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CIVILIZATION
INSTITUTE**

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On 28th November 2016, the sixth symposium held by Japanese Civilization Institute took place at Japan University of Economics in Shibuya, Tokyo under the theme, “What is the Imperial Family to the Japanese people? —revolving around the issue of Emperor Akihito expressing his desire to abdicate.” Four panelists participated including; Japanese historian and Doctor of Law Ikuhiko Hata, journalist specializing in Imperial Household and former member of the Imperial Household Agency Shinji Yamashita, adjunct lecturer at Kogakkan University and great-great grandson of the Meiji Emperor Tsuneyasu Takeda and writer and director of Japanese Civilization Institute Naoki Inose. Our symposium validates the Emperor’s message to the people, the issues regarding Imperial succession and the meaning of the Emperor and the Imperial Family to the Japanese people.

(reprinted from “*Shukan Dokushojin*,” 6th January, 2017, No. 3171)



Greetings

Ms. Kimiko Tsuzuki—Chairperson of Japanese Civilization Institute

Day to day, mother nature is starting to alter, as we see new buds starting to sprout again. It’s the natural cycle of nature. Similarly, Tsuzuki Gakuen Group to celebrated its 60th Anniversary last autumn. All the same, it’s still a very young group.

By the way, when we question which country has the longest history among the approximately 200 independent countries that exist in the world, I think Japan can be named. And one thing that is most characteristic about this country’s long history is undeniably the presence of the Imperial Family and the Emperor.

There are many theories that explain the origin of Japanese history and Japan’s Emperor. When you look at *Kojiki* (oldest chronicle of Japan) and *Nihon-shoki* (second oldest chronicle of Japan), it is said that Japanese history has been going on for 2000 years or 2700 years. The next in line is Denmark followed by England, so you can see how miraculous Japanese history is.

The theme was chosen for this symposium on this occasion, so that we can think about the Imperial Family again, as something that belongs to Japanese Civilization. It’s not only the Imperial Family that’s long lasting in Japan, but there are also many other aspects in Japan that last. For example, Japan is extremely good at building long-established companies that last for a few hundred years or sometimes up to a few thousands years. Some of them are still lasting. Why is this possible?

From a continuity and sustainability point of view, what should we—as people living in this modern world—keep in mind if we want to pass these cultures down to the next generation? I hope hints that answer this question, arises from the discussion. I hope you enjoy the event until the end. Thank you.

“What does the Imperial Family mean to the Japanese people?”

The issues surrounding Emperor Akihito's desire to abdicate

Ikuhiko Hata vs. Shinji Yamashita vs. Tsuneyasu Takeda
MC
Naoki Inose

The Emperor shares his “feelings” with the Japanese people on TV on 8th August 2016

Inose: Lately there was a most astonishing incident—a car which was carrying both Princess Kiko Akishino and Prince Hisahito struck another car.

Prince Hisahito is third in line to the Japanese throne after the Crown Prince and Prince Akishino. Amid discussions currently underway as to whether the Emperor should or should not be able to abdicate, and with both the Crown Prince and Prince Akishino now in their fifties, 10-year-old Prince Hisahito is currently the only member of the Imperial Family who can continue the Imperial line into the future. Yet nonetheless, there was no leading car assigned to accompany the car in which he rode.

If it had been the Emperor or the Crown Prince, the authorities would

have cleared all the cars off the Shuto Expressway. Does this mean that the Akishino Family does not receive the same treatment?

Yamashita: An unmarked Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) patrol car does follow the Akishino Family when they drive, but yes, their vehicle is treated as a regular car. That incident actually involved six people in all: Princess Kiko, Prince Hisahito, Prince Hisahito's friend and his mother, an Imperial Household Agency staff person who was driving, and an Imperial guard in the front passenger seat. There were probably three or so policemen in the unmarked MPD patrol car as well. This is probably a normal assignment if you think of the family as being part of the “*miya-ke*” (Collateral branches of the Imperial Family), but the question is: is it correct to think of the Akishino Family as being just part of the *miya-ke*?

Inose: There seem to be about 70 staff working at the Togu Palace, where the Crown Prince and Princess live. How many attend the Akishino Family?



