

A Representation of India in the Early Edo Period of Japan

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Introduction: Tenjiku and Sangoku-Sekaikan

This paper is concerned with the hugeness of India for the worldview of Japanese people in the Edo period.

Firstly, chapter one is an introduction that contains some background information. Secondly, the present writer is going to pick up two books as examples. The one is *Zouho-Kaitsushoukou* (増補華夷通商考, 1708, henceforth abbreviated as ZK) by Nishikawa Joken (西川如見),¹ and the other is *Wakansansaizue* (和漢三才図会, 1713, henceforth abbreviated as WS) by Terajima Ryoan (寺島良安).² Chapter three will focus on the maps that these two writers inserted in their books. Then, some names and description of India in their books will be examined in chapter four. Final chapter will draw a brief conclusion.

Historically, the Japanese people divided the entire world into three parts: Honcho (本朝, Japan), Kara or Tou (唐, China), and Tenjiku (天竺, India). This worldview is called Sangoku-Sekaikan (三国世界観), which means three countries worldview.³ India has been called by several names, such as *Indo* (印度), *Shindo* (身毒), and *Kendo* (乾豆), all of which referred to India, but Tenjiku was the most widely circulated in Japan.⁴ Beginning with the introduction of Buddhism to Japan in 6th century, Tenjiku became a well-known place for many people because it was where Buddhism originated. From that time onward, Tenjiku was continuously recited as part of various kinds of imaginative narratives for example, 'Konjyaku Monogatari-shu' (今昔物語集) in the medieval period.

No one had been able to reach the real Tenjiku until modern times. However, pilgrimage to Tenjiku was greatly desired by many people, especially monks.⁵ Tenjiku was embellished by the imagination, and people easily believed that it was a magnificent location. In a manner of speaking, Tenjiku was not considered to be part of the real world; it was somewhere like 'a paradise' or 'a utopia' for ancient Japanese people.⁶

Another important aspect of Tenjiku in ancient Japanese consciousness is that it was recognized as a "civilized" country, other than China. We can say that the existence of Tenjiku functioned in the relativization of China, which was a great and civilized "the other" for the Japanese people.⁷

In the Edo period, as new knowledge about world geography was introduced to Japan

mainly through Western missionaries, their old understanding of the world in other words, Sangoku-Sekaikan gradually declined, and a new understanding was developed. According to this new understanding, which was called Godaishu (五大州), the world consisted of five parts: Asia (亜細亞), Europe (歐羅巴), Libya (利未亜, Africa), America (亜米利加), and Megaranica (墨瓦蠟泥加, the 'terra incognita' in the south).⁸

There were being written and published several books containing new understanding of the world in Edo period. However, when we consider these books, it becomes clear that Japanese people continued to prefer the more traditional understanding of the world, which is Sangoku-Sekaikan containing the existence of Tenjiku.⁹

1. Joken and Ryoan

Nishikawa Joken is an astronomer who was born in Nagasaki, a city that had been considered the only open entrance to the world for many years during the so-called Sakoku period.¹⁰ ZK was one of his representative works and was used instructively as a book of world geography.¹¹ It contains world maps and lists 98 countries along with some description of their climate, people, direction from Japan, products, etc. Volumes 1 to 4 were sourced from the book *Ikokufudoki* (異国風土記), believed to have been written by using collected information circulating in Nagasaki.¹² Volume 5 was an enlarged part that was based mainly on the *Shokuhougaiki* (職方外紀), a work by Gulio Alleni, an Italian missionary in China.¹³

Terajima Ryoan is a physician in Osaka; however, the details of his career are still unclear. WS is a sort of encyclopedia that consists of 105 volumes. Volumes 13 and 14 contain facts about the world, and list 190 countries with pictures of the people living there. Volume 55 is about geography, it contains world and regional maps as well. Considering the fact that this work was collected by a large number of major libraries and was still published in large numbers in the Meiji era, it is presumed that WS was circulated throughout the Edo period.¹⁴

These two books had a large influence on Japanese people of that time in terms of their worldview. Joken and Ryoan were in the forefront of those who acknowledged new understanding of the world, like Godaishu framework. However, when we consider the works of those two intellectuals, it becomes clear that they continued to prefer Sangoku-Sekaikan.

