential social role of merchants was to circulate wealth. Most Japanese did not express themselves in the metaphysical language of Confucian scholars, but they likewise regarded the free circulation of goods and currency as essential for social and economic health. Ordinary urban dwellers tended to distrust wealthy merchants and blame them for high prices. Therefore, many residents of Edo regarded the Ansei Earthquake as heaven-sent medicine to take money out of the hands of wealthy merchants and put it into the hands of laborers, shopkeepers, workers in the construction trades, and other ordinary people.

A print entitled *Furidashi namazu-gusuri* (*Namazu* powdered medicine pouches, Figure 6)⁵⁵ nicely illustrates this view. *Furidashi* was a general name for powdered medicine sold in pouches by itinerant vendors and typically dissolved in hot water and quaffed like tea. A *namazu* is dressed as a medicine seller, but instead of the usual pouches of medicine, small figures representing some of the occupations that would benefit from the earthquake are stuck into his straw-tipped pole. The accompanying text explains in detail the efficacy of this *namazu* medicine for restoring economic health. It restores the flow and circulation of money collected in storehouses, restores warmth to the cold hearted, cures poverty, reduces laziness, and reduces the ill effects of luxurious living.

Chōsha, kane no yamai (The metal disease of millionaires, Figure 7)⁵⁶ shifts the perspective to the recipient of the medicine. *Kane* can mean metal in general, money in general, or gold, depending on the context. Here both its meaning of metal (one of the five agents of yin and yang) and its meaning of money (especially gold coins) are relevant. A world-rectifying *namazu* forces a sick-looking rich man crouching next to his damaged storehouse to vomit gold coins. Nearby, two other wealthy men are excreting money. They are sick because of the metal that has accumulated within them, and the *namazu* is effecting a purgative cure. On a larger scale, the spending of the wealthy to rebuild their damaged homes, businesses, and storehouses released money into the ranks of the common people. Carpenters, plasterers, certain food vendors, building supplies vendors, and even ordinary porters enjoyed not only an upsurge in opportunities for work, but also a sharp increase in the wages they could command because labor was in such high demand.⁵⁷ While the earthquake may also have destroyed their own homes, these newly-rich commoners could afford to replace them, with money left over for luxuries.

Figure 7
Chōsha, kane no yamai
 The metal disease of millionaires



“Big Black”

Just as some *namazu-e* cast the earthquake in the role of social medicine, so too did some newspapers speculate on the possible curative powers of Perry’s “black ships.” For example, an article under the headline “Barbarian Steam Ships” (*bankata jōkisen*) characterized the arrival of the black ships as the best possible medicine for society. It explained that the long period of peace has afflicted the warriors with an illness, making them ineffective and soft, but that recent events have refocused their energies on military affairs. Its opening words were a parody of a typical medicine seller’s pitch, much like the *Furidashi namazu-gusuri* print discussed above.⁵⁸ The popular press often portrayed Perry’s ships in a manner strikingly similar to some of the menacing *namazu* images of 1855. For many, that the earthquake took place so soon after Perry’s second visit and that it struck the bakufu’s capital was too powerful a message to disregard as mere coincidence. The bakufu’s long-standing prohibition of public commentary by the popular press on political issues did not actually stop such commentary. Instead, popular publications and prints employed veiling strategies such as allegories (*mitate*), plays on words, symbols with multiple meanings, and rebuses. Through such devices, Perry reappeared in Japan at the end of 1855 in some of the *namazu-e*.

Namazu-e depicting a world-rectifying *namazu* dispensing wealth commonly

feature the deity of good fortune, Daikoku (or Daikokuten), as the one actually dishing out the money.⁵⁹ Daikoku's name means "Big Black." In some *namazu-e*, "Big Black," the deity, helps to rectify society. Of course, there was another "big black" on the minds of many of Edo's residents, namely the American steam ships. *Namazu*, too, always appeared black in the prints. So the deity Daikoku connected two other "big blacks" to himself: Perry's steam ships and the earthquake *namazu*. In *Ō-Edo no furui* (The shaking of greater Edo, Figure 8),⁶⁰ a giant *namazu* appears to have partially morphed into a whale. It is spouting money, but not from a whale's blow hole. Instead, the coins spout from the same place that a smoke stack would be located on a steam ships, and the *namazu* resembles one of the black ships. Moreover, the text of an accompanying song includes a play on words that links the homonyms "great country" (*daikoku*) with "Big Black" (Daikoku). Standing on shore, people beckon the whale-*namazu*-steamship to come closer. This print portrays Perry's visits and the trade likely to result from them in a generally favorable light.