Ikuhiko Hata

Yamashita: About 20. Normally, there are less than 10 Imperial Household Agency staff accompanying members of the *miya-ke*, so you can see that it exceeds that number. However, if you compare it with the staffing at the Togu Palace it's only a third. In order to understand the reason for this difference, you have to consider the way the throne has been passed down to lineal descendants over the past 200 years from the 119th Emperor Kokaku to the 125th Emperor Akihito. There is the fixed idea and system that the Crown Prince—who



Shinji Yamashita

is next in line to become Emperor—should always come from the Crown Prince's family, and indeed, from the inner-court members of the Imperial Family

Inose: But now it has all but been decided that the Imperial line is to be transferred to the Akishino Family. Have the Imperial Household Agency and government taken any measures following this incident?

Yamashita: The Deputy Manager of the Imperial Household Agency staff is the former Superintendent-General of the Metropolitan Police. He has concluded that the incident involving the Akishino Family was “human error.” In other words, he has no intention of reconsidering the existing security measures.

Inose: It seems to me that the classic bureaucratic approach of simply glossing over things to avoid trouble and a critical question of how best to confront an important issue, are being handled at the same low level.

In any case, however, let us now turn to our main theme, the expressed desire of Emperor Akihito to abdicate. On 8th August, 2016, the Emperor expressed his “personal feelings” regarding his duties as the “symbol” of the state to the Japanese people via television. Mr. Hata, what are your feelings on this? Your personal views are very welcome.

Hata: The governmental Advisory Council held a hearing of experts regarding the Emperor's video message

of 8th August. However, it strikes me that their opinions were more divided than had been expected. According to one public opinion survey, 90% of the Japanese people simply accept the Emperor's feelings, expressing gratitude for his long service and accepting his desire to abdicate as something that is inevitable.

On the other hand, approximately half of the experts on the panel were either opposed to or expressed caution regarding the Emperor abdicating. There were opinions voiced that if the Emperor were allowed to abdicate of his own free will, then there might be other Emperors in the future who simply refused to assume the throne, which would jeopardize the very continuity of the Imperial Household system. Also, whether it be by a Special Law or by revising the Imperial House Law, the fact that the government might act in response to the Emperor's expressed will was also perceived as potentially going against the Constitution, which strictly separates the government and the Imperial Household. There were even opinions voiced that the Emperor's true duty is to pray for his people, and that there is no need for the Emperor to continue to appear in public at all. These experts suggested that perhaps the Emperor should be kept in a closed world.

I myself believe that the Emperor's message of 8th August was something he thought out very carefully. Therefore, I think it is incumbent on those around him to do their utmost to respond to the Emperor's demands. Assuming they do so, however, opinion is divided on whether it should be done by passing a Special Law or by revising the existing Imperial House Law. I personally think that we should properly revise the Imperial House Law. We should not simply postpone addressing the issue by promulgating a Special Law that approves abdication for the Emperor for this one time only. Nor should we simply create another Special

Law whenever the issue arises again. Presently the ruling Liberal Democratic Party has a powerful majority in the Diet while the Democratic Party of Japan—the largest opposition party—has also said that it supports revising the Imperial House Law, so I think the timing is good for revision.

Inose: The Abe Cabinet certainly is a stable administration that doesn't keep flipping every year or so, as other administrations have in the past. So you believe that at this time we can thoroughly revise the Imperial House Law, do you not, Mr. Hata? And on the other hand, Mr. Takeda, I believe you feel we should go with an act that is only valid for a short period of time?

Takeda: There have actually been various troubles around abdication in the past as well. One case involved a retired Emperor who brought disorder to politics, while another Emperor used the timing of his abdication to put pressure on politicians. There were even powerful politicians who forced an Emperor to abdicate against his will. But when we think about the present Emperor, I see no problem with him choosing to abdicate. There is no possibility of him forming a political party and participating in politics, and he has already made an official announcement of his desire to abdicate, so there his abdication would put no additional pressure on politics. As we know that he desires to abdicate, there is no question that he is being forced to do so.

However, once we systemized abdication, there is no denying that there could be trouble in the future. There have been countless official discussions on this matter over the last 150 years, but they have always concluded that abdication should not be systemized. I think that adopting a one-time special measure is not about postponing the issue, but rather is simply being realistic. That's my opinion.



Tsuneyasu Takeda

Inose: What do you think, Mr. Yamashita?

Yamashita: My first impression when I heard about this was that it was very typical of our Emperor. The Emperor strongly believes that, as has been said, his “status as the symbol of the state and his public duties cannot exist one without the other.” He regards his performance of his symbolic role to be accompanied by his other activities. The Emperor did not actually use the word “abdication,” but I can understand his feeling that he should abdicate if he can no longer continue to perform his duties.

