

Japanese Nationalism Ancient and Modern

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The nature and origins of nationalism are much debated topics, and the issues involved too complex to be adequately summarized here. Most authorities agree, however, that nationalism is a relatively recent phenomenon, originating in Europe perhaps during the eighteenth century and spreading throughout the world in the nineteenth century. One common definition stresses that nationalism arises when nation or ethnicity and state share a common boundary. Some scholars will note that this is a condition that has existed in China, Korea, and Japan for quite some time, although they do not then conclude that nationalism has an ancient pedigree in these Asia.¹ Nationalism in Japan too has received extensive treatment. In keeping with conventional definitions, the focus has been on the creation of modern nationalism after the Meiji Restoration. Scholars have noted how modern Japanese politicians and thinkers were able to build a vigorous, eventually even virulent, form of nationalism using materials from Japan's traditional culture, the imperial institution itself being a conspicuous example. Although Japan's long history of apparently common ethnic and political boundaries may have facilitated this process, most research has focused on how modern Japanese used elements out of Japan's past rather than on apparently nationalistic expressions from Japan's past.² This paper will begin with an instance of the former before

¹ See, for example, Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983) pp. 1, 13-14, 16; and E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) p. 66. Gellner mentions only China, although his argument would seem to apply to Japan and Korea as well.

² For the creation of modern Japanese nationalism, see Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), along with many of the works in her bibliography. Missing from her bibliography is Delmer Brown's classic study, *Nationalism in Japan: An Introductory Historical Analysis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), a work that now seems dated but does introduce nationalistic ideas from earlier times. A more recent and more narrowly focused treatment of the subject is Takashi Fujitani, *Splendid Monarchy* (University of California Press, 1996), which argues, as summarized in the dust jacket blurb, "that just over a century ago there was no such thing as an imperial family." As one largely favorable review has noted, Fujitani does not give due attention to the traditional materials that modern nationalists worked with (Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, review in *Journal of Asian Studies*, 56.3 [August, 1997] pp.

focusing on the latter.

During World War II, many elements of Japanese culture were mobilized to perform patriotic service. The following classical poem is one example:

もろこしも	Far Cathay too
天の下にぞ	Lies under the same heaven,
有と聞く	I hear:
照る日の本を	Please do not forget
忘れざらなむ	This Land of the Rising Sun.

Although originally meant as a highly personal rather than a political statement, this poem was addressed to a man who did indeed express sentiments that today seem remarkably nationalistic.

The poem itself originally appeared in two early anthologies, the more famous being the *Shinkokinshû* 新古今集, the eighth imperially sponsored collection of poetry in Japanese, compiled circa 1205. There, it is preceded by the headnote, “Composed by his mother when the monk Jôjin 成尋 went to China.” In 1071, Jôjin, in preparation for his pilgrimage to Buddhist holy sites in China, had entrusted his mother, her name no longer known, to the care of his younger brother, also a monk. At the time, Jôjin was already 61 years old; his mother, in her early eighties. She began to keep a sort of poetic diary lamenting her imminent, and—she feared—permanent, separation from her beloved elder son. As soon as she arrived at the brother’s monastery, she sent Jôjin a sequence of seven poems expressing her grief and begging that her son return from China promptly. That was the poem’s original context: part of an elderly widow’s plea that her favorite son, intent on overseas adventure, remember her and not fail to return.³ As it happens, he did not. The poetry is unremarkable, (793-94).

³ In *Shinkokinshû*, this is poem 871; for a full discussion of the mother’s anthology, *Jôjin Azari no Haha no Shû* 成尋阿闍梨母集, see my “Jôjin Azari no Haha no Shû, A Poetic Reading, *The Distant Isle: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Memory of Robert Brower*, ed Thomas Blenman Hare, Robert Borgen, and Sharalyn Orbaugh (Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1997), in which this poem is treated on pp. 8-10. Of various modern editions, the most convenient is Miyazaki Sôhei 宮崎荘平, *Jôjin*

but the story is affecting.