Abe Yasunari, however, is not so sure. The short song reads "The soil of the great country moves, piling up a mountain of treasure in the midst of the city." "The soil of the great country" is *daikoku no tsuchi*, which is a homonym for "the mallet of Daikoku." Why, Abe asks, have interpreters of *namazu-e* not at least considered taking the song at its face value, with Japan as the "great country?" The song is written in cursive script, angled into the spout of coins, and it is written upside down. The only way to read the song is to turn the print upside down (an arrow added to Figure 8 indicates the direction of the song text). Doing so reveals a different landscape. What was originally the oddly red sky looks like earth in the new perspective, and the spout of coins becomes a mountain of treasure. Furthermore, the whole scene now seems focused on "this" shore, that is, on Japan. Abe does not insist that the upside-down reading is the correct one, but rather that it reveals an additional possibility: that Japan might be or become wealthy and "great." Here, the term "great country" potentially refers both to the United States and to an optimistic vision of Japan's future, each linked by the figure of Daikoku, the deity of wealth.⁶¹ Further support for the possible reading of "great country" as Japan would be that the text of another print (Figure 10), one with no connection to the black ships or foreigners, begins with "The soil of the great country moves" (*daikoku no tsuchi . . .*), a verbatim match with in the above song.⁶²

A more explicit tension between Japan and the United States is evident in *Ansei ni-nen jūgatsu futsuka yoru daijishin namazu mondō* (An exchange with the *namazu* of the great earthquake, second year of Ansei, second day, tenth month, nighttime, Figure 9).⁶³ Here, Matthew Perry and the earthquake *namazu* engage in a neck-to-neck tug-of-war (*kubi-hiki*). Although there is no obvious victor, the *namazu* seems to be getting the upper hand as Perry lurches forward slightly and the referee points in the *namazu*'s direction. Again we see a close connection in the popular imagination between Perry's expedition and the earthquake. Unlike the previous print, here the *namazu* and Perry are at political odds.

The *namazu* begins:

You stupid Americans have been making fun of us Japanese for the past two or three years. You have come and pushed us around too much . . . Stop this useless

Figure 8
Ō-Edo no furui
 The shaking of greater Edo



Figure 9

Ansei ni-nen jūgatsu futsuka yoru daijishin namazu mondō
 An exchange with the *namazu* of the great earthquake, second year of Ansei, second
 day, tenth month, nighttime



talk of trade; we don't need it. We are sick of hearing the noisy calls of the candy sellers. Since we don't need you, hurry up and put your back to us. Fix your rudder and sail away at once.⁶⁴

Perry's reply emphasizes the ideals of his country's political and social organization: "What are you talking about, you stupid catfish! Mine is the country of benevolence and compassion. No matter what a person does, even if he is a laborer or a hunter, if he is benevolent he can become king. . . ." The possibility that commoners in the United States might even become head of state was fascinating to many Japanese at this time. The passage above ends with an admission by Perry of America's sole problem: a lack of sufficient food. It is for this reason that Perry has come to Japan seeking trade.

The *namazu*'s response reiterates the view of America as a land characterized by its mode of government and contrasts it with Japan's distinctive quality:

Shut up Perry. No matter how often you brag that your federation [*gasshū koku*] is a country of benevolence, if you don't have food you must be poor. If America had the Buddha or the gods, then you would have a good harvest of the five grains. But since you don't, you have to depend on piracy and steal your food. Knowing this, the gods of our country have gathered together and have caused a divine wind to blow and sink your ships and those of the Russians.⁶⁵ For sure in the eleventh month of last year the gods struck out against your rudeness. . . .

intact. The damage was less a function of proximity to the epicenter than it was a function of topography. The Yamanote Tablelands, an extension of the Musashino Plateau, wound their way through parts of the heart of Edo, constituting modest upland areas. These upland areas were not always obvious because of erosion and past filling with soil or debris of low lying areas. In 1590, when Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616) made the fishing village of Edo his base of operations, engineers and construction workers began to reclaim the marshy tidal flats around Edo Castle. This process accelerated rapidly during the early seventeenth century, after Edo had become the de facto political capital of Japan. Edo Castle itself was on natural high ground, but much of the prime real estate around the castle was land that had been part of a river drainage basin or the bay two or three centuries earlier—only yesterday in geological time.

When the earthquake struck, it shook the whole city, but structures on the firm foundation of the uplands generally fared rather well. The severe damage was in low lying areas, especially areas of land reclaimed from swamps and waterways. As fate would have it, the most prominent neighborhood of *samurai* residences, home to the bakufu's closest allies among the domain lords, leading bakufu officials, and several key bakufu offices, was located at a place that during the sixteenth century had been the Hibiya Inlet of Edo Bay. The Wadakura Gate, for example, one of the approaches to Edo Castle, had once been the site of an underwater storehouse. Adjacent to this gate was the mansion of the lord of Aizu, charged with construction and management of the number two offshore artillery battery. The earthquake spared no part of the Aizu complex, and the stores of potassium nitrate and other explosives accumulated there made the inevitable fires all the more spectacular in their destructive fury. The same fate befell Aizu's neighbor, in charge of the number three battery, and most of the other denizens of this elite neighborhood. In short, the earthquake launched a direct attack on the government. Moving one residential zone further out from the castle, the area adjacent to the elite neighborhood was home to commoners. Built on an eroded but sturdy tableland base, it suffered only moderate damage and stood in stark contrast to the elite collapse. The bakufu's expensive offshore artillery batteries also happened to be built on a foundation of flimsy soil, and their complete destruction rendered Edo defenseless against intimidation by steam-powered naval vessels. In the eyes of commoners and elites alike, the cosmic forces made a strong statement that night.⁶⁷

Given that the earthquake itself was an event fraught with political significance, it is hardly surprising that the bakufu would have been uneasy about Edo's residents discussing it through the medium of *namazu-e*. The bakufu, however, had more pressing concerns during the earthquake's immediate aftermath than popular media production. In the early days of the twelfth month, bakufu officials began actively seeking to ban the production of *namazu-e*. The publishing guild (*toiya*) was reluctant to enforce a ban on such a profitable product, and tried various delaying strategies. Nevertheless, increasingly severe bakufu intimidation, including briefly jailing nine guild officials, led to the destruction of all *namazu-e* printing blocks on the fourteenth day. The *namazu-e* had been in production for about two months.⁶⁸

