

PORCELAIN AND POWER: COMPARATIVE REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURING IN TOKUGAWA JAPAN

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This article analyzes the political context of industrialization in Tokugawa Japan through an analysis of merchandising policies for porcelains. With a comparison of the regions where the major sites of porcelain production were located, the study examines the processes by which arrangements for porcelain distribution were organized in the domains of Saga and Owari, and the district of Mino. The analysis shows contrasting types of arrangements in terms of the objectives and major agents who were responsible for making these policies and regulations. These policies and arrangements reflected the relationships between political authorities and those who were engaged in porcelain production and distribution in each region. The relationships varied significantly from each other, ranging from direct control by the regional authority, to relatively equal bargaining power, to extensive merchant autonomy. Comparative analysis of power relations illustrates the various ways of organizing resources that shaped the regional diversities and dynamics of industrialization in Japan. The relationships strongly influenced the ways in which resources, access, and opportunities for creating and accumulating resources for porcelain production and distribution were organized. An analysis of the merchandising policies for porcelains demonstrates the impacts that the relationships between the political authorities and those who were engaged in the production and distribution of porcelains had on industrialization in nineteenth-century Tokugawa Japan.

Keywords: Tokugawa; Early Modern Japan; state; industrialization; Saga; Owari; porcelain

INTRODUCTION

Nineteenth-century Tokugawa Japan was subject to a series of political, economic, and social dynamics. Studying its historical experiences offers us an opportunity to speculate on the mechanisms that brought about changes and how these political, economic, and social dynamics relate to each other. This article examines the merchandising policies

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for porcelains in the first half of nineteenth-century Tokugawa Japan. These policies were agreements related to the market transaction of resources that were implemented under the Tokugawa regime. The study compares the arrangements for production and distribution of porcelains implemented in the domains of Saga and Owari, and the district of Mino, in which the major centers of porcelain production were located. The article investigates how the political authorities and those engaged in the production and distribution of porcelains made claims on resources for porcelain production and distribution. Comparative analysis of the process in which these policies were made illuminates the political context of industrialization under the Tokugawa regime.

Extending the Analysis of Industrialization in Tokugawa Japan

Industrialization in Japan has been a topic of analysis by scholars in various disciplines. Many scholars now agree upon the development of some forms of industrial manufacturing along with the economic changes under the Tokugawa regime.¹ There are, however, variant views and focuses on the growth of manufacturing in Tokugawa Japan. Saito Osamu, a leading scholar of economic history, focused on the development of industrial manufacturing in rural areas with reference to the “proto-industrialization” thesis discussed by Franklin Mendels, and also Peter Kriedte and others, and highlighted Japan’s uniqueness as well as its similarities with historical experiences in Europe.² Many authors adopted the term “proto-industrialization” to describe the growth of non-agricultural sectors in rural areas under the Tokugawa regime.³

Some scholars, however, have questioned using the term of “proto-industrialization” to describe the growth of industrial manufacturing in Tokugawa Japan. Penelope Francks, for instance, criticizes the applicability of a “proto-industrialization” thesis to the Japanese experience.⁴ While those who discuss proto-industrialization recognize the development of rural manufacturing as a stage preceding modernization, other scholars, such as Tanimoto, have questioned such a view and described cases in which traditional styles of manufacturing relations continued and, in some cases, even competed with modern factory production after the Meiji period.⁵ Instead of seeing the growth of industrial

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- 1 Scholars who study the historical experiences of Tokugawa Japan recognize economic changes as a lengthy process. Hanley and Yamamura, for instance, have noted the growth of the Tokugawa economy throughout the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century; Hanley and Yamamura 1977.
 - 2 Saito 1985, p. 24, 2008, pp. 136–39. Mendels [1969] 1981, p. 8, 1972, p. 241; Kriedte, Medick, and Schlumbohn 1981, 1993; Hudson 1989. Mendels defined “proto-industrialization” as the growth of rural manufacturing for interregional or international markets, as a transitional phase in the development of factories.
 - 3 See, for instance, Howell 1994; Wigen 1995; Ravina 1999.
 - 4 Francks 2002, p. 34. Francks discusses the problem of the applicability of a proto-industrialization thesis to the Japanese experience. In contrast with cases in Europe, according to Francks, agricultural production was sustained through the flexible use of domestic labor, which resulted in an increase of production in both agriculture and rural manufacturing sectors.
 - 5 Tanimoto, in his study of the textile industry, showed that many “traditional” manufacturing workshops continued to experience growth throughout the late nineteenth century, even after the emergence of modern factories. Tanimoto and others emphasized the significance of “traditional” manufacturing sectors, called *zairai sangyō*, or indigenous industries, which are distinguished from a modern style of manufacturing. Tanimoto 1998, Tanimoto 2002; Nakamura 1971.

manufacturing under the Tokugawa regime as a stage preceding industrialization under the Meiji, these scholars saw continuities in industrial manufacturing as another path of industrialization. They pointed out various factors that led to the growth of small-scale manufacturing workshops, such as the role of rural entrepreneurs, who offered materials and finance, availability of domestic labor in agricultural households, and a continuous increase in domestic demand throughout the nineteenth century. Some of those studied the growth of rural industries with reference to demographic change and family patterns, while others saw more direct impacts, such as the role of entrepreneurs and amount of capital available for production.

