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## February Meeting

A sizeable audience gathered in the hall of OAG House on February 10th to hear Dr. Henry D. Smith, Associate Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and at present Director of the UC Tokyo Study Center at ICU, give an illustrated presentation on "Fujizuka: The Mini-Mount Fujis of Tokyo." This was Dr. Smith's second appearance on the ASJ platform, as he reminded his audience; he spoke in February, 1977, on "Who Built Shinjuku?"

Mt. Fuji today, said Dr. Smith, had just become an image, a cliché, both visually and as a mountain to be climbed for the sake of having done it. People had lost touch with its cultural role, and the problem was compounded by the fact that the mountain was now less visible from Tokyo than it once had been. Its height, isolation and wide base had all served to make it the symbol it was, but as a dormant, not extinct, volcano it had also once had the reputation of being dangerous, and a "lump" remains to remind us of its most recent eruption. Besides this, it had been an object of religious awe as a sacred mountain which was thought to have appeared magically. In the days when the capital was in the west, Fuji was far away, and it became stylized in paintings, usually being depicted as seen from the Seikenji temple, near Shimizu, with the Miho no Matsubara spit also in the picture.

A change came in late medieval times, and a painting at the Sengen Shrine in Fujinomiya shows it as a normal thing to climb the mountain as an ascetic practice. The Shūgendō cult was associated with this practice, and controlled the ascents of the mountain from its two shrines at Fujinomiya and Murayama. From the 15th century onwards they began to search for more climbers, and recruiters called sendatsu travelled round with paintings called jisha mandara, explaining to people what was involved. This practice reached its height in the 17th century.

Around this time a challenge emerged from a yamabushi of the Shūgendō cult called Kakugyō Tōbutsu, who founded a religion called Fuji-kō. He had a vision in which the cult's founder, En-no-Gyōja, told him to go to Mt. Fuji and make contact with the god there, so he went to a cave on the lower slopes and there developed an ascetic practice involving cold water, fasting, and standing on tiptoe on the end of an upright beam. Later he had another vision telling him to climb the mountain not from the south but from the north, at Fuji-Yoshida, thus setting up a rival base; this no doubt represented a

reorientation of the mountain from Kyoto to Edo, associated with the fact that Kakugyō was close to Tokugawa Ieyasu.

Kakugyō's charisma and the eclecticism of his philosophy attracted others, and after his death in 1646 his cult was handed down from teacher to disciple, and by the 18th century had become organized as the Fuji-kō, a fraternity without a priesthood. The second great leader of this association was Jikigyō Miroku, who was a very different person. He was born in 1671 near Ise, and came to Edo when he was 17, starting as an apprentice and finally building up his own business. In 1720 he had a vision of the Sengen Daibosatsu giving him the name Miroku (mi 'status', and roku 'stipend'), and another vision ten years later in a time of famine. As a result of this he announced that he would immolate himself on Mt. Fuji in eight years' time, to save the people from the famine. Later he advanced the date, and in the summer of 1733 he set out with a disciple and a small shrine to fast to his death. Being turned back from the summit by an official, he went down to a point above the Seventh Station, near the Eboshi Rock, and there climbed into his shrine, where he died 31 days later. The news of his death caused a stir in Edo, and the number of believers increased greatly.

From this time the Fujizuka, as they are known to scholars, though they are locally spoken of as "O-Fuji-san", came to be constructed. One of the Edo Meisho-zue shows the Takada Fuji in 1779, in a site which is now part of the Waseda campus. This was erected by a man known as Takada Toshirō, who was a gardener by trade, and in fact the Fujizuka are basically gardens. Toshirō came to Edo from western Japan when he was eleven, and became a follower of Miroku; he climbed Mt. Fuji 73 times, and was made a dai-sendatsu of the Fuji-kō. In 1765, on the 33rd anniversary of Miroku's death, he made a vow to build a replica of Mt. Fuji, (The word used is utsushi, a 'transferred Mt. Fuji', which suggests the moving of a place of pilgrimage to a new site, as in the case of the 33 Kannon Circuit, so this is really a re-creation of Mt. Fuji in a new site, with the same properties as the original.) The place he chose was a pre-existing kofun behind the Mizu Inari Jinja, and the Fujizuka was raised to a height of over 30 feet, and finally opened in the sixth month of 1779. In the next century and a half, a hundred of these were constructed within a radius of 30-50 miles from the centre of Tokyo, and a number of them are still to be found. The Takada Fuji remained as it was until 1964, when the university demolished it and reerected it in a little park nearby. It is now overgrown, but a representation of Kakugyō's cave (tainai 'womb') can still be seen, and a rocky path leading to a stone shrine on the top.

Toshirō's Fujizuka was not the first example of such a structure. The building of Sengen shrines on the top of hillocks was traditional, but a modern expert, Iwashina Koichirō, has clarified the points of difference. The old shrines, such as the Fuji Shrine at Komagome, are built on existing mounds, and the shrine itself, which is approached by steep stairs, is the focal point, and there is no sense that the mound replicates Mt. Fuji. But the Fujizuka are utsushi of Mt. Fuji as it is climbed, with a zig-zag path containing nine turns. On the way up one stops at the tainai cave, and then the Eboshi Rock, before reaching the Okunomiya Shrine (only a

small one) at the summit; on the way down one passes the Komitake, and the whole is encircled by an o-chūdō as on the real mountain. The rocky texture of the original is also reproduced by using lava blocks (kuroboku), which were brought by water from the foot of Mt. Fuji.