Abe points out that the key to understanding the bakufu's forceful ban is realizing that *namazu-e* were not frivolous amusements or even simply a "reflection"

Here we see a clear conception of Japan as a land characterized by the presence of benevolent deities, with the Ansei Earthquake being an attempt by these deities to shake off the foreign presence. Abe points out that just as some *namazu-e* portrayed the Kashima deity as inadequate to deal with the current crisis and thus in need of augmentation from outside deities, here too is a similar view. The only force that might balance the power of Perry and the new foreigners was the collective body of the deities of Japan. Significantly, the dialogue has extended the Ansei Earthquake in Edo to encompass all of Japan, as several other *namazu-e* have done.⁶⁶ The imagined community "Japan" was beginning to emerge in the popular imagination of Edo, and it was divine.

Perry responds by invoking the American spirit: "You catfish! It is funny for you to speak like that, making up your own reasoning. Despite the fact that men can usually hold you down with a gourd, on the fourth day of the eleventh month you tried to send us away by shaking Shimazu and Numazu, but our American spirit remained unmoved." In this way, the dialogue articulates a clear contrast between an American spirit, manifest as a relatively egalitarian, merit-based society, and the community of Japan, blessed by an array of benevolent deities. It may be significant that there is no mention here of government in Japan. The implied contrast is thus between an aggressive America with an effective government and a Japan, whose government is *not* effective and whose people must therefore turn to the deities. This dialogue adumbrated both the idea of Japan as a community extending beyond Edo and the need of this community for divine intervention. Faint outlines of what will become the Meiji Restoration and, slightly later, popular consciousness of Japan as a divinely-authorized nation have emerged from the wreckage of post-earthquake Edo.

The print, however, stops well short of advocating any further shakeup of society. The referee, a plasterer, gets in the last words:

Both of you be quiet . . . look with your eyes and see the cracks in the warehouses. We are asked to patch up these cracks and holes, asked over and over again; we are asked to prop up the broken down walls; we are known for our fine work with the trowel. Everyone admires our work. We are thankful this time for the earthquake, but both of you try to resolve your differences without causing us any more trouble. We don't want to see it; stop it!

The plasterer's view here was probably typical of many Edo laborers. For the most part, they were happy with the immediate post-earthquake situation, although the process of arriving at that point had been tumultuous, terrifying, and, for some, deadly. So, while thankful for the recent earthquake, these residents of Edo hoped for an end to major upheavals in the near future. We know from hindsight, of course, that the wheels of change were just starting to turn.

Broader Significance of the Earthquake and the *Namazu-e*

A remarkable coincidence between geology, geography, and politics magnified the psychological impact of the earthquake, making it appear as a direct attack on the heart of the bakufu. The damage was not uniformly distributed. Some areas suffered severe devastation and loss of life, while other parts of the city came through the ordeal with nearly all buildings and people shaken but

of prevailing conditions. Instead, they were the medium by which the common people of Edo actively articulated alternative visions of society, several of which we have seen in the preceding discussion. None of the prints explicitly criticized the bakufu, but they expressed doubts regarding the viability of prevailing political and social arrangements and suggested, albeit vaguely, alternatives for which people might yearn.⁶⁹

Especially significant for subsequent developments in Japan was the emergence of what we might call proto-nationalism at the popular level in Edo. Japan at this time was a patchwork of over two hundred fifty different governments, with marked regional differences. It was not a centralized state, nor did all of its inhabitants share a common culture. Social elites, regardless of geographical origin, usually did identify with a larger entity of "Japan" to some degree, but most ordinary people lacked a self-conscious Japanese identity. Their identities were primarily local, even though travel and information networks permitted an awareness of places far from their own homes.⁷⁰ Tokugawa Japan was not a modern nation in the sense of the term popularized by scholars such as E. J. Hobsbawm, Ernest Gellner, and Benedict Anderson.⁷¹ Some of the infrastructure needed to create a modern nation, such as transportation networks, newspapers, and sufficient literacy to read them, existed in some places, but other key elements such as school systems and a centralized state were missing. The pressing task of the new Meiji government after establishing basic institutions of state during the 1870s was to "make Japanese,"⁷² that is, to instill in Japan's population a self-conscious national identity. Accomplishing this task took only one generation, even though it did not produce a unified agreement on precisely *what* Japanese identity entailed.⁷³ The stimulation of proto-nationalism in Edo owing to the Ansei Earthquake was one contributing factor to the speed and success of this later undertaking.

The most important elements in this proto-nationalism were an emerging cognizance among Edo's common people that their lives were linked in significant ways with people who lived elsewhere in the Japanese islands and the recognition of Amaterasu as the ultimate representative of this imagined community among the deities. One talismanic *namazu-e*,⁷⁴ for example, features four *namazu* in the foreground, each with north, south, east, or west written on its robes. The four directions, along with the presence of the deities of earth and water (wells), emphasize the broad geographic scope of the earthquake's impact. Amaterasu is in charge of the situation (with an embarrassed-looking Kashima assisting) and declares that he is foremost among the deities of Great Japan. The *namazu* subsequently swear an oath to protect all of Japan.

