

ESSAY QUESTIONS FOR STATLER'S *JAPANESE INN*

FIRST QUARTER (CHAPTERS 1-4 & POSTSCRIPT):

- St1. Describe the physical setting of the Minaguchi-ya inn and the town of Okitsu. What is the significance of the physical setting in economic and political-military terms? In particular, how is the coming to the neighborhood of Okitsu by Takeda Shingen, the first Mochizuki (the inn's founder), Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu explainable in terms of the political and economic geography of the town's situation?
- St2. Trace the stages by which the Minaguchi-ya evolved into an inn. In what way has the inn's architecture from the beginning been analogous to (i.e. gets similar results from physically different means) the architecture of the fancier modern Western hotels? Under what circumstances did Oliver Statler become acquainted with the inn? What 17th century precedents were there for 20th century foreigners visiting the inn? How did these earlier visits differ from Statler's?

SECOND QUARTER (CHAPTERS 5-8):

- St3: What does the story of Yui Shosetsu's rebellion show about the political consequences of increased social and physical mobility during the 17th century? In what ways does Yui's career anticipate the careers characteristic of fully modern revolutionaries? In what ways and why did Yui's career fall short of that? Was that shortfall because of his personal limitations and/or institutional limitations of Tokugawa civilization? For good and ill, how were inns like the Minaguchiya affected by the social and physical mobility that helped make possible Yui's rebellion?
- St4. Describe the dangers and inconveniences of overland travel during early Tokugawa times. What were the main occasions for such travel during the early 17th century, as opposed to later? What were the main types of inns? Which type was the Minaguchi-ya? What long-run economic advantages did it enjoy from this status? In what ways could it also take economic advantage of its status as a public utility? What role did sexual commerce play in the life of the Tokaido, and how did Okitsu and the Minaguchi-ya differ from other postal stops and most other inns in this respect? How did married sex differ from the extracurricular variety in early modern Japan? Assuming (correctly) similar attitudes still hold, what effect might this have had on the sudden shift to a favorable postwar American attitude towards Japan?

THIRD QUARTER (CHAPTERS 9-10):

- St5. What new sorts of people tended to travel the Tokaido after early modern times began after the middle of the 17th century, and for what purposes and with what frequency did they do so? Why did travel increase so dramatically then? What sorts of businesses (besides inns and brothels) catered to travelers' needs? How did changing circumstances change the goods being provided?
- St 6. Summarize the story of the vendetta of the 47 ronin. Why was the vendetta illegal? Why would the vendetta and the place it came to occupy in the popular consciousness at the time have been impossible without the availability of the Tokaido and its businesses? Why has it remained so popular a story ever since?

FOURTH QUARTER (CHAPTERS 11-15):

- St7. In what way was Hiroshige a businessmen as well as an artist? How did the two aspects of his life interact? How did the state's interventions affect artists' freedom and wealth? What were Hiroshige's class origins? What class did he most identify with? What did both Hiroshige and the Mochizukis do when they failed to produce a male heir by natural means? What added bonus did the Mochizukis get from this procedure and how frequently did they resort to it? What sort of relationship does Statler give Hiroshige to the Minaguchi-ya?
- St8. Summarize the career of Jirocho of Shimizu port, "the Tokaido's Number One Boss." How did his career fit into Japan's middle half of the 19th century domestic political and socio-economic life and foreign policy? What connection does Statler give Jirocho with the Minaguchi-ya? With the court at Kyoto? How did the events of the 1860s affect the last thirty years of Jirocho's life? How did the Minaguchi-ya cope with the end of the alternate attendance system during the 1860s? What effect did the coming of the railroad after the 1880s have on the inn? What was the relationship between Prince Saionji and the Minaguchi-ya? What changes in both the attitudes and economic situation of the Mochizukis enabled the inn to survive the war and the Occupation? How has the inn adjusted to the contemporary period?