The poem attracted little attention until 1942, when the newspapers that evolved into the present Mainichi Shinbun published “*Aikoku Hyakunin Isshu*” 愛国百人一首, literally something like, “One Hundred Patriotic Poems by One Hundred Poets.” The title refers to the familiar *Hyakunin Isshu*, a medieval anthology of one hundred poems, each by a different poet. Because the poems came to be used in a card game played in Japanese homes every New Year, they are among the best known in the classical Japanese poetic cannon. The poems typically treat the conventional themes of classical Japanese literature: love and nature. The original collection dated from about 1200, but later years saw many imitations. The year 1942 called for a distinctively different anthology, reflecting the contemporary demand for sterner stuff than the traditional romance and flowers. Hence, the patriotic version was compiled and even translated into both Chinese and English, although it is difficult to imagine that foreign readers of the day would have appreciated the sentiments expressed.⁴ Those responsible for the compilation include some of the leading literary and scholarly figures of the day, among them the distinguished poets Sasaki Nobutsuna 佐々木信綱, Saitô Mokichi 齋藤茂吉, Kitahara Hakushû 北原白秋, and Orikuchi Shinobu 折口信夫, plus other intellectuals such as Hisamatsu Sen’ichi 久松潜一, Tokutomi Sohô 徳富蘇峰, and Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助.

Kawada Jun 川田順, in a commentary published shortly after the patriotic collection appeared, explains the inclusion of this poem. First, his introduction gives the general criteria for selecting the poems. “Patriotism” was to be broadly defined so as to include love

Ajari Haha no Shû Zenshakuchû 成尋阿闍梨母集全釈注 (Kôdansha, 1979). The work has been translated into English, with meticulous annotation and an introduction detailing the circumstances of composition, by Robert Minzter, “*Jôjin Azari no haha shû: Maternal Love in the Eleventh Century, An Enduring Testament*,” (Diss. Harvard University, 1978).

⁴ For the English version, see Heihachiro Honda, *One Hundred Patriotic Poems* (Hokuseido Press, 1944), where the poem by Jôjin’s mother appears on p. 27: “You start for Cathay,/ Which lies on the globe same,/ Howe’er far away./ Ne’er fail, my son, to esteem/ Your land, nor of it to dream!” Although I have not actually seen the Chinese version, it is discussed in Okamura Keiji 岡村敬二, “*Pekin Kindai Kagaku Toshokan no ‘Nihon’*,” 北京近代科学図書館の 日本 *Nihon Kenkyû* 7 (1992), pp. 115-16.

between parent and child or husband and wife, since Japan was a nation that believed in “family-ism” (*kazokushugi* 家族主義). In his explanation of the poem itself, Kawada states that it was the parting gift from an aged mother warning her son that going to China to help bring back foreign culture may have been very noble, but he must not to forget that he is Japanese. Kawada concludes by stressing that the reason for including this poem was to be found in the attitude of the mother, who displayed the traditional spirit of sufferance characteristic of Japanese women. To be sure, parting was a tearful occasion, but the mother was able to endure her sadness and admonish her son not to forget Japan.

Kawada improves upon history by asserting that Jōjin did return to Japan and devote himself to propagating esoteric Buddhism, even though a note on the poem’s author at the back of the book does get the details right and has him dying in China.⁵ But this misstatement of fact is surely the lesser of Kawada’s distortions. More notably, he turns Jōjin’s mother into a model for wartime Japanese mothers who were also sending their sons off to China, not on religious pilgrimages but to fight a brutal war. They too had good reason to worry that their sons might not return, but, Kawada implied, Jōjin’s mother offered a model for them to follow. In fact, readers of her complete text would have discovered that she was all too possessive a mother who had no sympathy at all for her son’s foolish religious ambitions to make a pilgrimage to China. Instead, she desperately wanted him to stay with her. She repeatedly regrets only that, when he had sent her off to be cared for by his brother, she had failed to make a scene, weeping and protesting so vociferously that Jōjin would be too embarrassed to part from her. In the end, he left at night, without telling her. Presumably he anticipated she would have taken the news badly. Some Japanese mothers during World War II may have shared her sentiments and preferred that their sons stay home, but one wonders how many would have dared express such views, even in private writings.

If Jōjin’s mother seems out of place in a selection of patriotic poets, Jōjin himself did express sentiments that certainly seem nationalistic. Occasionally, he would have even made a wartime Japanese patriot proud; mostly, however, he helps us understand Japanese national identity in the eleventh century. His nationalism—and, problematic though it may be, that term will be used—was not of the bellicose sort, but rather seemed to reflect an accurate awareness of cultural and political differences combined with a sense of self-confidence. If Jōjin never returned home, he did follow his mother’s admonition never to forget Japan.

