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# The Immortal Realm in Baisaō's Sencha Thought: Lu Tong's Return and Its Relation to the State of Enlightenment

ZHAO ZHENZHEN

In the early Tokugawa period, the Ōbaku school, transmitted from Ming China, revitalized Japanese Buddhism and introduced a tea culture grounded in Ming-dynasty literati taste, known as “Ōbaku tea.” This culture combined Zen-oriented discipline, symbolized by Zhaozhou's injunction “Drink tea!” (kissa ko), with refined literati elegance expressed through images such as “boiling tea in the snow.” Baisaō, active in the mid-Edo period, embodied this dual character and promoted the spread of sencha through his distinctive practice of selling tea.

Previous scholarship has tended to interpret Baisaō's thought primarily through Zen or Lao-Zhuang philosophy, leaving insufficiently examined the formation of the concept of the “immortal realm” (senkyō) within sencha culture and its relationship to the “realm of enlightenment” (gokyō). Focusing on Baisaō's self-identification in the *Geigo* as “the orthodox heir of Lu Tong and the forty-fifth patriarch of the Bodhidharma lineage,” this study reexamines his concept of the immortal realm from the perspective of a “return to Lu Tong,” building on Narabayashi Tadao's research. It argues that Baisaō's engagement with Lu Tong represents not a simple appropriation but a return to a spiritual point of origin centered on the state of mind. Furthermore, this article analyzes how the practice of selling tea functioned as a concrete site where the immortal realm and enlightenment intersected, thereby reassessing the distinctiveness of Baisaō's sencha thought within early modern Japanese intellectual history.

## Andō Shōeki's Conception of Communal Life: Toward an Understanding of the Human Beings

YIN Xinyi

Andō Shōeki (1703–1762), an Edo-period thinker known for his radical critique of hierarchical social structures and his emphasis on nature-grounded existence, offers a distinctive framework for reconsidering the relationship between human life, nature, and communal coexistence.

This paper investigates Andō Shōeki's conception of communal life as a framework for rethinking the structure of the human within his broader understanding of nature and social order. Rather than treating Shōeki's thought as a moral program or a political alternative, the study highlights the ontological and practical foundations that support his vision of coexistence. By examining the ways in which human existence is positioned within the self-organizing processes of nature, the paper clarifies how Shōeki develops a model of communal life grounded not in institutional design or hierarchical authority, but in the embodied reciprocity of everyday practice.

The analysis first outlines Shōeki's view of the relationship between the human and nature. Through key notions such as *ikki* (a single vital force) and the contrast between *shizensei* (the natural world) and *hōsei* (the artificially constructed world), Shōeki presents human existence as inherently relational and coextensive with natural processes.

Building on this framework, the paper examines how communal life emerges from bodily practice, particularly through *chokkō* (direct cultivation). Labor is understood not merely as productive work but as a process of attunement through which individuals participate in nature's generative order. Shared cultivation forms horizontal relations of mutual support and co-presence, allowing communal life to arise spontaneously rather than through prescriptive governance or intellectual supervision.

By interpreting communal life as an ontological and practical structure, the

study offers a new perspective on Shōeki's understanding of the human. It shows how his thought articulates a mode of coexistence rooted in the reciprocal interplay of bodies within nature, challenging assumptions that social harmony must rely on hierarchical organization or external authority.