I felt as early as 2015 that the time might come in the near future when the Emperor would need to make this kind of decision whether it would be to place a “*sessho*” (regent) on the throne, or appoint a temporary agent to perform his national duties on his behalf. In 2015, at the National Memorial Ceremony for the War Dead, I was surprised to see the Emperor make a mistake in the order of the ceremony. Also, I have heard that the Emperor asked about a program that had already concluded immediately before he delivered the closing address at the Toyama Umizukuri Contest. I think it was these kinds of incidents that led the Emperor to make the speech he delivered on 8th August.

An aging society— regency, revision of the Imperial Household Law, or special measures?

Inose: We live today in an aging society. If the Emperor is concerned that he will not be able to accomplish his national duties and properly serve as the symbol of the state, that should come as no surprise to any of us.

However, I am rather surprised that the Emperor is so adamantly opposed to appointing a *sessho*. There were also members of the Advisory Council who questioned what would be wrong with doing so. Article 16 of the Imperial Household Law notes explicitly, “In case the Emperor has not come of age, a Regency shall be established.” Also, the second paragraph of that section notes that, “In case the Emperor is affected with a serious disease, mentally or physically, or there is a serious hindrance and is unable to perform his acts in matters of state, a Regency shall be instituted by decision of the Imperial House Council.” Further, Article 17 notes that “the first to carry the throne should be the Crown Prince or the eldest grandson of the Emperor in the line of The Kotoishi, or Kotoison.”

Perhaps we should add “elderly” or more specifically, “over 80.” to the current Imperial Household Law. The aging of Japanese society is going to continue, and I think we need to make that sort of revision accordingly.

Hata: I personally am against naming a *sessho*, I believe it is incredibly rude to forcibly apply the condition “affected with an incurable and serious disease, mentally or physically.” That the Emperor chose to state clearly in his video message that he is against *sessho* was, I believe, influenced by the experience of his father, the Emperor Showa. Imperial Prince

Hirohito, who was the Crown Prince at the time, served as *sessho* for 5 years from Taisho 10 to Taisho 15.

In Taisho 10, when the 42-year-old Emperor Taisho read out the Imperial Rescript to appoint him as *sessho*, the former Imperial Household Ministry released the “Emperor *Goyo-daisho*” (Emperor’s Health Condition), which made Emperor Taisho’s health condition open to the public. The contents were extremely harsh, declaring that the Emperor was not healthy enough to continue his duties. I think there can be no doubt that behind these harsh words lay the political aims of the elder statesman Aritomo Yamagata, Prime Minister Takashi Hara and *Naidaijin* (Minister of the Interior) Nobuaki Makino.

Inose: As Emperor Showa’s health deteriorated, he revealed to his attendants that he could not bear seeing his health condition, including even diagrams of his body and reports on his daily blood loss, being printed in the newspapers. His condition seemed to be much worse than when Emperor Taisho put a *sessho* on the throne. Why, then, didn’t the present Emperor—who was Crown Prince at the time—assume the role of *sessho* at that time?

Takeda: I think that, too, might have been influenced by Emperor Showa’s painful experience of having to serve as *sessho*. Emperor Taisho was opposed to Imperial Prince Hi-



Naoki Inose

rohito serving as sessho. However, the Emperor's wishes do not have to be taken into consideration when a sessho is appointed.

Emperor Taisho was not at all happy. In his book, "*Taisho Tenno*," Takeshi Hara notes that Emperor Taisho was a clear-headed man. He was civilized and free-spirited from his days as Crown Prince, and he felt that the role model the Emperor Showa should follow for politics at the time should not be his own father, the Emperor Taisho himself, but rather his grandfather Emperor Meiji. There's the well-known "Spyglass Incident"—in which Emperor Taisho is said to have rolled his prepared speech up into a cylinder and peered through it at the assembly as if through a spyglass, behavior that made him seem unintelligent. However, it could also be suggested that such stories were propaganda.

Yamashita: Emperors are always left out of the decision to appoint a sessho. However, in the case of a temporary agent taking up the duties of national affairs, the Emperor's wishes are taken into consideration. The cabinet advises that a temporary agent be appointed to take up duties of national affairs, and the Emperor approves the recommendation.