Like his mother, Jōjin kept a journal, although his is anything but poetic. Rather, it is

⁵ Kawata Jun 川田順, *Aikoku Hyakunin Isshu Hyōshaku* 愛国百人一首評釈 (Ôsaka: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1943) pp. 17-20, 84-86, 250.

a daily record, written in terse, often cryptic, Chinese, recounting his experiences. In the third month of 1072, Jōjin, accompanied by seven disciples, boarded a Chinese merchant ship in Kyushu. After six days at sea, they arrived off the coast of China near the modern city of Ningbo. From there, Jōjin and his entourage travelled to the nearby Tiantai 天台 Mountains where his sect of Buddhism had been founded. Jōjin's second goal was to worship at another holy site, the Wutai 五台 Mountains far too the north. Local officials, obviously ill at ease in their dealings with a foreign monk, insisted he get permission from the central government before proceeding there, and so he dutifully sent off a petition requesting permission to visit Wutai. When eventually he received a reply, it made no mention of Wutai but instead ordered him to the capital for an imperial audience. From this point on, he became a guest of the Chinese government, his travels generously subsidized. Jōjin then went to the Song 宋 capital of Kaifeng 開封, where he met with Buddhist monks from throughout Asia. After his imperial audience, he was granted permission to visit Wutai, a two-month journey through the northern mountains that he completed in the dead of winter. Upon his return, he began to make arrangement to send five of his disciples home to Japan and to return to Tiantai himself in the company of his remaining two followers. With this in mind, he gathered many unfamiliar Chinese texts that he wanted to send home. Before he could depart, however, he was again summoned to the palace, this time to say prayers to end a drought. When rain fell, he was given credit and rewarded with a distinguished rank in the Chinese Buddhist hierarchy. Subsequently, he returned to the coast and entrusted his diary to his returning disciples, who then brought it safely back to Japan. Entitled *The Record of a Pilgrimage to the Tiantai and Wutai Mountains* 參天台五台山記, it offers a detailed description of sixteen months of travel throughout China. Jōjin then disappears from the pages of history until eight years later when we are told he died in China.⁶

Scattered throughout Jōjin's diary may be found evidence of his strong sense of

⁶ For a general introduction to the diary in English, see my "San Tendai Godai san ki as a Source for the Study of Sung History," *Bulletin of Sung Yuan Studies* XIX (1987), pp. 1-16. In Japanese, see Ii Haruki 伊井春樹, *Jōjin no Nissō to Sono Shōgai* 成尋の入宋とその生涯 (Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1996). The most convenient edition of the diary is that edited by Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and included in vol. 115 of *Dai Nihon Bukkyō zensho* 大日本仏教全書 originally published in 1917 and subsequently reprinted many times by various publishers. Citations of the diary will be in the form of *kan* 卷 no. (in roman numerals)/month/day.

national identity. As a convenience, the examples that follow will be divided into three categories, language, government, and religion even though in practice the distinctions are blurred.

One conspicuous example of linguistic nationalism is Jōjin's use of the term "Great Japanese Nation" 大日本国 to refer to his native land, an example of which will appear shortly in a translated excerpt from the diary. Japanese scholars have called attention to this choice of terminology.⁷ It is a usage that must surely provoke strong, if highly divergent, reactions among modern Japanese, for it sounds vaguely reminiscent of prewar Japan's official name, "Great Japanese Imperial Nation" 大日本帝国. Reading too much into this term, however, is dangerous. First, Jōjin was merely imitating Chinese usage. If Japan is "The Great Japanese Nation," China is "The Great Song Nation," a term Jōjin also adopts. Jōjin is simply attempting to put Japan on an equal footing with China, not asserting Japanese superiority. In other historical periods, the Chinese might have found such assertions of equality offensive, but the Song was a weak dynasty that faced military threats and was anxious to make friendly alliances. Rather than object, the Song chose to treat Jōjin as an official representative of Japan and use his visit as an excuse to seek a revival of diplomatic ties, an attempt that ultimately failed as the Japanese were not much interested.⁸ Unofficial Chinese tolerance of this usage was demonstrated when the monks at Wutai presented Jōjin a document using both the terms "Great Song Nation" and "Great Japanese Nation." In short, Jōjin's terminology is more a reflection of traditional Chinese usage than a precursor of modern Japanese imperialism.