It is not quite sure about the purpose of these works. But what I can imagine here is that although Tokugawa Shogunate had a so-called Sakoku Policy which restricted the contact with the other country, there had been lots of information coming from the outside of Japan. People had to explain these kind of new information especially information about other countries.

2. Tenjiku in world maps

Historically, Tenjiku was imagined on the map like *Gotenjikuzu* (五天竺図). ‘Go-Tenjiku’ literally means five Tenjiku. This comes from the ancient geographical division of India, which was north, south, east, west, and center. *Gotenjikuzu* was created in order to place the Japanese islands and China on Nansenbushu (南瞻部洲) or Jambudvipa, an imaginary India, narrated by the Buddhist worldview.¹⁵ This means that *Gotenjikuzu* is a map visualizing Sangoku-Sekaikan. On *Gotenjikuzu*, Tenjiku is a huge egg-like elliptical shape that dominates nearly the entire world. China and Japan are northeast of Tenjiku, disproportionately small. However, when we consider the maps from the works of Joken and Ryoan, different perspectives of Tenjiku emerge.

On the one hand, in ZK we can see the world map called *Chikyubankokuichirannozu* (『地球萬國一覽之図』, Map of the globe and whole world). Although it is quite rough, especially along parts of the coastline, it was drawn with a new recognition of the world for the Japanese people. For instance, the names of Godaishu were described on each part of every continent. Although the name Tenjiku was on the Eurasian Continent or in the middle of Asian countries, it is unclear where it is specifically. There is only a small peninsula where the Indian subcontinent must have been, on which there are names such as Mouru (モウル, Moor, Moghul), Bengala (Bengal), and Indeya (India). In the view of Sangoku-Sekaikan, Tenjiku is a huge country that encompasses most of the world. However, when we see this map, it is clear that Tenjiku is only one of many other Asian countries. What I would like to emphasize here is that the worldview is changing from old one to new one but we can still see the name of Tenjiku as well as India. In another words Tenjiku and India are coexisting. It may be because Joken was not quite sure that India was as same as Tenjiku. India was only a small country in great Asia, but Tenjiku should have been huge country covering greater part of the world. That is why Tenjiku could not go to anywhere but here where is quite obscure place.

On the other hand, WK contains several maps. I would like to pick up two of them. The one is *Sankaiyochizenzu* (『山海與地全図』 Map of Universal Mountain and Sea) with Godaishu framework. However, there is nothing that corresponds to the Indian subcontinent, and names like Bengara (榜葛刺) and Indeya (應帝亜) are described to the immediate west of the Malay-like peninsula, and the name Nishi-Tenjiku (西天竺, literally West-Tenjiku) to their north.¹⁶ We can see the name Tenjiku and Indeya at the same time again.

Godaishu became a new framework for recognizing the world that was introduced from the west, in which, of course, there was no place similar to Tenjiku. However, Tenjiku, which had dominated a huge amount of the world for long periods, must have existed somewhere in the world for the Japanese people. Today, we can understand that Tenjiku is a historical name for India, but this was not the case in the Edo period. That is why Tenjiku

coexisted with the other names, such as *Indeya*, which also means India, without being integrated as the place of the same name.

The other map in WS is called *Saiikigotenjikunozu* (『西域五天竺之図』). This is a map of Saiiki, which is a west province of China and of five Tenjiku.¹⁷ Five Tenjiku is traditional concept of Buddhist. They divided Tenjiku into five parts, North, East, South, West, and Middle. However, the names used within this map are Indo rather than Tenjiku. That is why, this map displays Naka-Indo (中印度, middle Indo), Kita-Indo (北印度, north Indo), Nishi-Indo (西印度, west Indo), Minami-Indo (南印度, south Indo), Higashi-Indo (東印度, east Indo). The reason the name Indo was used, rather than Tenjiku, is that this map depends on old Buddhist records like *Daitousaiikiki* (『大唐西域記』 Great Tang Records on the Western Regions) of Chinese monk Genjo or Xuanzang (玄奘).¹⁸ Moreover, the Indian subcontinent depicted here is finely divided into different areas with the names and distances written around them. They are also based on Buddhist records. It can be said that this map is completely drawn with traditional worldview. Ryoan rejected the Buddhist view of the world because he regarded it as fiction, but he could not stop relying on old Buddhist record like *Daitousaiikiki* to describe the details of each area within India.