Scholars have recognized economic dynamics under the Tokugawa regime, including the expansion of the domestic market and increase of production in non-agricultural sectors, adopting different focuses for analysis. Their analyses, overall, have shown how economic dynamics, such as the development of rural industries, occurred along with social changes under the Tokugawa regime, while showing different ways of understanding the process of industrialization. While this article shares common ground with these scholars who have emphasized the significance of economic dynamics under the Tokugawa regime, it will nevertheless approach the issue from a different perspective by setting a new agenda for analysis.

In this article, I suggest returning to an orthodox term, “industrialization,” but revising it to have more flexibility for analysis. “Industrialization” refers to a general process of formation of production relations regardless of the size of production capacities, which range from production at small-size workshops to that at large-scale manufacturing facilities. This broader definition includes various types and scales of production. While it refers to production by professional artisans at workshops as well as that by other professionals or their family members as a side occupation, it also includes manufacturing production with machinery and other technological devices and equipment. With this term, we can see many more varieties of production relations without the risk of suppressing the variety of experiences.

Exploring the Political Context of Industrialization in Japan

The major objective of this article is to explore the political context of industrialization. Charles Tilly et al. suggested that the significance of state power, which often established specific institutional frameworks for economic change, should be a theme for further research. They define “state” as the arrangements for making and enforcing the legal framework of economic activities.⁶ Charles Tilly further proposed a dynamic view on the state and described “state formation” as an ongoing process in which the government and people are constantly negotiating with each other while the government of the state has the autonomous and dominant power to authorize its claim. This continuing process of reforming the relationship between the government and people constitutes the dynamism of state formation.⁷ Tilly offered two analytical variables, “capital” and “coercion,” and defined “capital” as resources and “coercion” as concerted actions and potential for actions

6 Tilly et al. 1991, pp. 647, 661.

7 Tilly 1990, Tilly 1997.

of domination. With these variables of “capital” and “coercion,” Tilly illustrated the contexts that shaped the characteristics of states, trajectories of emergence, and disappearance of states as well as social contentions in Europe.⁸ Following Tilly, other scholars have made attempts to analyze the ongoing process of state formation. George Steinmetz viewed state formation in the process of policy, arguing that this illustrates the dynamics of relationships among the administrative powers and those who were subject to the administration.⁹ Analysis of policy making, as shown in Steinmetz’s analysis, enables one to understand the dynamics of the relationship between the political authorities that claim dominance and those who were subject to its rule.

Following the arguments by these authors, I see the state in an ongoing process. In this article, I define state formation as a process of formulating the relationships that legitimate certain claims and capacities of the governmental authorities and the subject population. The policy-making analysis offers us a space to investigate how the relationships between the government and the subject population are made and how some of their specific claims on resources become legitimate or illegitimate, and how they transform over time, all of which constitute dynamics of state formation.

In the case of the Tokugawa regime (1603–1868), it was comprised of multiple governmental authorities, the central government (the *bakufu*), local domains, and regional vassals. While the *bakufu* claimed the supreme power, the feudal lords had substantial autonomy to rule their subject populations and control the ways resources were organized in their own territories. The role of the political authorities was critical in influencing the process of economic change under the Tokugawa regime. While some scholars have recognized the significance of the role of domain authorities to shape regional economies, they have not further analyzed the specific contexts that made for regional differences.¹⁰ There is still scope to investigate how these social relations were institutionalized, in what context specific social practices were legitimated, what types of power relations were involved, and whether there were any regional variations in the process. In other words, one could further explore the contexts in which the governmental authorities and the subject population defined their capacities in the process of industrialization. This article, in that sense, examines how the two processes of state formation and industrialization converged in actual historical settings, and explores the regional diversities of these dynamics through the historical experiences of nineteenth-century Tokugawa Japan. Through analysis of the relationships between the central power, regional authorities, and the subject populations, this study examines the political context of industrialization in Tokugawa Japan.

Governance of Markets: Merchandising Policies of Tokugawa Japan

The Tokugawa economy experienced intensive commercialization from the beginning of the eighteenth century. With the growth of the domestic market and acceleration of

8 Tilly 1990.

9 Steinmetz, 1993, 1999.

10 Nishikawa and Amano 1999; Ravina 1999; Roberts 1998. Mark Ravina and Luke Roberts showed how the regional political authorities governed resources and supported the development of specific industries in the territory.

commercial activities, market transactions of goods became the object of political governance for the *bakufu* as well as the regional political authorities. Both *bakufu* and local domain authorities made a series of attempts to capture capital by intervening in market transactions, starting from the late eighteenth century. In this context, specific arrangements for market transactions were implemented as directives from the *bakufu* and regulations issued by the authorities in local domains and districts. The *bakufu*, for instance, intervened in the market by collaborating with the wholesalers' guilds in Edo and Osaka to control the supply and prices of various goods with relatively high market value, such as oil, cotton, and silk for domestic markets, and silver, copper, and seafood for overseas markets. Many regional domain authorities also enacted agreements for distributing specific merchandise made in their territories outside their domains, such as cotton, wax, paper, and other goods. They established public warehouses to provision the supply of specific resources made in their territories and promoted the sales of these resources in the markets.

In this way market transactions in these products and commercial networks became the object of political governance under the Tokugawa regime. Multiple governmental authorities, the *bakufu* as well as local domain governments, responded actively to the inter-regional commercial exchange and tried to exercise their powers on market transactions. Distribution of specific resources with high market value became a major concern for governmental authorities as well as those who were engaged in the production and distribution of these resources.

To illuminate the political context of industrialization along with the rise of the market economy under the Tokugawa regime, this study analyzes “merchandising policies,” the arrangements for market transactions involving material resources under the Tokugawa regime. The merchandising policies illustrate dynamics of the relationships among the *bakufu*, the regional political authorities, and those who were engaged in production and distribution along with the growth of the market economy under the Tokugawa regime.