Three final points remain concerning Jōjin's choice of terminology. First, idea of turning Japan into a "Great Nation" appears to have been a recent development in his day. The oldest example of "Great Japanese Nation" cited in the authoritative dictionary *Nihon*

⁷ See, for example, Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助, *Kaigai Kōtsū Shiwa* 海外交通史話 (Naigai Shoseki, 1930) pp. 182-83; and Mori Katsumi 森克己, *Kaigai Kōshōshi no Shiten* 海外交渉史の視点 (Nihon Shoseki, 1975) vol. 1, p. 167.

⁸ For diplomacy in Song times, see the essays found in Morris Rossabi, ed. *China among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbors, 10th-14th Centuries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). Diplomatic consequences of Jōjin's visit to China are treated in my "Monkish Diplomacy: A Case Study in Eleventh-Century Sino-Japanese Relations," *Contacts between Cultures: Selected Papers from the Thirty-third the International Congress of Asian and North African Studies, vol. 4: East Asian History and Social Sciences* (E. Mellen Press, 1992).

Kokugo Daijiten 日本国語大辞典 is a document dated 1046, a mere 26 years before Jōjin used the term.⁹ Thus, although Jōjin had not coined the phrase, surely it had not appeared previously in an international setting. Second, the Japanese and Chinese usages are not altogether parallel, for Jōjin's term presumably referred to the Japanese state, whereas its Chinese counterpart referred to a specific dynasty. Since Japan has not had a series of dynasties, the Japanese had little choice but to adopt a term suggestive of modern nationalism in place of China's dynastic labels. Finally, Jōjin was not consistent. If he chose occasionally to use terminology inflating Japan's status, other times he conceded to Chinese hegemonic inclinations by adopting the Chinese era name. Thus, whereas the diary begins in Japan with a date using the Japanese era name, the fourth year of Enkyū 延久, by the third book, the date has become the fifth year of Xining 熙寧 and the fourth book begins "The Great Song Nation, the fifth year of Xining." Here, Jōjin was conceding to Chinese notions of propriety that insisted on the use of the Chinese by vassal states.

Jōjin's interactions with the Chinese government began as soon as he arrived in Hangzhou, the first major Chinese city he visited. His travels in China were closely monitored. Before he could go to Tiantai, he needed official travel documents. In seeking permission to travel, he was aided by his interpreter, a Chinese merchant who had been to Japan five times and learned the language—in Hangzhou he also met a Korean sailor who spoke Japanese—and by other local merchants and Buddhist monks. As he proceeded to Tiantai, officials periodically checked his documents and, by the time he was requesting permission to travel from the central government, he had come to fully appreciate their value and copied them into his diary. At this point, we discover they had been issued not to him but to his interpreter. As an unknown foreign monk, apparently he had status only as a ward of his new-found Chinese companion. This all changed when the central government ordered him to the capital for an imperial audience and he became a guest of state. Local officials were now quite pleased to deal with him directly. His contacts with the Chinese government are thus a persistent theme throughout the diary.

Two incidents, both of which occurred in the capital, are particularly revealing of his attitude toward his Chinese hosts. Upon his arrival in the Chinese capital, he was given a list of questions by the Chinese court, which he recorded in his diary along with his answers:

⁹ This first reference is in a prayer to Hachiman Daibosatsu 八幡大菩薩 (*Heian Ibun: Komonjo Hen* 平安遺文古文書編, Takeuchi Rizō 竹内理三 ed. [Tōkyōdō, 1974] vol. 3, p. 775.

Question: What are Japan's customs?

Answer: The Tang 唐 Dynasty forms the basis in our study of the civil and martial arts.

Question: How many *li* is the area of the capital?

Answer: There are nine wards 条 totaling thirty-eight *li*. One ward is four *li* making thirty-six *li* and to the north of the first ward are an additional two *li*.

Question: How many residences are in the capital?

Answer: There are 200,000 houses. I do not know the exact number in the western and southern capitals [Daizaifu and Nara], but there are many.