Yet there is no requirement to ask the Emperor regarding a sessho. If the government cannot confirm of the Emperor's intent, it may convene an Imperial Household Council and decide on a sessho there. The Showa Emperor did not have a sessho in his later years because they were still able to confirm his intent against, even though he was bedridden. Consequently, they only needed to arrange to have a temporary agent take up his duties of national affairs.

The reason why the present Emperor is opposed to appointing a sessho is most likely because he heard about Emperor Showa's experience in that role. Moreover, the Emperor strongly believes that it is important that he continue to appear in front of the people as the symbol of the state. A



sessho, after all, is not a symbol.

It might be different if there was a chance that the Emperor might return to the throne himself at a later date, but if a sessho is to be in place until the very end, then it is my belief that the Emperor feels he should go ahead and directly pass the throne on to the next generation now.

Hata: My concern is that if the present Emperor abdicates at age 85, the Crown Prince will become Emperor at age 58. The problem lies in what follows after that. Prince Akishino—the next in line of succession—is only five years younger than the Crown Prince. If the Crown Prince abdicates at 85, Prince Akishino will become Emperor at 80. Consequently, Akishino is likely to serve as Emperor for an extremely short period of time, which I think could cause many problems. I believe that the Emperor's video message was a result of carefully contemplating all these kinds of issues, which is why I say we shouldn't hide from the hard issues and escape by simply naming a sessho.

Takeda: The present Emperor is a very sincere person. Even though the Imperial Household Agency suggested reducing his public activities, he declined their offer. His thinking was that if he could not maintain his status as a symbol, then he should abdicate. On the other hand, Emperor Showa did reduce his public activities as he aged, continued to pray for the people, and chose to remain on as Emperor. Is it really all right for us

to select one of these two paths as the "correct" one, and amend the Imperial House Law? What I think we need now is a flexible system.

The Emperor's busy days — Imperial ceremonies are considered private affairs?!

Inose: By the way, I think we do need to understand as we have this discussion exactly what it is the Emperor does in specific terms. First of all, he carries out national affairs as stated in the Constitution, is this correct?

Yamashita: National affairs are primarily about approving documents at the *Omote Gozascho* (the Imperial office room) and the Imperial Palace. The only annual ceremony included under national affairs is the annual New Year Greeting. Duties such as the Ceremony of the Presentation of Credentials—in which newly arrived foreign ambassadors travel by carriage from Tokyo Station to the Imperial Palace to present their credentials to the Emperor—and attending the opening ceremony of the Diet, are known to be public acts related to national affairs.

Inose: It appears that 28 new ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary visited the Emperor in 2015. Some years have seen more than 40



such visits. According to a survey by the Imperial Household Agency, the number of foreign guests and ambassadors in Japan whom the Emperor met at the age of 74 was 1.6 times greater than Emperor Showa did the same age. In the case of his meetings with Japanese ambassadors before their departure for new assignments abroad, the number was 4.6 times greater. These various increases are due in part to the growing number of countries with which Japan has relations.

Secondly, there is the Emperor's public role. The Emperor participates in memorial ceremonies and rites, and attends public events and festivals as well as going on domestic tours and making official visits to foreign countries.

Thirdly, under the rubric of "other activities," the Emperor goes on private outings and research trips to art exhibitions and concerts, not to mention attending and performing religious ceremonies at the Imperial Palace.

In 2015 alone, there were 1,047 "na-

tional affairs," 529 "public affairs," and 87 "other activities." Emperor Showa had 12 "*Gyokokei*" (activities included under "public affairs," often meaning that the Emperor and the Empress attend together)" when he was age 82. The present Emperor had 128 at the same age.

Yamashita: With or without abdication, the throne will eventually be passed on. However, the question remains of whether or not the new Emperor should continue to carry out every duty the present Emperor performs. If he does so, then he will have no leeway left to do out what is best for the new era, as Crown Prince Naruhito himself has said.

This is very worrying. Unless the Emperor himself or the Imperial Household Agency rearranges the Emperor's duties, it will be very difficult for the Crown Prince to say that he will not perform some of the duties his father used to perform once he becomes Emperor in his place.

Inose: Both the Emperor and Empress are very enthusiastic about

both their public affairs and their Imperial ceremonies. Imperial ceremonies have been regarded as private affairs since State Shinto was abolished following WWII. Yet these ceremonies are not private affairs at all. They are very hard work indeed.