Development of the Porcelain Industry: Industrialization in Tokugawa Japan

Porcelain, pottery made from hard stone materials, was one of the leading “industrializing” sectors at that time. The introduction of multi-chambered kilns enabled producers to fire a large number of products to the same quality. The production line was divided into several stages: foaming, painting, and firing. A series of technological innovations, such as large-sized kilns and division of labor according to specialized skills, allowed for mass production for domestic and international markets beginning in the seventeenth century. Porcelain wares attained a relatively high market value, due to the scarcity of stone materials and special production techniques, as well as their aesthetic value.

The study of porcelains illuminates the political context of industrialization in Tokugawa Japan. Porcelain production and distribution often became the object of political control, especially the use of stone materials, the size of production, and market distribution. The political authorities often intervened in details of production and distribution, recognizing the industry's potential for creating capital in the market, while producers and merchants also made their own claims to sustain their activities. Porcelain, therefore, offers a case to investigate how the political authorities got involved and how producers and merchants tried to

obtain and control resources for porcelain production and distribution on their own along with the growth of the market economy under the Tokugawa regime.

The porcelain merchandising policies in nineteenth-century Tokugawa Japan offer a case study in understanding how political authorities and the subject populations negotiated with each other to define their capacities, including their claims over resources and the ways of organizing resources in the process of industrialization. Under the Tokugawa regime, Arita (in the domain of Saga), Seto (in the domain of Owari), and Mino (a territorial holding of the *bakufu*) were the major sites of porcelain production. Merchandising policies for porcelains were implemented in these three places at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This study analyzes these policies and compares how each regional setting mediated the interactions among the political authorities and groups engaged in porcelain production and distribution in the process of formulating the agreements. Merchandising policies for porcelains particularly show how the governmental authorities and those who were engaged in production and distribution of porcelains defined their capacities in the process of industrialization. A comparative analysis of the arrangements made for merchandising porcelains illustrates how specific agents made claims over the market transactions of resources in each of these regions.

In order to understand the processes by which such arrangements were made, I analyzed historical documents and major works on porcelain merchandising in Saga, Owari, and Mino. The documents include policies, regulations, petitions, and proposals for porcelain production and distribution. These records illustrate the involvement of the political authorities and various groups of people involved in manufacturing and distributing porcelains, what types of claims they made for porcelains, and what sorts of issues emerged in the process of establishing agreements for transactions related to porcelains. Through analysis of these records, I examine whether there were any regional differences in the processes and what shaped the distinctiveness in each region.

The following sections provide a descriptive analysis of the three regions. The analysis refers to the political economy in each of these regions and describes how the relationships between the *bakufu* and the regional political authorities influenced the ways in which the regional authorities made claims over resources and the subject populations. It shows how the control of regional political authority shaped the ways of organizing resources and the degree of commercialization as the context for porcelain production and distribution in each region. With a brief historical description of porcelain production, it presents an analysis of the merchandising policies for porcelains, and shows how the *bakufu*, the regional political authorities, and producers and distributors made their claims over porcelain manufacturing and distribution, and how some of the specific claims gained legitimacy through these arrangements.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF PORCELAIN PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

Saga: Governing Resources for Porcelains

The Political Economy of the Saga Domain

The Saga domain was located in the northeast of Kyūshū and was ruled by the Nabeshima family, who belonged to the category of the *tozama* lords (those outside the Tokugawa

lineage).¹¹ The territory of the Saga domain was located in a relatively less developed region under the Tokugawa regime, far from the capital Edo or the major markets in Osaka. The relation between the *bakufu* and the Nabeshima lords influenced the political economy of the Saga domain. More than half of the revenue of Saga was spent in maintaining its relationship with the *bakufu*. Being located far from the capital, the duty of alternate attendance in Edo necessitated a high level of expense for the domain government, including travel and maintaining its residence in Edo. The domain also had a duty of defense in Nagasaki, the only international port under the regime.¹² These duties imposed by the *bakufu* continued to pressure the budget of the domain government of Saga. Moreover, frequent approaches of foreign powers near Nagasaki since the beginning of the nineteenth century further pushed the domain government of Saga to strengthen its military defense.

The domain government of Saga, in this context, commanded a strong claim over the subject population. Saga's rule over the domestic population was twofold. The domain authority recognized the political autonomy of the *samurai* class on the one hand, while it made a coercive claim over the other groups of the domain population on the other. The domain government imposed a high rate of taxation on farmers in the domain's own territory, 60 percent of their total production; the average rate of taxation in other domain territories was much lower, around 40 percent.¹³ Increasing fiscal pressures from the late eighteenth century pushed the domain government to appropriate resources in the territory by implementing new policies. The domain government, for instance, enacted a series of land reforms and obtained land owned by the *samurai* class, landlords, and merchants in order to increase its revenue. The domain government also implemented mercantilist arrangements and intervened in the distribution of specific merchandise, such as coal, wax tree, paper, and porcelains within the domestic markets as well as export for international markets starting in the late eighteenth century. The domain government issued bills and requested producers and merchants within the domain to use them for exchange of the products in order to control transactions in the markets. The domain authority established warehouses in Nagasaki, Edo, and Osaka. While granting concessions to a couple of wholesalers to deal with specific products, the domain government took charge of the entire transaction process for the purpose of increasing cash revenue.¹⁴ The Saga