In addition to the prints we have previously examined, several others explicitly describe the earthquake's impact as "echoing throughout Japan" (*Nippon e hibiki*) or otherwise having an impact on Japan, not Edo. They also associate Amaterasu explicitly with this entity called Japan. Kashima is certainly a key player, even in most prints featuring Amaterasu, but Kashima's authority is regional in scope, inadequate to deal with the Japan-wide problem of the day.⁷⁵ Yet another print features Tentō, whose head is the sun. Tentō is a term meaning both "sun" and "heavenly way," and is a synonym for Amaterasu in this print. A crowd has gathered, some of whom worship Tentō. Others attack Kashima with their fists and push over the foundation stone.⁷⁶ This example is atypical

in its extreme portrayal of violence toward Kashima, but the key point is that it and numerous other *namazu-e* we have examined indicate an emerging consciousness of Japan as a natural community, a recognition of Amaterasu as its head, and, to varying degrees, an acknowledgement of at least the possibility of radical, even violent change.

M. William Steele has described what he calls “a sort of commoner nationalism” in the popular press accounts of Perry’s extended stay in Japan in the spring of 1854. They typically portrayed the Americans in crude terms, showing them succumbing to the superior power of the people or the deities of “Japan.” Furthermore, Perry’s visit inspired graphic renditions of world maps, with Japan at the center.⁷⁷ The *namazu-e*, therefore, were not the earliest manifestation of proto-nationalism among Edo’s population. They do, however, adumbrate a generally more sophisticated view of the emerging imagined community than the prints Steele describes. Abe characterizes the image of Japan that emerged in the *namazu-e* by using an ancient East Asian metaphor for the political community, the tripod vessel. The *namazu-e* that deal with national images express a triumvirate of national soil (*kokudo*), that is, the physical territory of Japan, the national deities (*kokushin*), and the national sovereign (*kimi*), whose precise identity is never stated. These three elements are the legs of the tripod.⁷⁸

Following Abe and Steele we find that by the end of 1855, many residents of Edo thought of Japan in terms of specific territory, albeit with imprecise boundaries in the north and south. A geographical sense of Japanese identity appeared frequently in the press reports of 1854. The *namazu-e* add to this geographic view a nuanced portrayal of the relationship among the land, the people, and the deities. They presage many of the themes that the new Meiji state would soon emphasize and further develop. That such a vision of Japan was already present among the people of Edo was undoubtedly a boon for the new imperial government in its bid to establish itself in a city that owed its very existence to the Tokugawa bakufu.⁷⁹ The Meiji state would expend much effort to inculcate an emperor-centered national consciousness in many other cities and in the countryside during the late nineteenth century, but the process got a head start in the capital, owing in large part to the Ansei Earthquake. That head start, however, did not include a strong consciousness of the emperor as an earthly political ruler. The linkage between Amaterasu and the emperor in the *namazu-e* ranges from vague to nonexistent. Indeed, it is probably significant that many *namazu-e* speak of an earthly ruler (*kimi*) but give no concrete indication who that ruler may be (except for one, which mentions the emperor, shōgun, and domain lords all together). As Abe points out, imagining a Japanese identity in which the political ruler was an unspecified abstraction was surely appropriate in post-earthquake 1855.⁸⁰

There is one final point to consider regarding the political significance of the Ansei Earthquake and *namazu-e*. That the earthquake was a blow to bakufu finances, power, and prestige in 1855 should now be clear. It is also possible that this event entered popular memory and exerted a significant destabilizing effect twelve years later, in 1867, the year the bakufu actually collapsed. The print *Kashima osore* (Kashima fear, Figure 10)⁸¹ portrays people dancing around a *namazu* dressed as an itinerant representative of the Kashima shrine. These representatives would wander the countryside each spring to encourage quasi-

Figure 10
Kashima osore
 Kashima fear



religious dancing in anticipation of the start of the agricultural cycle (*Kashima odor* or *Kashima kotofure*). Six men and a boy dance around the *namazu* in a state of apparent rapture. The *namazu* is holding a pole with a solar disk at its top. A rabbit in a disk would ordinarily signify the moon in East Asia, but the color of this disk is red, and 1855 was the year of the rabbit. It was also the *okage-doshi*, the one year in twelve when people traditionally made pilgrimages (*okagemairi*) to the Ise Shrine (Amaterasu) in large numbers.⁸² These pilgrimages often featured frenzied dancing, carousing, drinking, and other elements of a carnival-like atmosphere.

George M. Wilson has analyzed the years leading up to the Meiji Restoration using a structuralist framework that plots simultaneous narratives for four different groups: commoners, *samurai* imperial loyalists (advocates of “expelling the barbarians”), bakufu and domain officials, and foreign envoys. His approach stresses the motives and self interests of each group, and allows us rather easily to see convergences and clashes between the groups in a way that usefully eschews traditional cause and effect explanations for these inter-group interactions. Wilson is especially concerned with acknowledging the significant role played by ordinary people in the Meiji Restoration, as the interests of groups of commoners seeking world rectification converged briefly ca. 1866–1868 with *samurai* loyalists seeking roughly the same outcome of redeeming society. Wilson has much to say about the widespread, “orgiastic” *ee ja nai ka* dancing that broke out in many parts of central Japan toward the end of 1867 and lingered into 1868, sparked by rumors of paper charms falling from the sky. The dancing functioned, among other things, dramatically to display the breakdown of the old order and the yearning of the common people for reform.⁸³