Takeda: I fully agree. I have heard from Imperial Prince Tomohito how very demanding the Imperial ceremonies are. Even in the view of other Imperial Family members, the duties the Emperor bears today are heavy indeed. They say that the way the Emperor performs his duties as if they were no burden upon him at all is truly divine.

There are approximately 20 of these rituals held annually. Among them are "*Shihohai*" (Prayer to the Four Quarters, the Japanese Imperial New Year's Ceremony) held on New Year's Day and "*Saitansai*" (a Shinto ritual to mark the beginning of the New Year)" which is conducted in Heian period costumes. Protection against the cold is not allowed.

There is also the "*Niname-sai*" (a ceremonial offering of newly-har-

vested rice to the deities) held on November 23rd. This ritual has been simplified because of the Emperor's advanced age, but initially the two-hour ceremony was held not once, but twice.

Yamashita: Twice including both the evening ceremony, which took place for two hours from 6 p.m., and the dawn ceremony, which took place for two hours from 11 p.m., lasting into the following day. The Emperor stopped attending the dawn ceremony in Heisei 26 (2014). The ritual required sitting in the "*seiza*" formal kneeling position for long hours, and up until that year he had practiced sitting in *seiza* while watching television every year when autumn drew near.

Takeda: I've attended Saitansai in the past. It begins in the dark, then it gets chilly, and after awhile you can feel nothing at all below your knees!

Inose: Most people are unaware that Labor Thanksgiving Day on 23rd November is the day the *Niname-sai* festival takes place. Initially, the rituals were conducted secretly, adding to the sense of mystery.

Imperial ceremonies are both a mythology and a reality. The unbroken line of Emperors always existed through these rituals. It's not only about the continuity of blood, but also about continuously performing these secret rituals and building upon them along the way.

Until now Imperial successions have come upon us suddenly, when an Emperor has passed away, and the era has changed abruptly with it. All of a sudden, we have found ourselves facing a change in our timeline. I think that, through these repeated transformation, we have come to sense a power in the Imperial line that transcends everyday life. However, if we agree now to an abdication, the era name might change more sensibly in the future, on January 1st for example. That's modern rationalism for you. Can we really sacrifice our Japanese

spirit to modern rationalism?

Yamashita: That's very true. Historically, Emperors sat behind bamboo screens and were never to be seen by the people. The Emperor was a presence who prayed for his country in a closed environment. But modern Emperors have come out into the light. While maintaining the spiritual nature of the invisible, modern Emperors have revealed their existence as a symbol, cultivating their relationship with the country and its people. As in the Humanity Declaration issued by the Emperor Showa, connection between the Emperor and his people today is built on trust and respect, and not on something that derives from myths and legends. The present Emperor, I think, is embodying that in his activities. Modern Emperors have come to exist by uniting the invisible of concealed traditions and rituals with their Gyokokei duties and international goodwill that are visible to us all.

Yet even so, I do agree with what was said earlier. We do need to worry about what Mr. Hata mentioned regarding Prince Akishino's succession.

Hata: I think that succession at age 80 will be very challenging. Also, don't forget that he will have to abdicate 5 years later.

Inose: It seems from this discussion that, in the end, we have a kind of dead end. We need to find the right way out. It was in order to do that the Emperor felt he had no choice but to put his feelings into words, even though he sensed that there were going to be issues in the future if he did so, including Prince Akishino's short reign.

That said, it will be irresponsible of us if we don't take some kind of measures in response, regardless of what kind of plan we finally do choose. When you look around the world today, the kings and queens of the Benelux countries—Holland, Luxembourg, and Belgium—have abdicated. On the other hand, the kings and queens of Denmark and Sweden

still continue to serve to the end. So even when we look around the globe, it seems there is no one right answer.

Regardless, if the final decision is abdication, we will have to face a brand new issue: the "*genko*" (era name)."

Yamashita: The Gengo Law contains only two articles. One reads, "the era name is decided by government ordinances," and the other reads, "the era name is modified only when there is Imperial succession." If abdication is approved and there is to be a new Emperor a year later, how should we treat the era name?

Takeda: From the Meiji Period on, the era name has changed whenever the Emperor has changed. Prior to that the era name was sometimes changed when something fortunate happened, or when natural disaster or famine struck. But because there was such turmoil during closing days of the regime of the Tokugawa shogunate, it was finally decided to assign an era name for each Emperor beginning from the first year of Meiji. Before that, there was no tradition of changing the era name when the Emperor passed away.