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- 11 Under the Tokugawa regime, the lords were categorized according to loyalty to the Tokugawa clan. The lords called *shin-pan* were affiliates of the Tokugawa clan. The lords who had served the Tokugawa were recognized as *fudai*. In contrast, the lords who submitted to the Tokugawa clan after the end of the sixteenth century were recognized as outside the Tokugawa lineage (*tozama*). Obligations and credits were granted according to these categories.
- 12 Under the Tokugawa regime, every lord was required to stay in the capital Edo every other year for several months. Domain governments had to pay travel expenses and the cost of maintaining their residences in the capital. These expenses were a substantial burden for most of the lords, especially for those that were located far from the capital Edo. In the case of Saga, it took almost a month to travel from Saga to Edo.
- 13 The estimated yield of public territories directly ruled by the domain government of Saga was around 135,000 *koku*, while the real amount of taxation gained from these territorial holdings was around 90,000 *koku*. The tax rates in other private holdings in the domain were much more moderate.
- 14 Multiple currencies were circulated under the Tokugawa regime, including silver, gold, copper, and domain-issued paper money. Many domain governments issued paper money for local circulation. In the domain of Saga, rice-based coupons (*kome-hazu*) and silver-based coupons (*ginsatsu*) were issued. Silver was the official currency for intra-domain exchange.

government, in this way, made a coercive claim over resources and the subject population by implementing “mercantilist” policies aimed at appropriating capital from the production and distribution of these resources. The financial capacity of the domain expanded via such arrangements throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.

Porcelain Production in Arita

Porcelain production began in Arita within the Saga domain.¹⁵ The domain authority had directly governed and controlled the site of production since the seventeenth century. In 1637, the authorities designated the district of Arita as a production site and established the Intendant office, called *sarayama-daikan-sho*. The Intendant of Arita closely supervised various aspects of the porcelain production and imposed a series of regulations on production in order to control both the quantity and quality of production and to maintain high market prices for Arita porcelain. The Intendant, for instance, prohibited the use of stone material for producing anything other than porcelains, and categorized production sites in Arita as *uchiyama* (inside-mountain), *sotoyama* (outskirts-mountain), and *ōsotoyama* (far-out-mountain) based on soil quality and requested potters to use materials from the designated area. For instance, the material gained at *uchiyama* with the finest stone clay was used solely by the Nabeshima’s private kiln for the production of supreme quality products for their exclusive private use. The material from *sotoyama* and *oostoyama* was used for general consumers.

Moreover, artisans who made porcelains were required to register their activities with the authorities. The domain authority issued the official licenses in exchange for business tax (*unjōgin*). This official license registration system (*kansatsu*) regulated production quantities and set the occupational categories of producers. The domain authority gave official recognition to their occupations according to their specialties, such as potters (*kamayaki*) and painters (*ekaki*), while prohibiting occupational mobility among them. The potters and painters could pass down the licenses, technique, kilns, and other resources for production only to their eldest sons. There were similar regulations for those engaged in mining stone and glaze materials. The regional Intendant also appointed two merchants who could engage in distribution of Chinese import glaze materials. Moreover, the domain authorities were much concerned about potential industrial espionage and prohibited the potters from traveling and the merchants from unauthorized entry to the production sites. By implementing a series of these measures, the regional Intendant of Arita closely monitored producers’ activities and controlled both the quantity and quality of porcelain production.

Coercive Saga: Display Check Policies for Governing Capital

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the domain government further intervened in porcelain transactions by implementing the display check policy, called *gengawase shihō*. It required potters to deliver the products in exchange for checks (*gengawase*) issued by the local domain authorities. The products were shipped to the domain-owned warehouses

15 At the end of the sixteenth century, after the invasion of the Korean Peninsula, the lord Toyotomi Hideyoshi came back with Korean potters. At beginning of the seventeenth century, a Korean potter started porcelain production in Arita, after discovering abundant resources for porcelain production, including stone materials and trees for the production of glaze and fuel.

in the major markets of Edo and Osaka, while those destined for markets other than these two major markets were not included in the arrangement. However, producers and wholesalers who saw the benefit of a distribution channel under public control submitted a petition to the domain government, demanding to be participants in the arrangement. In 1849, the domain government accepted their claim and enacted the amendment that prohibited direct transactions between local producers, brokers, and merchants.¹⁶ By the mid-nineteenth century, transactions of all porcelains made in Arita were under the control of the domain authority.

During the process of implementing the new distribution arrangement, the domain government curtailed opportunities for merchants who had been engaged in porcelain distribution. The authorities replaced most of those who had offered material and financial resources to Arita producers with a small number of merchants as the officers of domain warehouses, granting them the official concession to wholesale the products in the markets of Edo, Osaka, and Nagasaki. Moreover, the Saga government implemented a series of policies that curtailed the capacities of those who were engaged in agricultural and commercial activities, such as landlord-wholesalers, especially those in Arita and adjacent regions who had been involved in porcelain wholesaling. The domain government prohibited them from simultaneously engaging in agricultural and commercial activities and expropriated their land with a series of land reforms. Landlords engaged in commercial activities needed to hand over their lands to the regional authority. Moreover, under an amendment in 1849, the domain government further extended its control over brokers and shipping merchants who had not initially participated in the arrangement.¹⁷ In this way the local domain authorities established a strong claim over porcelain-related capital by controlling those involved in porcelain distribution as well as the entire market transaction process. The Saga authorities implemented a series of arrangements, along with display-check policies, or *gengawase-shihō*.