Ee ja nai ka dancing was centered in Kyoto, although it took place across a wide range of towns, cities, and rural villages. It did not take place in Edo, which by this time had suffered severe population decline and economic depression owing to repeated natural disasters and epidemics and because the bakufu eliminated *samurai* alternate attendance in 1862.⁸⁴ Like Wilson, Noguchi stresses the political significance of the *ee ja nai ka* dancing. He also points to a variety of fragmentary evidence indicating that at least some of the dancers in 1867 were cognizant that during the previous *okage-doshi*, a world rectifying earthquake shook Edo. A song ditty, for example, playing on the homonyms “self” and “earthquake,” points out that twelve years ago an earthquake (*jishin*) half destroyed the military houses, and that this year, the military houses will complete that task by themselves (*jishin*). Noguchi points out that the conviction on the part of many people that this *okage* year (1867) would again feature momentous change on a par with the 1855 earthquake became in part a self-fulfilling prophecy.⁸⁵ Abe also discusses similarities in the rhetoric and themes of some of the *namazu-e* and the songs of the *ee ja nai kai* dancers.⁸⁶

The reverberations of the Ansei Earthquake of 1855 continued long after the earth stopped shaking. The event functioned as a catalyst for growing doubts about the bakufu’s ability to govern, doubts that had first emerged in the wake of Perry’s visits. It also catalyzed among the common people of Edo an emerging vision of Japan as a natural political community blessed by the deities. The *namazu-e* were the means by which the common people adumbrated this new vision. Abe characterizes the prints as a handy, cheap, disposable tool for help-

ing to create Japan as a nation.⁸⁷ I agree with this characterization but would also highlight the high degree of linguistic and visual sophistication evident in many of these prints. *Namazu-e* constituted a powerful form of political rhetoric for a group theoretically forbidden from engaging in political discourse. Edo was in temporary decline at the time the bakufu collapsed, and its residents were on the political sidelines. Owing in large part to the role of the *namazu-e* in defining the 1855 earthquake as a world rectifying event in popular memory, it was able to inspire acts of political protest and subversion by thousands of frenzied dancers in Kyoto and throughout wide areas of central Japan twelve years later. The anonymous print makers of Edo posited that the earthquake under their city had shaken up all of Japan, and they were right.

Department of History and Religious Studies
University Park, PA 16802

ENDNOTES

University of Washington research scientist Ruth Ludwin provided helpful comments on an earlier draft of this article. Discussions with her about the intersection of earthquakes and culture in 2004 led to my current interest in the social history of earthquakes in Japan. This article also benefited from the astute comments of an anonymous reader and from a faculty research grant from the Institute for the Arts and Humanities at Penn State University.

1. The full, quasi-official name for this earthquake in many English-language publications is the Ansei Tokyo Earthquake (*Ansei Tōkyō jishin*), even though Edo was never called Tokyo until 1868. For this reason most Japanese scholars call it the Ansei Edo Earthquake (*Ansei Edo jishin*) or simply the Ansei Earthquake (*Ansei jishin*), and it occasionally appears as the Great Ansei Earthquake (*Ansei dai-jishin*). Ansei is an imperial reign name (*nengō*) and refers to the period 1854–1859. There were several other major earthquakes during the Ansei era, each distinguished by a different place name. The newspapers of the time described the details of the Ansei Earthquake. Reproductions and summaries of these newspaper accounts are available in the many Japanese works dealing with the popular press during the Tokugawa period (1603–1867). See, for example, Inagaki Fumio, ed., *Edo no taihen: jishin, kaminari, kaji, kaibutsu* (Pivotal events in Edo: earthquakes, lightning, fires, and monsters) (Tokyo, 1995), p. 64; and Kitahara Itoko, “Ansei dai-jishin” (The Great Ansei Earthquake) in Kinoshita Naoyuki and Yoshimi Shunya, eds., *Nyūsu no tanjō: kawaraban to shinbun nishiki-e no jōhōsekai* (Birth of the news: the information world of the popular press and visual images) (Tokyo, 1999), pp. 154–155. Regarding the number of buildings destroyed, see also Susan B. Hanley, *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan: The Hidden Legacy of Material Culture* (Berkeley, 1997), p. 24. For a detailed geological account of the earthquake and the damage it caused, see Usami Tatsuo, *Nihon higai jishin sōran, [416]-2001* (Materials for a comprehensive list of destructive earthquakes in Japan, [416]-2001) (Tokyo, 2003), pp. 171–182. For comprehensive social histories of the earthquake, see Kitahara Itoko, *Jishin no shakaishi: Ansei dai-jishin to minshū* (The social history of an earthquake: the Great Ansei Earthquake and the people) (Tokyo, 2000); and Noguchi Takehiko, *Ansei Edo jishin: saigai to seiji kenryoku* (The Ansei Edo Earthquake: calamity and political authority) (Tokyo, 1997).

