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# NIHONGA PAINTER TOMIOKA TESSAI AND NATIONALISM IN MODERN JAPAN

**Prof. Dr. Hiroshi Takagi** Kyoto University

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CATS, Voßstr. 2, Building 4010, R. 010.00.06

with subsequent discussion, moderated by  
**Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schamoni**

In his youth, Tomioka Tessai (1836-1924) was involved with the *sonjō* movement (an abbreviation of *sonnō jōi*, "revere the emperor, expel the barbarians"); after the Meiji Restoration he worked as the chief priest of Ōtori Shrine. Tessai considered himself first a scholar, and then a painter and man of letters, and strove to "read ten thousand books, and walk ten thousand ri". In the Meiji period, he worked to restore the temples Giōji in Saga, and Hōkyōji, dedicated to Kusunoki Masatsura (Shōnankō); he also spared no effort to make the mausoleums dedicated to Emperor Jinmu and Prince Yuki Yoshi, as well as the area around Yoshino and Kawachi Nagano linked to Kusunoki Masashige and

Masatsura, well-known to the public. His actions were closely connected with the new government's policies and various social movements at the time. On the occasion of the Imperial Visit to Yamato in Meiji 10 (1878), he drew a map of the mausoleums and great imperial shrines along the Emperor's route (*Sakai-ken gyōkō michisuji kanpei taisha goryō ichi zukan*), as well as a decorated map of temporary lodgings built to accommodate the imperial visit in Sakai Prefecture (*Sakai-ken anzai-sho on-kazaritsuke zukan*). He took care of Emperor Meiji's agarwood (Ranjatai), and organized Chinese-inspired activities centered on the appreciation of tea and antiques from the continent in his circle of literati. [...] As such, Tessai truly lived by the adage that one ought "to express the spirit of *meikyō* (moral principles defining the relationship between lord and vassal) through one's art".