Taking that into consideration, and to make an extreme case, we could simply do away with the system of having one era name for one Emperor entirely.

Yamashita: We also need to consider the timing for when to announce the new era name. If we say yes to an abdication, then we will be able to prepare in advance. There are calendars and diaries, all these things that will need to be changed over to the new era name, so the people will want to know the new name as soon as possible.

Inose: It's not just the era name. We will need to choose the "*yukiden*" and "*sukiden*" (Ceremonial rice fields) for the "*Daijosai*" (the first ceremonial offering of rice by a newly-enthroned Emperor) a year in advance. In the past there has been some time between the Emperor's death and the enthronement cere-



mony for the new Emperor.

Yamashita: At the same time, however, we can't celebrate until the period of mourning is over. That means that there will be a blank of about two years during which we can't even decide on the yukiden and sukiden.

Inose: How, then, should we consider that timing? Also, we will need to think about the residence of the new Emperor. If Crown Prince Naruhito becomes Emperor, that means there will be no Crown Prince. Naturally, Prince Akishino would then become Crown Prince, but we will have to systemize that process, too.

There are multiple problems to be solved, but I personally think that in the end we will have to revise the Imperial Household Law.

Hata: Teams have been formed already at the “*kantei*” (the prime minister's official residence) these past few years, and studies have already been carried out on this issue. The groundwork has been laid, so all we need to do is to wait for the political decision to be made. I personally think that in the era of the new Em-

peror and Empress, there will be fewer official affairs. Court rituals, too, will be simplified, and I expect there will also be growing opinion in favor of aligning gengo era names with the Western calendar.

Yamashita: Regardless of the final decision, I think that it would be splendid if the government made a final decision now. Postpone it for another ten years or more, and we'll find ourselves in a position where we will need to have a sessho no matter what, and the debate will be over.

However, while the Emperor system is encoded in the Constitution and in the Imperial Household Law, I do not think this system will last if there is no sense of responsibility on the part of the state, the people and the Imperial Family.. There is some anxiety that once we decide on abdication, there will be Emperors in the future who will abdicate the throne arbitrarily. Yet if that is the case, isn't it possible that there might also even be Emperors who refuse to sign the documents presented to them by the Cabinet. The Emperor is a living hu-

man being. Even if the people respect the Emperor and even if we revise the system, if the Imperial Family should lose their sense of responsibility it will all be over. All depends on the Imperial Family's sense of responsibility and mission, and at this moment it is that sense that is solving every contradiction that arises.

That, I think is the situation we are in today. What can we do as a state and as individuals belonging to that state so that the Emperor can maintain that sense of responsibility and mission? I am not saying that we must agree with everything that the Emperor says, but I do strongly believe that this is not just about fixing the system.

Inose: I expect that for the time being the government will probably choose to take only temporary measures. If so, then we have not even gotten close to the heart of the problem, and that is simply irresponsible. But this is where we will have to stop today.

(reprinted from “*Shukan Dokushojin*”, 6th January, 2017, No. 3171)

The panelists

Ikuhiko Hata

Japanese historian and Doctor of Law. Born in 1932 in Yamaguchi Prefecture. Hata graduated Tokyo University, Faculty of Law in 1956 and joined the Ministry of Finance. He studied at Harvard University from 1963 to 1965 and later at Columbia University. He was assigned to the Defense Agency in 1965 and he served as instructor at National Institution of Defense and lecturer at National Defense Academy of Japan. After resigning his post at the Finance Ministry in 1976, Hata served as a visiting professor at Princeton University's graduate school from 1977, followed by professor at Takushoku University, Faculty of Economy, Chiba University, Faculty of Law, and Nihon University, Faculty of Law. His books include, "*Shōwashi no nazo wo ou* (Chasing the Riddles of Showa History)," out from Bungei Shunju which was awarded the Kikuchi Kan Prize, "*Mei to An no Nomonhan-Senshi* (General Analysis of the Nomonhan War)" out from PHP Institute which was awarded the Mainichi Shuppan Bunka Ward and "*Ianfu Mondai no Kessan* (Settlement of the Issue of Comfort Women)," published in 2016 and others.

