



Famous Objects:

Agency and Materiality in the Collection of Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)

Morgan Pitelka

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The life of Tokugawa Ieyasu neatly spans the shift in Japan from a society wracked by civil war to the age of Pax Tokugawa. His remarkable collection of *meibutsu* or famous objects, carefully passed down to his descendants at the time of his death and deification, can be read as a material history of this epochal transformation. Yet these objects also resist simple interpretation as pieces of Ieyasu's triumphal life story. They possess their own biographies, tales that challenge the hagiographic narrative of the Three Unifiers and complicate our understanding of the relationship between people and things.

Morgan Pitelka is Professor of Asian Studies and History and Director of the Carolina Asia Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His publications include *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History, and Practice* (2003); *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons, and Tea Practitioners in Japan* (2005); and *Spectacular Accumulation: Material Culture, Tokugawa Ieyasu, and Samurai Sociability* (2016). He is currently researching daily life and material culture in Sengoku castle towns.

Free of charge/No Prior registration necessary

Institute of Comparative Culture (ICC) Sophia University 7-1 Kioicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8554, JAPAN
+81-3-3238-4082 / +81-3-3238-4081(fax) / Email diricc@sophia.ac.jp / Web: <http://icc.fl.sophia.ac.jp/>