Owari: Collaboration and Contention for Porcelains

The Political Economy of the Owari Domain

The domain of Owari, the home of the Tokugawa clan, was located in the center of Honshū Island, located halfway between Edo and Osaka. The territories of the domain included the entire land of Owari-*koku* (province) and portions of land in four adjacent provinces. The domain was located in an economically advanced area. Various types of resources made in the territories were collected and exchanged in the domain capital, Nagoya, which, being located midway on the Tōkaidō roadway that linked the capital Edo with Osaka, experienced a high degree of commercialization. The Owari domain's relationship with the *bakufu* was well established. It was the home ground of the Tokugawa clan, and the lords of Owari continued to have close relations with the *bakufu* by sharing the Tokugawa lineage.

The domain government of Owari exercised moderate control over the subject population while mostly recognizing their autonomy. The status of the *samurai* group was well

¹⁶ Arita chō 1985.

¹⁷ Arita chō, 1988, pp. 173–76; Nakamoto 1967; Yamada 1995, pp. 37–38; Yamagata 2008, pp. 88–89, 95–100.

established. Most of the *samurai* were located in the capital and received moderate stipends for their livelihood.¹⁸ As for its control over the other social groups, the tax rate on farmers was relatively low, 30 percent of total yield, while the average rate of taxation in the entire regime was around 40 to 50 percent of the total production.¹⁹ The domain government also recognized the autonomy of those who were engaged in crafts and commercial activities. Artisans and merchants formed guild associations to secure their occupational interests and often gained official warrants for their activities. The domain government supported the activities of these guilds by recognizing the regulations made by these guilds in exchange for business tax.

Starting in the nineteenth century, the domain government of Owari promoted the production of various products and intervened in distribution. For instance, in 1803 it established a commercial agency (*shōhō-kaisho*) and the agricultural agency (*nōhō-kaisho*) to support and supervise commercial and agricultural activities in the domain. The government offered support to those involved in the major domain industries, such as producers and merchants of pottery and cotton. To promote the marketing of these products, the authorities established the domain commodity agency (*kokusan kaisho*), which warranted transactions in these resources and ensured the security of the activities of producers and merchants within the domain.²⁰

Porcelain Production in Seto

Pottery production was a long-established tradition in Owari, especially in the Seto region. In the early seventeenth century, the local potters created a guild association (*kama-nakama*). In 1737, potters from the village of Seto made an agreement that they would register their activities – the ownership of kilns (*kama-kabu*), the right to the use of kiln furnaces (*kamayaki-kabu*), as well as that of pottery wheels – with the association. Under the agreement, only the eldest sons could inherit a license (*kabu*) with one pottery wheel.²¹ In contrast to the Arita case where the domain authority coercively regulated the number of licenses for producers in order to control the quantity of production, the guild association of potters in Seto regulated the number of producers themselves through license registry in order to avoid excessive competition and sustain pottery production over the long term.

The guild of potters aimed to secure their position by limiting opportunities for new entrants. However, some groups of people who were involved in production or distribution started to obtain resources, which gradually transformed production relations in the region. Wholesalers and landlords offered financial and material support to producers by pledging the *kabu*. The kiln license (*kama-kabu*) and the kiln-using license (*kamayaki-kabu*) were sold to those who were not initially members of the association, often farmers or potters' family members, who, according to the agreement of the guilds, had not been allowed to inherit

18 In comparison with Saga, *samurai* vassals in Owari were much better off. The average yield of the land owned by each vassal was 9.9 *koku*, which was almost twice that of Saga, 5.0 *koku*. Although there were some *samurai* who owned private holdings in rural regions, these private holdings were gradually absorbed by the domain government.

19 Kodama and Kitajima 1976.

20 Seto shi 1993, pp. 270–86.

21 Seto shi, 1993, pp. 251–62.

the licenses.²² The number of those having newly started to obtain resources for pottery production gradually increased in Seto.

Porcelain production started in Seto in the early nineteenth century.²³ In response to requests from a group of producers, the domain government of Owari intervened in the processes of production and distribution by offering financial and institutional support to producers. The Owari domain authority nullified the guild's regulations prohibiting non-eldest sons from engaging in pottery production and granted loans to those who wanted to produce porcelains. As a result, the number of new porcelain producers dramatically increased. After the abolishment of the guild's regulations, production relations became increasingly commercialized. A large number of kilns and licenses were sold or rented to farmers or non-eldest sons of potters previously prohibited from participating in pottery production. Some producers and merchants further expanded their activities by hiring peasants and non-eldest sons of potters as firing workers (*kama-kasegi*), mining workers (*sunayama-kasegi*), glaze-mining workers (*egusuri-kasegi*), and water-mill labor (*suisha-kasegi*), or directly financing producers with materials to start wholesaling the products.²⁴ While pottery production was once under the communal control of the local guild association, along with the beginning of porcelain production, the industry developed with private capital under the institutional support of the Owari domain authority.

Corporate Owari: Public Warehouse Policies for Shared Capital

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, wholesalers who gained official recognition from the domain government (*kuramoto*) and the head of the potters' guild proposed that the Owari government establish a new distribution channel for porcelains for the major markets of Edo and Osaka. The *kuramoto* merchants in Nagoya and several merchants in Osaka, Kyoto, and Edo donated funds for the new arrangement and won the concession for wholesale products in these markets from the domain authority. Under the new arrangement, all porcelain products were shipped to the domain's warehouse and, via the means of public wholesale owned by the Owari domain, they were distributed to the markets of Edo and Osaka.²⁵

However, the arrangements were challenged, which resulted in a further revision. The distribution arrangement initially included all the pottery products regardless the type or quality of the products. However, producers and merchants whose products were destined for the regional markets tried to maintain the existing channels of distribution. These producers and regional brokers submitted petitions to the domain authority demanding exemption from the arrangement as the products they dealt with were not for the major markets. After negotiations among producers, merchants, and the domain government, transactions of earthenware were exempted from the 1812 arrangements. Moreover, some porcelain producers and merchants who did not see any benefit from the arrangements continued wholesaling the porcelains to regional brokers and retailers, often

22 Seto shi 1996, pp. 257–61.

23 A potter who travelled near Arita and studied technique of porcelain production came back to the region to start porcelain production.