Shinji Yamashita

A journalist specializing in Imperial Household, and a former member of the Imperial Household Agency. Born in 1956 in Osaka. Yamashita graduated Kansai University. For 23 years, he worked at the Press Office of the Imperial Household Agency, handling Imperial Household press conferences and press related work. After leaving the Imperial Household Agency in 2001, he served as an executive at a publishing company before establishing Time Leader Japan Co. in 2004. After creating his own business, he started working as a journalist specializing in the Imperial Family including editor-in-chief for the "*Koshitsu Techo* (Imperial Notebook)." His present activities include supervising for the television show "*Koshitsu no Mado* (Window of the Imperial Family)" (BS Japan) and commenting on various mediums related to the Imperial Family.

Tsuneyasu Takeda

Author and adjunct lecturer at Kogakkan University. Born in 1975 as a member of former Imperial Family Takeda. Great-great grandson of Emperor Meiji. Takeda graduated Keio University, Faculty of Law, specializing in Constitutional Law and History. In 2006, he was awarded the 15th Shichihei Yamamoto Award for his book "*Katararenakatta Kozoku-tachi no Shinjitsu* (The Untold Truth of the Imperial Family)" out from Shogakukan. He has written multiple books including, "*Nihon wa Naze Sekai de Ichiban Ninki ga Arunoka* (Why Japan is the most Popular Country in the World)" and "*Gendai go Kojiki* (Modern Language Kojiki)." Takeda holds over 200 talks a year, including Takeda Study Group which he holds at 17 venues nationwide.

Naoki Inose

Author. Born in 1946. In 1986, he received Souichi Ooya Nonfiction Award for his book "*Mikado-no Shozo* (Portrait of Emperor)." In 1996, he received Bungeishunju Readers' Award for his book "*Nipponkoku no Kenkyu* (A Report on Japan)." From then on, he actively worked toward abolishing and privatizing government-affiliated corporations. In June 2002, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi appoints Inose as member of Promotion Committee for the Privatization of the Four Highway-Related Public Corporations. He included the story of the battle in his books, "*Doro no Kenryoku* (Authority of the Road, Bunshunbunko)" and "*Doro no Ketchaku* (Settlement of the Road, Bunshunbunko)." In October, 2006, Inose served as Research Professor at Tokyo Institute of Technology and in June, 2007, he served as Vice Governor of Tokyo. He served as Tokyo governor from December 2012 to December 2013.

From Sengoku Era (age of civil wars) to the Edo Period (1603-1868), Japan shifted from times of riots to peaceful order. Although, Edo Period was run by a feudal system, it developed a highly established market socialism, which merged well with Western modernization after the Black Ships of Perry arrived.

Please enjoy a heated discussion with historian Michifumi Isoda and director of Japanese Civilization Institute, Naoki Inose.

► Panel discussion:

“A study on Edo period’s Innovation after ‘Naotora,’ with historian Michifumi Isoda”

—a look into the reformist’s family tree

Michifumi Isoda

historian



Naoki Inose

Writer and director of
Japanese Civilization Institute



Date: February 7th 2017, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. (doors scheduled to open at 6:30 p.m.)

Venue: Japan University of Economics, Tokyo
Shibuya Campus Hall (the hall seats 100 people)

Address: 25-17, Sakuragaoka-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo

How to attend: apply through the site below:

<http://www.japancivilization.org/>

Contact: Japanese Civilization Institute
03-5456-8082

Address: 24-5 Sakuragaoka-cho, Shibuya-ku,
Tokyo 150-0031



**Traditional Crafts
Online Site**

Worldwide : <https://shops.japancivilization.org>

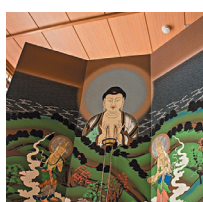
Japanese : <http://japancivil.shop9.makeshop.jp>

Messages from Director

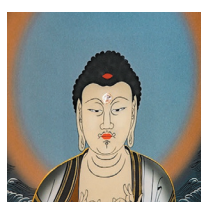
Japanese Civilization Institute has been introducing and selling traditional crafts of Japan. Although it is said that there is approximately 1,200 types of traditional crafts in Japan, its production is declining. As part of our activities, we hope to discover valuable traditional crafts spread across the nation, enjoy Japanese craftsmanship and its beauty inherited over the centuries, and develop it with you.



Tsumami Kanzashi
(Crepe)



Folding Screen
(half size)



Folding Screen
(full size)



KYO-YAKI
Earthenware



Japanese Bamboo
Basket Tokyotrad



Odoshi -
Samurai Armor