2. Konta Yōzō, "Bakumatsu masu-media jōhō" (Bakumatsu-era mass media information) in Miyata Noboru and Takada Mamoru, eds., *Namazu-e: Jishin to Nihon bunka* (Catfish picture prints: earthquakes and Japanese culture) (Tokyo, 1995), pp. 77–78.
3. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 11–12.
4. *Namazu-e and Their Themes: An Interpretative Approach to Some Aspects of Japanese Folk Religion* (Leiden, Netherlands, 1964). This study has relatively little to say about the *namazu-e* themselves and is instead a thick description of the matrix of folk beliefs in which the *namazu-e* were embedded.
5. Some of H.D. Harootunian's extensive work on the Bakumatsu era (ca. 1830–1867) examines events from the standpoint of ordinary urban dwellers. See, for example, "Late Tokugawa Thought and Culture" in Marius B. Jansen, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan: Volume 5, The Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1989), esp. pp. 168–182. George M. Wilson has argued forcefully for the importance of including ordinary people in any account of the events leading up to the Meiji Restoration, and he outlines a method for doing so in *Patriots and Redeemers in Japan: Motives in the Meiji Restoration* (Chicago, 1982). Thomas Keirstead and Deidre Lynch have raised the possibility of alternative views of the end of the Tokugawa bakufu, in part by looking at events through the eyes of ordinary city dwellers. See "Eijanaika: Japanese Modernization and the Carnival of Time" in Robert A. Rosenstone, ed., *Revisioning History: Film and the Construction of a New Past* (Princeton, NJ, 1995), pp. 64–76. M. William Steele has examined Bakumatsu Japan through the eyes of various commoner groups, including urban dwellers. See *Alternative Narratives in Modern Japanese History* (New York, 2003).
6. Kitahara points out that the term *yonaooshi* first appeared in connection with earthquakes after an earthquake and tsunami disrupted commerce between Edo and Osaka during the second month of 1853. At that time, people chanted "*yonaooshi*" as an incantation to ward off further shaking. By late 1855, the term's meaning had expanded to indicate an active desire for the rectification of society. *Jishin no shakaishi*, pp. 98–99.
7. Harold Bolitho, "The Tempō Crisis" in Marius B. Jansen, ed., *The Cambridge History of Japan: Volume 5, The Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1989), pp. 120–121; and Conrad Totman, *Early Modern Japan* (Berkeley, 1993), pp. 442–445.
8. Wilson, *Patriots and Redeemers*. More specifically, Wilson argues that a quest for redemption motivated two key groups in *bakumatsu* Japan: activists among the common people and samurai imperial loyalists. Although these two groups quickly became antagonists after the Meiji Restoration, their dreams of world renewal and redemption briefly complemented each other to help bring about the bakufu's downfall.
9. Gerald Groemer, "Singing the News: Yomiuri in Japan during the Edo and Meiji Periods," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (June, 1994): 245.
10. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 18, 43–44, 63–64; and Abe Yasunari, "Namazu-e no ue no Amaterasu" (Amaterasu in the *namazu-e*), *Shisō*, no. 912 (June, 2000): 25–52.
11. The seminal study of Tokugawa-period foreign relations is Ronald Toby, *State and Diplomacy in Early Modern Japan: Asia in the Development of the Tokugawa Bakufu* (Princeton, NJ, 1984). There is now a substantial literature in English and Japanese on Tokugawa-period foreign relations.

12. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, p. 64

13. The print was *Ukiyo Matabei meiga kitoku* (The miracle of famous paintings by Ukiyo Matabei) by Utagawa Kuniyoshi. According to Sarah E. Thompson: "The legendary painter Ukiyo Matabei (1578–1680), is shown making folk paintings of the type called *ōtsu-e*, a forerunner of *ukiyo-e*. The paintings have come to life, leaving only shadowy outlines on the paper, and dance around the painter in a cloud; . . . The word *kan* concealed in the pattern of the falconer's left sleeve was interpreted as a reference to the irritable temperament (*kanshaku*) of the shogun. The other figures were identified with the various advisers surrounding [the shōgun] Iesada, and the whole was seen as a vaguely derogatory reference to the new governing powers. Kuniyoshi and his publisher were fined." "The Politics of Japanese Prints," in Sarah E. Thompson and H.D. Harootunian, *Undercurrents of the Floating World: Censorship and Japanese Prints* (New York, 1991), p. 83.

14. Kitani Makoto, "Kurobune to jishin-namazu: namazu-e no fūdo to jidai" ([Perry's] black ships and the earthquake *namazu*: the customs and temporal context of *namazu-e*) in Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 56–57. By the nineteenth century, the image of pinning down a catfish with a gourd had become a well-known metaphor for accomplishing something so difficult as to seem impossible. In some contexts, it might also highlight the magic power of bottle-gourds. The earliest painting depicting an attempt to pin down a catfish with a gourd is Josetsu's ca. 1413 *Hyōnenzu* (Illustration of catfish and gourd). For a thorough, revisionist analysis of its context, meaning, and iconography, see Shimaō Arata, *Josetsu-hitsu Hyōnenzu: Hyōtan namazu no ikonoroji* (Josetsu's *Hyōnenzu*: the iconology of the gourd catfish) (Tokyo, 1996).

15. For the geological details of this earthquake, see Usami, *Jishin sōran*, pp. 131–132.

16. Quoted in Bolitho, "Tempō Crisis," p. 117.

17. Sarah E. Thompson points out that during the Tokugawa period, "Any mention of current news events, especially those of a sensational nature, was prohibited. . . . There was also the possibility for implied criticism of the government in the reporting of current events, especially given the ancient notion, imported from China, that a truly virtuous regime would be so completely uneventful that even natural disasters would not occur. The suppression of news reporting may have been due in part to a desire to suggest this ideal condition." Thompson, "Politics of Japanese Prints," p. 34.

