

section, “Ideología, religion y fiesta” treats, among a wide range of topics, the use of martyrdoms, courtly celebrations, and quotidian events as ideological tools that directly or indirectly take the form of news and promote attitudes such as adherence to the monarch, anti-Semitism, or orthodox religious zeal.

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*Individuality in Early Modern Japan: Thinking for Oneself.* Peter Nosco.  
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In this welcome addition to the revisionist scholarship on the history of premodern Japan, Nosco analyzes the development of individuality in early modern Japanese society, challenging the traditional, stereotypical image of Tokugawa Japan (1603–1868) as a backward feudal society dominated by the repressive Bakufu regime. Aiming “to rehabilitate the host of counter-ideological and countercultural values” and “to resurrect the individuality that was so prominent a feature of mid- and late Tokugawa society” (8), Nosco explores a wide range of sources, including novels by Ihara Saikaku (1642–93), writings of independent-minded female author Tadano Makuzu (1763–1825), narratives of the state persecution of a Buddhist movement, and a statement of protest composed by an eighteenth-century villager. What is revealed is a vibrant culture of nonconformity, which prompted Carl Peter Thunberg (who stayed in Japan 1775–76) to write, “Liberty is the soul of the Japanese” (58).

After explaining his study’s goal, in chapter 1, Nosco examines, in chapter 2, the interaction between the development of individual and collective identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As the status of samurai as military professionals declined, urban commoners started seeking more education as a means of improving social status, sharing upper-class concerns over reputation and the making of a name for oneself. This change in social mobility and the mental world stimulated people’s enthusiasm for self-improvement as individuals, blurring the boundary between samurai and commoners. The collective identity of “Japaneseness” defined by the nativists such as Kamono Mabuchi (1697–1769) and Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) do not deny these individual differences.

Chapter 3 focuses on the emergence of the public sphere in Tokugawa Japan, shown through the examples of the violent protests against the regime (especially the 1637–38 Shimabara Rebellion and the 1837 insurrection in Osaka), the use of remonstrance boxes, and the liberty of opinions expressed in private academies. These examples lead the author to conclude that “consciousness of both freedom and reasonable expectations [of individual well-being] grew steadily to the point where they were just a few short steps away from what today would be styled human rights” (60). The next chapter

reveals that the situation was not always so rosy, as it narrates the suffering of the Fufuse movement within Nichiren Buddhism brought by state persecution. However, the believers' determination to uphold their religious principles even in secret suggests their staunch sense of identity and individuality. At the same time, the effort of the community to pretend ignorance of their neighbors' religious unorthodoxy also shows the people's communal willingness to allow for "privacy."

Chapter 5 examines the early modern zeal for self-cultivation—which became almost a "religious quest" (84)—prevailing in the private academies and the *bunjin* (literati) salons. The significance of these venues is clear: they provided a place where commoners could express their opinions and present intellectual disagreements with samurai. The salons were characterized by "a horizontal fraternity of literate, highly cultured individuals who disdained conventional values and chose instead to explore their individual interiority and to pursue spiritual fulfillment" (91).

Nosco analyzes the transformation of images of happiness in chapter 6, arguing that their focus moved gradually from physical, material well-being to a more subjective interiority. This shows that "the early modern self was no longer to be denied or left behind as in medieval times," as people "enjoyed individual and collective dimensions of identity, as they sought to situate themselves in what had become a much more complex and transactional world" (112). Chapter 7 explores the transformation of the values throughout the Tokugawa period, showing the decline of ideological values and the increasing emphasis on the pursuit of personal self-interest. One example of this change is the growing acceptance of eccentricity in Edo society, where the populace welcomed *kijin* (eccentrics) as genius figures.

Offering a wealth and variety of material, Nosco successfully presents how the early modern Japanese expressed their individuality to a far higher degree than is recognized in traditional studies. Any future study on early modern Japan will be required to consider the power and the richness of these radical, nonconforming voices expressed through diverse means. One source that could have been included in this captivating work is a series of poems composed by Tachibana Akemi (1812–68) narrating various daily experiences that made the poet feel happy. This would add an interesting twist to Nosco's elaborate arguments in chapter 6.

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*The Free Port of Livorno and the Transformation of the Mediterranean World, 1574–1790.* Corey Tazzara.

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Corey Tazzara's excellent book examines the history of Livorno, the earliest and most successful model of a free port in early modern Europe, and its importance in the