3. Tenjiku and the other India

One of 98 countries listed in ZK is China. It could be said that the other 97 countries were all called Tenjiku, because Tenjiku had been a blurred concept to refer to every country other than China, rather than a single united region. Although the Japanese had a notion of Tenjiku being the country where Buddhism started, they had no idea where exactly it was. This is why Tenjiku became a kind of pronoun for the “the other”, representing the places they did not know, in comparison with China and their own country, which they were geographically familiar with.

According to Joken, other 97 countries can be divided into two categories: *gaikoku* (外国, foreign countries) and *gaii* (外夷, foreign barbarians). *Gaikoku* includes countries under the Chinese tributary system, namely Korea, Ryukyu, Taiwan, Kochi, and Tonking. *Ikoku* covers the rest that are not in *Gaikoku* (Table 1).

When we examine the countries that make up *ikoku*, we find the word Tenjiku in several places. Among *Gaii*, there are 27 countries that contain the word Tenjiku in their explanation in some way. The most numerous occurrence is *Minami-Tenjiku* (南天竺, South Tenjiku), or *Minami-Tenjiku-no-uchi* (in South Tenjiku), which encompasses countries such as Champa, Siam, Ceylon, *Indeya*, and Goa. Of those 27, we can say that 16 of them were recognized by Joken as being located within *Minami-Tenjiku*. Noticeable as well are the expressions *Hi-Tenjiku* (非天竺, not Tenjiku) and *Nishi-Tenjiku* (west Tenjiku). Countries described as *Hi-Tenjiku* include Jawa and Patani; Persia and Saint Thomas were said to be

Table 1. List of countries containing the word “Tenjiku” in ZK

China	1						
Gaikoku	5						
Gaii	92	27 including the word “Tenjiku”	Champa (占城)	Kambojia (柬埔寨, Cambodia)	Tani (太泥, Patani)	Rokkon (六甲, Ligor)	Siam (暹羅)
			Jagatara (咬囉吧, Jakarta)	Jawa (爪哇)	Bantan (番旦, Banten)	Moraka (母羅伽, Malacca)	Mouru (モウル, Moghal?)
			Somondara (ソモンダラ, Sumatra)	Pegu (ヘグウ)	Arakan (アラカン)	Bengara-koku (ベンガラ国, Bengal)	Saraata (サラアタ, Surat)
			Marumaru (マルマアル, Malabar)	Seiron (セイロン, Ceylon)	Harusia (ハルシヤ国, Persia)	Santome (サントメ国, Sao Thome)	Indeya (インデヤ国, India?)
			Rau (ラウ国, Laos)	Kafuri (カフリ国, East Africa?)	Ciyau (チャウ国, West India?)	Kowa (コワ, Goa)	Arabiya (アラビヤ, Arabia)
			Judeya (ジュデヤ, Judea)	Ejitto (エジツト国, Egypt)			
	Other Gaii						

※The coloured boxes are Minami-Tenjiku.

in Nishi-Tenjiku and Judea in the west of Nishi-Tenjiku.

It is clear that Tenjiku itself does not exist in any particular place. It was originally name for India, or the place where Buddhism came from. However, considering this situation, we can say that meaning of Tenjiku had been changing. Although there are some countries that are located in present-day India or South Asia—for example, Indeya, Bengara (Bengal), and Ceylon—in reality Tenjiku was used as a vague conception covering present South Asia and Southeast Asia as well.

At the same time, the word Asia (亜細亞) was used as a conception containing many countries such as China, Arabia, Cambodia. Asia is a part of Godaishu, meaning that Tenjiku was only a part of the place that is only one fifth of whole world.

Let us consider some concrete examples of each explanation. In the case of Champa (占城), Joken describes this place as follows.