18. Kitahara has analyzed news networks in much of her work on the popular press. See, for example, "Ansei dai-jishin," especially the graphic on p. 157, and Kitahara Itoko, "Saigai to kwaraban: sono rekishitekitenkai" (Natural disasters and the popular press: their historical development) in Kinoshita Naoyuki and Yoshimi Shunya, *Nyūsu no tanjō*, pp. 25–43. Konta has also analyzed these networks in "Bakumatsu masu-media jōhō," as has Groemer, "Singing the News." See also Steele's chapter "Goemon's New World View" in *Alternative Narratives*, pp. 4–18.

19. For the geological data and a detailed breakdown of death, injury, and destruction throughout the area affected by the earthquake, see Usami, *Jishin sōran*, pp. 137–144. For a discussion of the significance of the Zenkōji Earthquake in the development of information networks, see Kitahara, *Jishin no shakaishi*, pp. 94–97.

20. Nishimaki Kōzaburō, ed., *Kawaraban, shinbun: Edo, Meiji sanbyakunen jiken 1* (Kawaraban and modern newspapers: 300 events from the Edo and Meiji periods, vol. 1) (Tokyo, 1978), p. 126.
21. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, p. 18.
22. Nishimaki, *Kawaraban*, p. 140; and Kitahara “Saigai to kawaraban,” p. 32. The stated death toll of 3,780 seems high, even considering the fires. Usami’s data puts the number of dead and seriously injured at 2,152. Property damage, however, was severe and extensive. Usami, *Jishin sōran*, pp. 146–148.
23. Kitahara, “Saigai to kawaraban,” p. 33; and Usami, *Jishin sōran*, pp. 148–151.
24. For accounts from the popular press, see Inagaki, *Edo no taihen*, pp. 60–61; and Kitahara “Saigai to kawaraban,” pp. 34–37. For the geological details of these earthquakes and the tsunamis resulting from them, see Usami, *Jishin sōran*, pp. 151–168; and Watanabe Hideo, *Nihon higai tsunami sōran, dai-ni han* (A comprehensive listing of tsunamis striking Japan, second edition) (Tokyo, 1998), pp. 91–97.
25. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, p. 39.
26. Wakamizu Suguru, *Namazu wa odoru: Edo no namazu-e omoshiro bunseki* (Catfish dance: a distinctive analysis of namazu-e) (Tokyo, 2003), pp. 16–17.
27. Kitahara, “Saigai to kawaraban,” pp. 32–33.
28. #134, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 10–11, 322–324. Because Miyata and Takada have gathered nearly all extant *namazu-e* into a single volume, I follow Abe Yasunari’s practice of indicating specific *namazu-e* by their number in that volume.
29. #84, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 296–297; and Abe, “Amaterasu,” pp. 42–43.
30. Wakamizu, *Namazu wa odoru*, p. 17.
31. Mitaya Noboru, “Toshi minzokugaku kara mita namazu shinkō” (The development of *namazu* belief as seen from the perspective of urban ethnology) in Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 29–30. In many Japanese accounts, dragons and *namazu* were interchangeable, and sometimes we find an image of a dragon with accompanying text that refers to it as a “*namazu*.” For details on when and how this dragon-*namazu* equivalency developed, see Shimao, *Hyōnenzu*, pp. 66–81.
32. Miyata, “Toshi minzokugaku,” pp. 30–31; and Kitani, “Kurobune to jishin-namazu,” pp. 52–55.
33. Kuroda Hideo, *Ō no karada; ō no shōzō* (The body of the king, the image of the king), (Tokyo, 1993), pp. 160–161.
34. Kitahara, “Ansei dai-jishin,” p. 163.
35. #37, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 110, 262.
36. Big Dipper belief (*hokuto shinkō*) came into Japan as part of early popular Daoism, circa the Heian period (794–1185). The basic belief is that the stars are deities, the most important of which are the Pole Star and the Big Dipper constellation. This star-related

belief also came to be associated with wish-granting spirit writing talismans (*chintaku reifu shinkō*). See Ōmori Takashi, ed., *Dōkyō no hon: furōfushi o mezasu sendō-shukujutsu no sekai* (Daoism book: the world of esoteric techniques aimed at attaining youth and immortality) (Tokyo, 1991, 1997), pp. 164–171.

37. Kitani Makoto, “Namazu-e to yakuharai” in Tsuchiura shiritsu hakubutsukan (Tsuchiura City Museum), ed., *Namazu-e kenbunroku: Ō-Edo bakumatsu namazu-e jijō* (The record and circumstances of *namazu-e* in Edo of the bakumatsu period) (Tsuchiura, Japan, 1999), pp. 41–42, 46–48.

38. #44, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 106, 266.

39. In this capacity, Ebisu was acting as a *rusu(i)gami*, that is, a caretaker deity who stands in for the main deity of a place. This need for a substitute arises from the belief that all the major deities travel to Izumo for a meeting that takes place during the tenth lunar month. This month is known as *kannazuki* or *kaminazuki*—“the month without deities.” Although often depicted as good-natured, Ebisu’s origins are complex and contain a dark side that can manifest itself in certain circumstances. For a detailed explanation of these matters, see Ouwehand, *Namazu-e*, pp. 16, 82–85.

40. Wakamizu, *Namazu wa odoru*, pp. 70.

41. T. Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy: Power and Pageantry in Modern Japan* (Berkeley, 1996), pp. 1–9.