The purpose of the Fujizuka was to give a chance to all to earn the merit of climbing Mt. Fuji, even the very old and the women, who were kept off the mountain in the old days. But they also developed into places of regular worship, and on o-yamabiraki day, the 15th day of the 6th month (now July 1st), when the climbing season begins, ceremonies are still held today at a dozen of the Fujizuka. No attempt seems to have been made to make them look like Mt. Fuji in shape, perhaps because, as a writer once said of a woman's figure, the form is made to be appreciated from a distance, not when one is in physical contact. But they were always located on high ground, with a view of Mt. Fuji, as can be seen from a Hiroshige print of the Shin Fuji in Meguro, complete with tea stalls at the base, showing that it was popular with the public.

For a historian the most interesting question is, how did these Fujizuka spread in time and place? We find them being erected from the end of the 18th century to the early 1930's, without interruption, and over an area extending from Edo to the southern half of the Kanto plain, that is, the Musashi plain and the deltas of the Arakawa and Edogawa. Between 1779 and 1865 twenty-one were built within the 23-ku area of Tokyo, mainly in the Yamanote and delta areas, being erected generally within existing shrine precincts, such as Sengen, Hachiman and Inari shrines, but also in two cases on private land and in two more cases in temple precincts. If there is any logic to be found in their location, it is that they are fringe phenomena, suggesting that they were built by gardeners in the nursery belt on the urban fringe, leading the religion out from the town into the countryside. In later times they continued to move out along set routes, many of them following the Arakawa or concentrated in the delta area. The usual height is only five to six feet, and the most recent ones have a concrete core. The change from Tokugawa to Meiji did nothing to hinder the development, and the real turning-point came with the events leading up to World War II and the disruption of the population that followed. No Fujizuka have been built since 1935, but 56 still survive, 47 of them within the 23-ku area. The Fuji-kō itself has declined drastically, but public interest in the Fujizuka has been aroused, and in 1980 the three best were designated minzoku bunkazai, one of them being at Sendagaya, near the Hatomori Shrine. Some have o-yamabiraki ceremonies to attract the public; the one at Hakusan has hydrangeas, and the one in Shinjuku the Seven Gods of Luck. At Kiyose they have a Hinohara Matsuri with candles lighting the way to the top, and finally a huge torch below.

Thus, in an age when the exoteric image of the mountain itself has run its course, appearing as the symbol of Japan par excellence on stamps, labels and posters, the Fujizuka remain to convey something of its earlier cultural role.

As time was running late the meeting was brought to a close immediately with a vote of thanks by Dr. Ronald Suleski, and the speaker was privately besieged by questioners afterwards.

In response to a request, Dr. Smith has kindly prepared a list of the surviving Fujizuka in the 23-ku area, together with a map, in case any people would be interested in exploring for themselves. The total list is rather long, but a copy can be sent on request. The following are the more centrally located ones, numbered as on the map, together with Dr. Smith's comments:

1. Komagome Fuji Jinja. Bunkyo-ku, Hon-Komagome 5-7. The main Sengen shrine in Tokyo, dating from the early 17th century; of the "Sengenyama" type pre-dating the Fujizuka of the Fuji-kō.
2. "Mirokusan", the grave of Jikigyō Miroku. In middle of cemetery of Kaizōji Temple, Bunkyo-ku, Mukogaoka 2-25. The current lovely grave, a mini-Fuji in itself, dates from 1922.
3. Takada Fuji (1779). Kansen'en Park, Shinjuku-ku, Nishi-Waseda 3-5. This was the first Fuji-kō Fujizuka; it was moved in 1965 from its original location, which is now Bldg. No. 8 of Waseda University.
4. Sendagaya Fuji (1789). Hatomori Hachiman Jinja, Shibuya-ku, Sendagaya 1-24. Oldest surviving Fujizuka in original form, well maintained. A Tokyo City landmark.
5. Teppozu Fuji (1790). Teppozu Inari Jinja, Chuo-ku, Minato 1-16. Rebuilt and reduced in size.
6. Jujo Fuji (1814). Fuji Jinja, Kita-ku, Naka-Jujo 2-14.
7. Gokokuji Fuji (1817). Gokokuji Temple, Bunkyo-ku, Otsuka 5-40. Apparently not much left.
8. Hakusan Fuji (1826). Hakusan Jinja, Bunkyo-ku, Hakusan 5-31. Open when hydrangeas are in bloom.
9. Sakamoto Fuji (1828). Onoterusaki Jinja, Taito-ku, Shitaya 2-13. National landmark.
13. Ekota Fuji (1839). Kayahara Sengen Jinja, Nerima-ku, Kotake-cho 1-59. National landmark.
14. Higashi Okubo Fuji (1842). Nishimuki Tenjinsha, Shinjuku-ku, Shinjuku 6-21.
15. Takamatsu Fuji (1862). Fuji Sengen Jinja, Toshima-ku, Takamatsu 2-41. National landmark.
18. Kami-Ochiai Fuji (1872). Tsukimioka Hachiman Jinja, Shinjuku-ku, Kami-Ochiai 1-7. Moved from original location.
31. Ikebukuro Fuji (1912). Hikawa Jinja, Toshima-ku, Ikebukuro Honcho 3-14.
35. Naruko Fuji (1920). Naruko Tenjinsha, Shinjuku-ku, Nishi-Shinjuku 8-14. Open in January for Seven Gods of Happiness pilgrimage.
40. Tabata Fuji (1925). Hachiman Jinja, Kita-ku, Tabata 2-7.