24 *Ibid.*; Shinomiya 1996.

25 Seto shi 1993, pp. 270–86, 1998, p. 474, Yamagata 2008, pp. 16–21.

resulting in tensions and conflicts with the arrangement's observers. Those who adhered to the arrangement sent persistent petitions to the Owari authorities, exposing their competitors' activities as illegal transactions and requesting regulation by the domain authority.²⁶

The public warehouse policy (*kuramoto-shihō*) was designed through collaboration between the domain government, wholesalers granted official patronage, and producers. Since the arrangements guaranteed payments to potters, many of the producers became financially dependent. The payments received prior to sales were treated as interest-earning loans. While this practice financially entrapped most of the potters, some producers tried to retain their autonomy by maintaining alternative channels of distribution. While a few merchants in Seto managed to accumulate resources by establishing close ties with producers, there were groups of producers and merchants who constantly challenged the arrangement and sought alternative channels of distribution. While the public warehouse policy officially set the distribution channel, the relations of production and distribution were constantly revised.

Mino: Competition and Contention for Porcelains

Political Economy of Mino

The province of Mino was divided into smaller administrative districts ruled by the *bakufu*; territories of twelve domains, including Owari; and fiefs of forty vassals, or *hatamoto*. While some of these land holdings were owned by the *bakufu* from the very beginning of the Tokugawa reign, others were originally owned by the vassals and later integrated to the territory of the *bakufu* after the decline of these vassals and lords. Most of the *bakufu*'s land holdings were located in the southeast of the province.

In the context of fragmented political control, various types of agents and political authorities, both within and outside the province, competed with each other over resources in the province. While the majority of the population were farmers, many of them were involved in commercial and craft activities. Moreover, those who were from outside of the province also obtained resources to engage in production and distribution in this region. Little regulation by the political authorities created a favorable condition for people to obtain resources, engage in various types of activities, and accumulate capital.

Porcelain Production in Mino

Pottery production had existed in Mino since the seventh century. While the Kasamatsu Intendant deployed by the *bakufu* was officially in charge of supervising the civil activities in the region, he was located far from the production site, and did not intervene in pottery production. In this context, professional potters who shared a kiln organized a group of kiln-lineages (*kama-suji*) and established the guild association of potters (*kama-nakamama*), officially recognizing the holders of licenses (*kabu*) by themselves. At the end of the eighteenth century, the guild association of potters officially gained a permit for their activities from the regional authorities by paying a business tax to the Intendant office in Kasamatsu.²⁷ Unlike the Seto case, however, the regulations of the guild neither specified

26 Seto shi 1996, pp. 252–54.

27 Kasahara chō 1991, pp. 169–71, 180.

the size of production nor restricted opportunities for new entrants. Although the Mino guild prohibited leasing a license and kiln across the kiln-lineage, many rented them to those who did not belong to the lineage or have any license. Many farmers in the region obtained new licenses for using furnaces or were employed as workers for kilns (*kamakasegi*). Moreover, Owari merchants developed close ties with producers in Mino by financing or leasing kiln furnaces and materials to the producers.²⁸ Without regulation by the political authority or the guild, pottery production in the region was under the influence of incoming commercial capital, especially from Owari merchants.

Porcelain production began in the mid-nineteenth century after the technique was transferred from Seto. The beginning of porcelain production brought significant changes to pottery production in the region. Firstly, the amount of production expanded alongside the increased number of those involved in porcelain production. Secondly, new types of labor emerged, such as mining stone and clay materials (*sunayama-kasegi*), glaze mining (*egusuri-kasegi*), and the water mill (*suisha-kasegi*). Moreover, the relations of production became increasingly commercialized. As mentioned above, unlike the cases of Arita and Seto, licenses or *kabu* and the furnaces of kiln were openly leased or sold in this region, thus making it possible for farmers, landlords, and merchants to obtain firing rooms and pottery wheels for porcelain production. Some of them further expanded their activities by utilizing resources, such as finance, materials, and the labor force. These landlords and merchants who obtained extra firing rooms and pottery wheels leased them to potters and farmers and further increased their influence in porcelain production in the region. Without political control or guild regulations, the commercialization of porcelain production in Mino further accelerated.

Capitalist Mino: Creating New Distribution Channels for Marketing Porcelains

In Mino, unlike Saga with its coercive control over porcelain production, or Owari with the collaboration between producers, merchants, and the domain authority, different types of agents made competing claims over porcelain production and distribution. Ever since the beginning of porcelain production in the early nineteenth century, the Owari merchants had organized production resources and influenced porcelain production in Mino by making the public warehouse policy of Owari available for the products made in the region, with the permission of the Owari domain and the Mino Intendant.