Question: What is the population of the nation?

Answer: I do not know how many countless billions 億万.

Question: What is the area of your nation?

Answer: It is 7,700 *li* from east to west and 5,000 *li* from south to north.

Question: How many states 国, districts 郡 and villages 邑 are there?

Answer: There are sixty-eight provinces 州 and 981 districts.

Question: What is the king of your nation 国王 called?

Answer: He is either called "emperor" 皇帝 or called "sage ruler" 聖主.

Question: Do your families have surnames?

Answer: Our families have surnames. Fujiwara 藤原, Minamoto 源, Taira 平, and Tachibana 橘 are the most noble; time does not allow me to provide a detailed list of all the others.

Question: Since your nation is very close to Mingzhou 明州, why do not maintain contact with China?

Answer: I do not know how many *li* of ocean lie between my nation and Mingzhou. Some say it is more than 7,000 *li*, others 5,000 *li*. The waves are high and there are no harbors. Contact with China is difficult to maintain.

Question: What are the titles of your nation's high officials?

Answer: There is one prime minister 大政大臣, one minister of the left 左大臣, one minister of the right 右大臣, one minister of the center 内大臣, four major counsellors 大納言, six middle counsellors 中納言, and eight consultants 参議. Together, these officials are known as "senior nobles" 上卿.

Question: What is the genealogy of your nation? [Jôjin's note: the monk Sanzang 三蔵 said that this meant the names in the genealogy of the age of the gods and the age of men.]

Answer: In my land, the genealogy in the age of the gods consists of seven generations: the first is Kunitokotachi no Mikoto 国常立尊, the second is Izanagi-Izanami no Mikoto 伊弉諾伊弉册尊, the third is Ôhirumemuchi no kami 大日靈貴, who is also known as Amaterasu Ômikami 天照大神. When this sun goddess was first born, she became emperor 帝王.

Later she climbed to the heavens and shone on the realm below which was therefore named the Great Japanese Nation (literally, "The Great Nation which is the Source of the Sun").

The fourth is Masakatsu no Mikoto 正勝尊, and the fifth, Hiko no Mikoto 彦尊, who ruled for 318,542 years and was the eldest son of the previous king. The sixth was Hikohohodemi no Mikoto 彦火々出見尊, who ruled for 637,892 years and was the second son of the previous king. The seventh was Hikonagisa no Mikoto 彦瀲尊 who ruled for 836,042 years. Next was the first generation of human rulers, Jinmu Tennô 神武天皇, who ruled for eighty-seven years and was the fourth son of the previous king. The seventy-first generation is the present national ruler. All are descendents of the divine family.

Question: In your nation, are the temperatures in the four seasons the same as in China?

Answer: In my nation, the temperatures in the four seasons are the same as in China.

Question: When one goes to the nation of Japan from Mingzhou, at what province and in what district does one first arrive and how far is it from there to the city of the nation's king?

Answer: From Mingzhou, one arrives at the harbor of Hakata 博多 in Chikuzen 筑前 Province, Dazaifu 太宰府, in the nation of Japan; from the harbor to the city of the nation's king is 2,700 *li*.

Question: What goods from the land of Han does your nation need?

Answer: Our nation needs from the land of Han fragrances, medicines, tea, bowls [or teabowls?], brocade, and sapan-wood [used as a dye].

Question: What beasts are there in your nation?

Answer: My nation has no lions, elephants, tigers, sheep, peacocks, or parrots, but it has all the other varieties.

Question: What is the surname of the king 王 of your nation?

Answer: My nation's king 国王 has no surname.

Question: How far is your nation from the land of the hairy people 毛国?