42. #30, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 112, 257. #31, pp. 112, 258 is very similar.

43. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, p. 194; and Abe, “Amaterasu,” pp. 37–38.

44. For a trenchant analysis of the *ei ja nai ka* phenomenon, see Wilson, *Patriots and Redeemers*, esp. pp. 95–121.

45. #29, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, p. 257. For analysis of this image, see Abe, “Amaterasu,” p. 40.

46. #32, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 258–60.

47. Abe, “Amaterasu,” pp. 41–42.

48. This point is one of Abe’s main arguments in “Amaterasu.” Abe takes issue with most other scholars of *namazu-e* regarding their emphasis. While not denying the importance of the theme of the earthquake as a world rectification (*yonaooshi*) event in many prints, he says that an excessive focus on this point has prevented adequate treatment of other, equally important themes.

49. #48, also called “Namazu e no korashime” because the print itself has no title. Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 268–269.

50. #62, Takada and Miyata, *Namazu-e*, pp. 18–19, 278–280.

51. Wakamizu, *Namazu wa odoru*, pp. 62–65; and Takada and Miyata, *Namazu-e*, pp. 278–280.

52. See, for example, #110 and 111, Takada and Miyata, *Namazu-e*, p. 138, 311–312.

53. *Yamaga Sokō gorui* (Classified statements of Yamaga Sokō), Tahara Tsuguo and Morimoto Jun'ichirō, eds., *Yamaga Sokō, Nihon shisō taikai* (Great compendium of Japanese thought series) 32 (Tokyo, 1970), p. 152.
54. *Kadōkun* (Household precepts), Ekken-kai, eds., *Ekken zenshū* (Collected works of Kaibara Ekken), Vol. 3 (Tokyo, 1911), p. 452.
55. #195, Takada and Miyata, *Namazu-e*, pp. 222, 356–357.
56. #92, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 224, 300–301; and Wakamizu, *Namazu wa odoru*, pp. 60–61.
57. For a discussion of these wages, see Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 201–205.
58. Kitani, “Kurobune,” p. 58.
59. For example, see #126 and #127, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 110, 231, 319–320.
60. #131, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 8, 321.
61. Abe, “Amaterasu,” pp. 29–32.
62. #191, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, p. 355
63. #142, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 236, 327–328.
64. Translation of the text of this print is found in Peter Duus, *The Japanese Discovery of America: A Brief History with Documents* (New York, 1997) and in Steele, *Alternative Narratives*, pp. 16–17.
65. The reference to “the Russians” is almost certainly about the *Diana*, the Russian warship damaged by the tsunami resulting from the Ansei Tōkai Earthquake. While it was in transit to Heta on the Izu peninsula to undergo repairs, a violent storm arose and sunk it. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 67–68.
66. Abe, “Amaterasu,” pp. 32–34. Abe also discusses another print that posits the earthquake as an attempt by the *namazu* to strike out at the foreigners who have lately come to Japan, pp. 34–35. Again the main point for our purposes is that the earthquake, in some instances, has led to the explicit self-conscious identification by Edo residents of membership in the entity “Japan.”
67. Noguchi provides a masterful and detailed analysis of this remarkable convergence among geology, geography, and politics. See *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 73–108. There were commoner neighborhoods elsewhere in the city that did suffer severe damage, but not around Edo Castle. For a detailed discussion of the earthquake damage as a function of social status, see Kitahara, *Jishin no shakaishi*, pp. 45–79.
68. For details of the maneuvering leading up to the ban and printing block destruction, see Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 205–208.
69. Abe, “Amaterasu,” pp. 46–47.

70. For a good summary of the situation in late Tokugawa Japan with respect to self images, see Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy*, esp. pp. 1–9.
71. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge, UK, 1990); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY, 1983); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Revised Edition (New York, 1991).
72. I use the expression “make Japanese” in the same sense as Massimo d’Azeglio, who, after Italy’s unification in 1860, made his famous remark that “We have made Italy; we now have to make Italians.”
73. For a superb study of the competing views of Japanese national identity prior to the 1940s, see Eiji Oguma, *A Genealogy of ‘Japanese’ Self-Images*, David Askew, trans. (Melbourne, Australia, 2002).
74. #68, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 111, 284–285.
75. See #66 and #81, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 110, 282–283, 295. Abe provides a trenchant analysis of them. See, “Amaterasu,” pp. 37–40.
76. #43, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 109, 265–266. See also Abe, “Amaterasu,” pp. 43–44.
77. Steele, *Alternative Narratives*, pp. 4–18.
78. Abe, “Amaterasu,” p. 45.
79. For excellent studies of commoner views of and reactions to the Meiji Restoration in and around Edo, see Steele, *Alternative Narratives*, pp. 32–87.
80. Abe, “Amaterasu,” p. 45.
81. #191, Miyata and Takada, *Namazu-e*, pp. 17, 355.
82. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 212–216.
83. Wilson, *Patriots and Redeemers*, esp. Chapter Six, “What the Hell! Ee ja nai ka Dancing as a Form of Protest,” pp. 95–131.
84. For an account of the continuous barrage of storms and plagues that hit Edo almost every year after 1855, see Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 216–222.
85. Noguchi, *Ansei Edo jishin*, pp. 225–229.
86. Abe, “Amaterasu,” p. 48.
87. Abe, “Amaterasu,” p. 50.