Most producers in Mino, however, started to complain about a policy that was initiated by Owari merchants with the support of the Owari domain. Producers had to pay sales tax, charge for currency exchange at the account office in the domain, and hand over a commission charge to the wholesalers in the major markets. During the 1830s, Nishiura, a landlord merchant, with the support of local producers, worked to establish an alternative transaction route while holding a series of negotiations with the regional Intendant of Mino and the domain government of Owari. Owari merchants and those from Edo initially contested his proposal; however, he successfully managed to persuade these stakeholders. In 1835, a new office for pottery transaction was established. Subsequently, all products were shipped to the Mino pottery office and then via the account office in Nagoya to

28 Kasahara chō 1991, pp. 171–76, Ando 1981, p. 50.

the warehouse offices in the major markets. All payments were made in the Tokugawa regime's official currency instead of the paper money issued by the Owari domain. The new arrangement blocked opportunities for the Owari merchants for engaging in pottery production and distribution in Mino. Nishiura further organized the resources for production and distribution of porcelains by controlling the entire process, supervising the products' transactions, and opening new wholesale stores in Edo and Osaka.²⁹

The new arrangements, however, did not satisfy all producers and distributors in the region. While many favored the arrangement that guaranteed payments without additional charges, others who sold the products in the nearby markets did not see any benefit in participating in the arrangement and continued selling the products directly without registering them with the regulatory office. Although Nishiura and other merchants made a series of amendments to regulate these activities and the volume of transactions each broker could deal in, many producers and merchants persistently ignored the arrangement.³⁰ The number of amendments illustrates the competing claims among different groups of producers and merchants in the region. In that sense, distributing arrangements in Mino were made amidst continuous power struggles among the various agents involved in porcelain production and distribution. In the absence of political control or guild associations, various types of agents, the Owari merchants, local wholesalers, and local producers, made different claims to pursue their interests to enlarge their capacities.

COERCION, COLLABORATION, AND CONTENTION FOR PORCELAINS

The relationships between the *bakufu* and the regional political authorities shaped the political economies of local domains and regional districts, including the claim of the regional political authorities over the subject populations. They influenced the ways resources were governed by the regional authorities in each domain or administrative district. While the regional authority made claims over resources, the means and the degree of its control influenced the opportunities and capacities of the subject populations to create capital out of resources in the territories. The analysis above has shown how political context shaped the regional economies in each of three regions. The different political relationships caused multiple patterns of political economies in local domains and territorial holdings in the Tokugawa regime.

The regional characteristics constituted the context in which merchandising policies for porcelains were formulated in each domain or district. They not only affected the ways of managing the resources for porcelain production but also shaped the patterns in which distribution channels were institutionalized. The *gengawase-shihō* (display check policy) of the Saga domain was a "mercantilistic" arrangement, implemented through the strong initiative of the domain authority. Saga made a highly coercive claim over porcelain production and implemented various types of regulation on production to control the size and quality of porcelain manufacturing and further intervened in the distribution of porcelains to

29 Kasahara chō 1991, pp. 193–98, Yamagata 2008, pp. 21–22, 24–27.

30 Kasahara chō 1991, pp. 199, Yamagata 2008, pp. 287–92.

appropriate capital created through the sales of porcelains, while undermining the capacities of wholesalers. The *kuramoto-shihō* (public warehouse policy) of Owari was a “corporatist” arrangement, made through collaboration among the domain government, wholesalers who received patronage, and producers. The Owari domain made a relatively moderate claim over the resources for porcelain production and distribution. The wholesalers appointed by the domain authority and the guild of potters collectively proposed new arrangements for the transaction of porcelains to secure distribution channels to the major markets. The arrangements for transactions of porcelain made in Mino were “capitalistic” ones. In Mino district, without regulation either by the domain authority or established guild associations, there were many more opportunities for various types of agents, such as potters, farmers, landlords, and merchants to engage in porcelain production and distribution, with competing claims over resources. Wholesalers in Nagoya, and later, a landlord in Mino, who obtained resources for production in the region, played critical roles in institutionalizing distribution channels to the markets. The different patterns of relationships among the political authorities and manufacturers and distributors of porcelain elucidate the regional variations in the arrangements for porcelain transactions.

Comparative analysis of merchandising policies illustrates that each regional political authority made different types of claims in the process of making arrangements. The political economy of each region shaped the different motives for political authorities to intervene in market transactions. The domain government of Saga made strong claims over porcelain production and distribution and captured capital created through porcelain transactions. The domain government of Owari made only a modest claim over porcelain production and distribution to share the capital created through the sale of porcelain with the guilds of producers and merchants. In Mino, in the absence of strong political authorities, different types of merchants who organized resources for production utilized their political powers to legitimate claims in the region. The degree of intervention and the type of claim that each political authority made differed by region.

The financial basis of the arrangement illustrates who took the major role in establishing the arrangement in each domain or district. While the domain government of Saga directly financed producers, the finance for implementing such arrangements in the case of Owari and Mino was offered by the merchants who proposed the arrangement. These variations in the major agents who took the initiative of establishing the arrangements, and their motives, were embedded in the relationships between the regional powers and those engaged in production and distribution in each region. The regional political economy shaped the motives and incentives of the political authorities and those engaged in porcelain production and distribution to appropriate resources over porcelain and legalize their claims in the process of industrialization along with commercialization of the Tokugawa economy. In this way, the relations between the *bakufu*, regional authorities, and the subject populations shaped the contexts in which producers, merchants, and administrative authorities made claims over porcelain production and distribution in each region.