Answer: I do not know how far it is from the nation of the hairy people.¹⁰

Both the Chinese questions and Jôjin's answers are fascinating. Although all merit comment, only a few relating to Jôjin's sense of national identity will be discussed here. For example, even the most rabid modern Japanese emperor worshippers would surely be pleased that Jôjin emphasizes the divine ancestry of Japan's royal family, but at the same time they would be rather puzzled by his version of the genealogy of the age of the gods, which appears to be a unique variation on the familiar creation myths from Japan's ancient histories, *Kojiki* 古事記 and *Nihon Shoki* 日本書紀. Perhaps, as a devout Buddhist, Jôjin was uncertain of the details and so improvised to produce a version that would seem more plausible, yet at the same time more impressive, to his foreign audience. This involved a mixture of both contracting and expanding on the details. Names of deities that may have seemed improbably cumbersome were contracted. Thus, for example, the diet whose various alternate names includes Masakaakatsukachihayabi Amanooshihomimi no Mikoto 正哉吾勝勝速日天忍穗耳尊 became simply Masakatsu no Mikoto. At the same time, reign lengths were wildly inflated. Nowhere else does one find even deities credited with reigns in the hundreds of thousands of years, and even Jinmu is normally only given seventy-six years.

Similarly, other numbers such as Japan's putative population are clearly exaggerated. For example, according to modern calculations, a *li* is just under 4 kilometers. A rough estimate puts Jôjin's route from Japan to China at approximately 800 kilometers. Jôjin claims the distance to be between 20,000 and 28,000 kilometers. Earlier in his diary, however, he had estimated the distance as 3,000 *li*,¹¹ or about 12,000 kilometers, still almost four times the actual figure, but apparently not sufficient to justify the infrequency of Japan's diplomatic missions to China. Other measurements are comparably exaggerated, although

¹⁰ IV/10/15.

¹¹ I/3/25.

we have no way of knowing whether or not Jōjin was consciously inflating his figures as he clearly was doing with the distance to China or was merely ignorant of the actual numbers. Whatever the reason, Jōjin was stressing that his was a grand and civilized nation.

Later, when Jōjin was asked to say prayers for rain, once again he expressed an acute awareness of his status as a representative of his nation, although this time his concerns were expressed only in his diary. He vowed to bring substantial rain within three days because, first, he wanted to demonstrate the miraculous power of the *Lotus Sutra*, which was basis of both his sect of Buddhism and the rites he was about to perform. Successful prayers would encourage faith in the sutra. Second, he wanted to repay the Chinese emperor for his great generosity. And third, although many Japanese monks had previously visited China, none yet had received an imperial command asking that they pray for rain. If his prayers were to fail, it would be a great embarrassment for the Japanese nation. Jōjin was not merely a monk on a pilgrimage. He had become a representative of the whole Japanese nation and was determined to make a good impression. In this case, he succeeded so splendidly that eventually he was asked to say prayers for the rain to cease, and they too proved effective. When asked if there were others in Japan as effective in their prayers as he, he replied that many were better.¹² Whether he is boasting of the skill of Japanese rainmakers or being modest about his own abilities is difficult to judge.

Finally, in the realm of faith Jōjin revealed that, although at times he may have been a nationalist, he could also be an internationalist. If Jōjin had frequent dealings with the government, he contacts with China's Buddhist community were even greater. While in China, whenever he was not actually travelling, he was staying in monasteries where he interacted constantly with other monks. Most, of course, were Chinese, but Jōjin also met monks from other Asian nations. Although his sense of geography seems imprecise, most are identified as Indians. A few are described as having black skin, suggesting that indeed they probably came from either southern India or perhaps Sri Lanka. Other foreign monks were from Tibet.¹³ Jōjin mixed easily with all of them. Dark skin must have been quite a novelty for an eleventh-century Japanese, yet Jōjin seems to note it only as an incidental detail to which he attaches little importance. If Jōjin displayed nationalistic inclinations in his dealings with the China's government, he fit into its Buddhist community with little hint of dissonance.

Nonetheless, his attitude toward the local church differed from that of earlier Japanese

¹² VII/3/1-7, 22.

¹³ IV/10/13, V/12/27, VII/3/30.