四季東京ヨリ大ニ熱國也。此國ノ邊ヨリ南天竺ノ内也ト云。此國交趾國ノ内ニテ交趾ヨリ仕置スル所モ有之トゾ。大佛ト云所モ此國ノ内也。唐人往来ノ津也。此國ノ者日本へ船仕出シル事ナシ。唐人此処ニ往テ諸色ヲ調へ日本ニ来也。人物甚賤ク常ニハダカニテ往来ス。詞蠻語ニ似テ曾テ通ズ各別也。

The climate of this country is much hotter than Tonkin. The area is said to be around in South-Tenjiku. It is said that this country is located in Kochi, and is governed by it. The place

called Daifutsu is also in this country. Chinese people are coming and going around the port. People of this country have never sailed to Japan. Before going to Japan, Chinese people load cargo at this place. People are quite humble, always coming and going naked. Their language resembles Dutch and we can communicate with them very easily. (Translation by Ishizaki)

The explanation of the other places agree that Tenjiku or Minami-Tenjiku have a climate that is generally warm or sometimes (extremely) hot. People were often said to be humble. Interestingly, the name Indeya is also on the list. The explanation follows.

南天竺ニテ四季アル暖國也。海邊ニ及タル大國也。インデヤト云ハ印度國ト云事ニテ、印度ハ則天竺ノ名也トゾ。モウル國ト此國トハ南天竺ニテ第一ノ國ナリ。此國ノ人ノ色ハ皆紫色ナリト云。人物風俗モウル人ニ同じ。唐人ヲランダ人ハ此國ニ往来スル事之レ無シ。土産他國へ交易スルヲ調へ来ルトゾ。

This is South-Tenjiku, a warm place with four seasons, overlooking the sea. Indeya means Indo-koku, Indo is the name of Tenjiku. Mouru-koku and this are the number one countries in Minami-Tenjiku. The color of the people living there is purple. The people, as well as their manners, are the same as the Mouru. The Chinese and the Dutch have never visited this place. They conduct produce trade with others. (Translation by Ishizaki)

As this description says, Joken understood that Indeya, Indo, and Tenjiku were names for the same place. Tenjiku, however, was used as an umbrella term covering a plurality of countries, as well as being a specific place. Sangoku-Sekaikan traditionally understood that places other than China or Japan were part of Tenjiku. That is why Joken had to connect Tenjiku with real places whose other geographical information had accumulated gradually.

According to academic predecessor, Mouru refers to the Mughal Empire, since the language known as Mouru-go is a version of Persian with considerable vocabulary borrowed from Hindi.¹⁹ However, Mouru is still a controversial term because it is unclear whether it originally meant ‘language’ or ‘people’. It could be said that there was merely some language called Mouru-go, which is linguistically Persian and used by the people visiting Nagasaki in the early Edo period; gradually people might have begun calling the Mouru-go-speaking foreigners the Mouru-jin (Mouru people). Regardless, the Mouru-jin was important foreigners from mainly Southeast Asia, or Minami-Tenjiku, and it was known to citizens of Nagasaki in the Edo period.

Meanwhile, WS lists 190 countries, one of which is China. We can see a distinction between Ikoku and Gaii. Among Gaii, the explanations of 13 countries contain the word Tenjiku (Table 2). As in Joken’s case, there are references to Minami-Tenjiku.

Table 2. List of countries containing the word “Tenjiku” in WS

Gaikoku	11		(including China)
Gaii	179	13 including the word “Tenjiku”	Cyuren (注輦, Chola)
			Champa (占城)
			Ciamro (暹羅)
			Nyoningoku (女人國, Ceylon?)
			Tenjiku (天竺, India?)
			Kabochoa (柬埔寨, Cambodia)
			Tani (太泥, Patani)
			Jyagatara (咬嚙吧, Jakarta)
			Mouru (莫臥爾, Mughal?)
			Santome (聖多默, Saint Thomas)
			Indeya (印第亞, India?)
			Pegu (琶牛)
			Seiras (錫蘭山, Ceylon)
other Gaii			

※The coloured boxes are Minami-Tenjiku.

WS inherited much of its information from *Sansaizue*, which was published in China in the early 17th century. That is why there are descriptions that are very similar to the previous work. However, when looking at the usage of Tenjiku, it is evident that those descriptions, including the word Tenjiku, were written by Ryoan himself, and not inherited from *Sansaizue*. That is why Tenjiku is quite unique concept of Japan. This means that Ryoan added explanations with the word Tenjiku to the descriptions in *Sansaizue*, which originally did not mention Tenjiku. The description of Champa is a good example. After supplementing the history and manner of people by other Chinese books, Ryoan wrote his own thoughts, as follows.