Merchandising policies became the source of tensions and struggles among various groups of agents: producers, merchants, and the governmental authorities. While merchandising policies officially defined the capacities and claims of producers, merchants, and the governmental authorities over porcelain on one hand, they also transformed or even

challenged the existing patterns of transactions on the other. Those who did not recognize any benefit in the arrangement often challenged it by searching for alternatives. While some of these challenging claims were accepted for revising the arrangements, others were ignored or even suppressed by those who supported the arrangement. A series of petitions and other related historical records made by local merchants and producers have shown regional variation in the issues, the ways, and the frequencies with which these claims emerged in the process of formulating merchandising porcelain policies. The process of policy-making illustrates struggles, cooperation, and negotiation among the political authorities and the subject population to legitimize some of their competing claims.

Political relations, as shown above, constituted specific contexts of industrialization in Tokugawa Japan. As Ikegami and Tilly noted, the Tokugawa state was a “coercion-intensive” state. The growth of commercial capital was constrained by political power.³¹ My analysis confirms their claim, but shows regional variations in the degree of the constraints within the regime due to the power structure of the Tokugawa regime. Comparative analysis of these policies illuminated the development of porcelain production and distribution along with the growth of the market economy in Tokugawa Japan. The relationships influenced the ways of organizing resources, access to the market, and the degree of commercialization as the context of industrialization in each of these regions under the Tokugawa regime. These regional characteristics of the relations constituted the contexts of industrialization in each region. Porcelain manufacturing in Arita in the Saga domain took a path of *state-led* industrialization. The domain authority closely monitored and controlled the size and quality of production. By implementing the arrangement, the domain authority gained capital from transactions of porcelains in the major markets. Porcelain production in Seto in the Owari domain took a more *corporative* path. The guild of producers and wholesalers gained political support from the domain authority, while extending the network of porcelain transactions to the major markets. The district of Mino took a *capital-intensive* pattern of industrialization. Various groups of agents, such as producers, merchants, farmers, and landlords competed with each other to obtain resources for porcelain production and distribution. Analysis has shown that the political context shaped different paths of industrialization under the Tokugawa regime. While it is far beyond the scope of this article to discuss how each industrial site went through changes after the collapse of the Tokugawa regime, the regional characteristics in managing resources must have influenced the porcelain manufacturing in each region along with the wider political and social dynamics in the late nineteenth century.

Regional variation in the relationships shown in my analysis implies that it is necessary to understand the relationships in the economic, social, and political dynamics in each historical setting. While the rise of industries did have a significant impact on regional economies as well as social and political relationships, my analysis shows that each case went through different processes with different outcomes. While industrialization in some cases caused regional governmental authorities to enforce its coercive claim, private agents also further enlarged their activities to create capital in other cases. In other words, industrialization did not always cause specific social and political outcomes, for the existing

31 Ikegami and Tilly 1994, p. 439.

relationships shaped the ways of organizing and allocating resources in each region. In that sense, my analysis illustrates various patterns of economic, political, and social dynamics in nineteenth-century Tokugawa Japan.

Analysis of merchandising policies for porcelains further indicates the impacts that arrangements for market transactions had on the entire Tokugawa regime. Merchandising policies, including the arrangements enacted in the three regions, challenged the *bakufu's* claim over the markets. The distribution channels warranted by the regional political authorities undermined the interests of established wholesalers' guilds in the markets of Edo and Osaka that were supported by the *bakufu*. Facing confusion in the market, the *bakufu* announced the dissolution of all the guild associations and nullified the merchandising policies of the domains in the early 1840s to reorganize the distribution system of the entire regime. Many domain authorities, however, ignored the announcement to retain their distribution channels and protect the guilds of their domains. In all three regions, the distribution channels for porcelains were maintained with some revisions. The Saga domain further enforced its claim over the distribution of products for regional markets. Owari made a special arrangement that exempted the guild of pottery wholesalers from the ordinances of the *bakufu*. In Mino, a territory of the *bakufu*, distribution channels were maintained, and wholesalers created new associations and a license registry system that specified the size of their business activities. Each of these reactions shows that the *bakufu's* attempt to control distribution in the markets was unsuccessful. After realizing the ineffectiveness of its policy, the *bakufu* accepted the merchandising arrangements of the local domains and activities of the guild associations. The *bakufu's* move indicated that its influence over the markets was declining by the mid-nineteenth century. The analysis above illuminates the power struggles among the *bakufu*, the regional powers, and various types of private agents, and clarifies the expansion of the market economy and the rise of industries under the Tokugawa regime in the first half of the nineteenth century.

CONCLUSION

This article has analyzed merchandising policies for porcelains implemented in the domains of Saga, Owari, and the *bakufu's* holding of Mino, from the late eighteenth century to the first half of the nineteenth century under the Tokugawa regime. The arrangements for merchandising porcelains illustrate the contrasting relations among the *bakufu*, regional political authorities, merchants, and producers in the three regions. The relations between political authorities and those who were engaged in porcelain production and distribution could manifest in the form of coercion, collaboration, or contention. In Saga, the regional authority made a coercive claim to govern resources in its territory. In Owari, groups of producers and merchants associated with each other as guild associations and often made collective claims and legitimated their interests to control resources with support of the regional authority. In Mino, with little control by the regional authority or the guild association, various groups made competing claims over resources for porcelain production and distribution. The way and the extent of control by the regional political authorities strongly influenced the opportunities and potential of the population to create capital through the production and distribution of resources in each region. Comparative analysis of three sites of porcelain manufacturing has demonstrated that industrialization

in Tokugawa Japan did not take a unilinear path. Instead, it was conditioned by the relationships among the *bakufu*, the regional authorities and the subject population. The regional characteristics shown in the analysis of Saga, Owari, and Mino illustrate the diverse contexts of industrialization within the Tokugawa regime.

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