and reflected a new sense of national confidence. Previous Japanese pilgrims had gone to China seeking knowledge, clarification of doctrinal matters they did not understand, and bringing back to Japan with them new sects or teachings. By Jōjin's day, the situation had changed. Japanese Buddhism had matured to the point that Japanese monks were sending their texts to China, where they expected to find an audience for them.¹⁴ This is not to say that the Japanese had become arrogant. Rather, they were dealing with Chinese as their spiritual equals. Jōjin offers a case in point. The goal of his pilgrimage was primarily just that: visiting holy places to perform sacred rites. At the same time, he showed considerable curiosity about new developments in Chinese Buddhism. When he came upon the works of Hanshan 寒山, a Buddhist poet previously unknown in Japan, he obtained a copy of his works to send back home.¹⁵ In the capital he observed a massive government-supported sutra translation and printing enterprise. Again, he obtained copies of the new sutras and sent them back to Japan. The difference between Jōjin and earlier pilgrims is that he had also brought with him to China Japanese Buddhist writings, including some of his own, that he shared with his Chinese hosts, who actively sought them out. When a Chinese expressed an interest in a rite he was performing, he taught it to the Chinese. He devoted little effort to actively seeking out new teachings and practices. By the eleventh century, however, a Japanese monk had something to teach as well as something to learn, and Jōjin participated in this intellectual exchange. If he was critical of an occasional ignorant monk, he was respectful of those who were pious and learned. When he observed a Daoist deity being worshipped at a Tiantai monastery, he easily equated it with the Shinto deity worshipped at Mt. Hiei.¹⁶ For Jōjin, faith did transcend national boundaries, if not absolutely, at least to a considerable degree.

Based on such evidence, can we conclude that Jōjin, unlike his mother, was a true nationalist? This is a question that ultimately cannot be answered. If one follows the conventional view of nationalism as a modern phenomenon, looking for nationalism in the likes of both Jōjin and his mother is folly: just as the compilers of the *Patriotic Poems* misinterpreted Jōjin's mother to turn her into a patriot, we are misunderstanding Jōjin if we consider him a nationalist. As *The Encyclopedia Britannica* confidently explains, prior to the rise of nationalism, loyalties were to "the feudal fief and its lord, the dynastic state, the religious group, or the sect."¹⁷ Certainly in later times, Japanese loyalties focused on feudal

¹⁴ Mori, *Kaigai Kōshōshi*, p. 206; for Jōjin's comments, see IV/10/25

¹⁵ See my "The Legend of Hanshan: A Neglected Source," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 111, no. 3 (Fall, 1991).

¹⁶ VII/3/28, VII/3/18-19, VII/3/12-13, I/5/14, etc.

lords, and the Chinese emphasized their dynasties. For Jōjin, the situation was more complicated. He did express loyalty to a dynastic line, but unlike other such royal lineages, it was regarded as conterminous with the Japanese nation. No other dynasties were recognized and so, at least in principle, dynasty and state were the same. Although Jōjin was also loyal to his transnational Buddhist faith, this did not conflict with his strong sense of identity as a Japanese. The encyclopedia explanation does not quite fit Jōjin's case.

One key element, however, is indeed missing from Jōjin's nationalism. In both modern Europe and Japan, nationalism was, or at least was meant to be, a sentiment shared by all the people of a nation-state. Jōjin was hardly a typical, representative Japanese of his day. If he was a Buddhist monk, he was also an noble with close ties to the court. His father was a Fujiwara and his mother a Minamoto, both from particularly powerful lineages within these sprawling families at the pinnacle of the aristocratic hierarchy. Furthermore, he held high rank in the Buddhist hierarchy. Once he had been called upon to say prayers for the recovery of both the ailing emperor and his ailing regent. We have no way of knowing whether the views he expressed were widely shared by the common people in Japan of his day, for we know virtually nothing about popular views on any topic until much later times. Nationalists of a later day—those who put his mother's poem in a collection of patriotic poetry—surely would have interpreted this lack of evidence to mean that Jōjin's views were the norm; all were nationalists even in his day. More plausibly, some scholars have acknowledged the presence of seemingly nationalistic sentiments, even in early periods when they would deny the existence of true nationalism. One view stresses that what seems to be nationalism is actually a sense of ethnic identity.¹⁸ Others have distinguished a sense of national identity once found only among elites from the more widely shared nationalism of modern times.¹⁹ Jōjin's nationalism surely was of the elite, not the popular, variety. Still, if Jōjin's example does not prove the existence of modern nationalism in ancient Japan, it does demonstrate that when nineteenth-century Japanese set about to propagate modern nationalist ideas, the materials with which they were working were not purely their own inventions. One can find nationalistic ideas in at least certain strata of early Japanese society.

¹⁷ (1993) vol. 27, p. 420.

¹⁸ Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 6-18.

¹⁹ Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 14-18; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, p. 9.

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