按占城隣于南天竺而暑熱甚民俗裸形野鄙也用天竺橫文字唐人到彼地交易以通于日本

I suppose that Champa is next to Minami-Tenjiku. Extremely hot, and people are naked and humble. They use horizontal Tenjiku characters. Chinese people visit and trade through to Japan. (Translation by Ishizaki)

To explain the location of Champa, Ryoan uses the word Minami-Tenjiku probably because it was quite a familiar term for the readers of WS. Furthermore, he points out that people in Champa use horizontal ‘Tenjiku characters’. Whether people knew Chinese

characters or not was one of important indication of Gaii. In terms of the usage of characters, it could be said that Ryoan maintained Sangoku-Sekaikan, and the characters other than Chinese were called Tenjiku characters. The important point here is that Ryoan connected Tenjiku and Champa when Tenjiku had not entered the worldview in *Sansai-zue*.

Bengara was Higashi-Indo (East-India) in *Sansai-zue*. The important thing is that although he understood that Indo (印度) corresponded with Tenjiku, he adopted Bengara instead as the name for that place rather than keeping the name Indo. The purpose of this seems to connect the geographical name in *Sansai-zue* with the more familiar Japanese name. In other words, Bengara was a more familiar name than Higashi-Indo to contemporary Japanese. Additionally, he estimated that people would understand the name Bengara even if they did not know the name Higashi-Indo.

It is remarkable that the name Tenjiku is on the list. In *Sansai-zue*, which is the source of WS as I mentioned, Tenjiku is described as subordinate to Daishin (大秦), which was identified as the Roman Empire. It is unclear whether it actually corresponds to present-day India. In addition, Ryoan tried to add some explanation or comments about that.

按天竺國有東西南北中之五今所謂者中天竺乎

I suppose Tenjiku has five parts, east, west, south, north, and middle. The explanation of Tenjiku here might be of middle Tenjiku. (Translation by Ishizaki)

Adding to Ryoan's thought, it is possible that there might have been some embarrassment due to the explanation that Tenjiku was totally different from what was known to other Japanese intellectuals during that period. It is true that Minami-Tenjiku, like Champa and the other southeast countries cannot be the same as the Tenjiku in *Sansai-zue*. Accordingly, Ryoan wrote that Tenjiku refers to five different regions, specifically east, west, south, north, and central, and that the Tenjiku in *Sansai-zue* might be Middle-Tenjiku. That is why in WS, Tenjiku exists both as the name of a particular country and a notion covering a broad geographical area.

Because WS is a kind of encyclopedia that is based on the Chinese encyclopedia *Sansai-zue*, WS inherited the geographical recognition of India by the Chinese people, which was assimilated via Buddhism. Upon extracting the frequency of the usage of the words Tenjiku and Indo in WS and comparing it with *Sansai-zue*, it was found that in WS, the word Tenjiku was used more frequently than Indo. Concepts of Tenjiku in China of that period were different from Japanese Tenjiku. Nevertheless, Ryoan must have explained this confusing description of Chinese Tenjiku.

Conclusion

It can be argued that Sangoku-Sekaikan did not vanish immediately following the introduction of Godaishu. When we examine maps contained in two books, both of them was drawn with a Godaishu worldview, as we can see by the use of names such as Asia and America. From Godaishu worldview, which originated in the new geography of the West, there was no need to put the name Tenjiku on the map. However, for Joken and Ryoan, it must have been quite important to do so, because Tenjiku had been a vast “the other” for the Japanese worldview.

Considering the names of countries listed in two books, it is clear that Joken and Ryoan were both still using the word Tenjiku to describe other countries. Although Joken and Ryoan must have believed in the new image of India that was a part of the new geographical knowledge of Asia, they could not stop relying on the word “Tenjiku” to describe the world. In the early Edo period of Japan, when the traditional Sangoku-Sekaikan had already begun its decline, the concept of Tenjiku was still indispensable as an explanation of the world.

Both authors made a great effort to place Tenjiku, which is a concept very particular to Japanese people, on the freshly emerged Godaishu worldview. The reason that two intellectuals would do so was the cultural strength of Tenjiku for the Japanese people. In this paper, I have been discussing about the hugeness and power of Tenjiku within the Japanese notion of geography during the Edo period. Tenjiku, also known as India, was a very large and important concept of ‘the other’ for Japanese people.

Notes

- 1 *Zouho-Kaitsushoukou* literally means “A study on commerce with China and barbarians ~enlarged edition~”. The title of this book will be abbreviated to ZK onwards.
- 2 *Wakansansaizue* literally means “Japanese-Chinese illustrated encyclopedia on the three components”. The title of this book will be abbreviated to WS onwards.
- 3 For more information about Sangoku-Sekaikan and Tenjiku, see Arano (1996) for example.
- 4 According to Sugimoto (1956), the etymological origin of *Tenjiku* is the word *Thindhu*, the Burmanized word for Sind. Sind is the original name of India.
- 5 For instance, the episode of prince Takaoka (高岳親王) has been handed down, in which he tries to visit Tenjiku but dies in an attacked by a tiger somewhere in Laos or Indonesia. Another monk named Myoe (明恵) is also famous for wanting to visit Tenjiku; he is said to have calculated that it would require 1,000 days in order to reach Tenjiku.
- 6 For examples, see Kawamura (2003).
- 7 *Jinnoshotoki* (神皇正統記), written by Kitabatake Chikafusa (北畠親房) in 1339 is a work famous for its Shinkoku-Shisou (神国思想), which is the belief that Japan is a land of Kami, or deities. Chikafusa said that although China is a vast country, compared with Go-Tenjiku (all of

- Tenjiku), it is actually very small.
- 8 There have been a lot of articles about Godaishu. For example, see Arano (1994).
 - 9 Ishizaki (2010).
 - 10 In reality, Japan had been interacting and trading with Korea through Tsushima, with China through Ryukyu, and with Russia through Ezo during this period. Although the term ‘Sakoku’ is still being used today, this interaction was very broadly understood. See Arano (1994).
 - 11 This valuation is mainly based on *Kaikoku hyakunen kinen bunka jigyokai* (1978).
 - 12 Ayusawa (1952).
 - 13 For more information about relationship between ZK and *Shokuhougaiiki*, see *Kaikoku hyakunen kinen bunka jigyokai* (1953). Recently, Inden pointed out other sourcebook of ZK in Inden (2003).
 - 14 Inden (1999).
 - 15 Ouji (1996) explains more about this.
 - 16 This is probably because WS came after the *Sansaizue* map, which is also the source of this one, just as is in the original version, in which Tenjiku is unnamed and only Nishi-Tenjiku is shown. Nishi-Tenjiku is a name that is frequently used through *Daitousaiikiki* (『大唐西域記』) to *Saiyuki* (『西遊記』), which developed from *Daitousaiikiki* and suggest the place where Xuanzang (玄奘) can be attained. Because Xuanzang headed Tenjiku from Changan (長安) via Saiiki (西域, a western region of China), Tenjiku evidently was recognized by the Chinese people as a region to the west of China. Therefore the name Nishi-Tenjiku does not signify an area west of Tenjiku, but that Tenjiku was west from a certain point of departure—in this case, China.
 - 17 *Saiikigotenjikunozu* (『西域五天竺之図』) is originally a part of *Nansenbushubankokusyokanozu* (『南瞻部州万国掌菓図』). The other parts are *Seinansyobannozu* (『西南諸蛮之図』), and *Hokuchisyotekinozu* (『北地諸狄之図』). *Nansenbushubankokusyokanozu* was drawn by priest Hotan (鳳潭) in 1710. This type of map is called “Buddhist World Map” (『仏教系世界地図』), and the Tenjiku depicted on it was the center of Buddhism. In *Hokuchisyotekinozu*, India is described as five parts of Tenjiku, and it is roughly west of China; in *Seinanshobannozu*, the name Nakatenjiku is noticeable.
 - 18 Muroga and Unno (1979).
 - 19 Nagashima (1986).

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