

LONE WOLF AND CUB BABY CART IN PERIL

See the Lone Wolf & Cub: Sword of Vengeance Liner Notes (also available online at <http://www.animeigo.com/samliner/lwc.t>) for general details on Tokugawa-era Japan.

The Mountain Witch & The Kintaro: Yamauba (or Yamanba), the Mountain Witch, said to live and hide in the mountains, is a well-known character in Noh plays and in many tales. In the most well-known Noh play, a city yujo (prostitute/entertainer), named Yamanba, actually meets a real Yamanba in a mountain.

While the tale of Kintaro takes on different forms, he's said to be a son of a certain yamauba from a mountain in central Japan. Kintaro, it is told, is a child who was blessed with extraordinary strength, and was able to befriend animals.

The Yagyu New Shadow-Style: The "New Shadow-Style", or Shin-kage-ryu, founded by Yagyu Muneyoshi, is a school of swordmanship that Yagyu Juubei-Mitsuyoshi extended to create the Yagyu-Style in the early to mid 1600's. The Shadow-Style was perhaps the most influential during the Tokugawa Era, as Yagyus were the official swordmanship instructors for the Shogunate. For more on the Yagyus, see the liner notes for LW&C 1.

Goumune (literally "street beggar"): The ruling class classified the commoners into the "good people", or ryoumin, and the "bad people", or senmin. Most commoners were considered ryoumin, but by the end of the Tokugawa Era there were almost 400,000 people who were regarded as senmin. Of the senmin, there were sub-categories such as hinin and eta. Goumune people, as told in the movie, are of the senmin. Hane states that the hinin included "itinerant entertainers, beggars, scavengers, prostitutes, and castoff commoners..." who were used to "take care of prisoners and to execute and bury criminals." Eta, who were so lowly that the Shogunate considered their lives to be worth only a seventh of the value of a human being's life, were harshly discriminated against, and often resorted to occupations such as the butchering and slaughtering of animals in order to make a marginal living.

The Owari Fief: Because of its location on the Toukaidou Roadway, Owari was an important commercial province. Among the greatest of the castle-towns (though not as great as Kanazawa, the capital of the head of the Maeda family, the richest daimyo in Japan), Nagoya was the capital city of the Owari fief, held by one of the three Tokugawa collaterals - The Lord of the Owari did in fact come from a Tokugawa lineage, as he clearly states.

Notes about Names: The Japanese, like most Asians, put their family name first; all of the credits in these liner notes and the videos follow this convention. They also often refer to people by their family names; this is considered to be more polite. Use of a given name implies a certain level of familiarity and intimacy. In addition, the Japanese often use "terms of reference" such as "big brother," "little sister," "Aunt," and so on, both alone, as a suffix, and even in a friendly way to refer to people they are not related to, but who, if they were, would fit into that category.

For example, children will often call young women “Onee-san,” which means “Big Sister.” These young women dread the day the children start calling them “Oba-san,” or “Auntie.”

In addition, suffixes are tacked on to names to add inflections of politeness, and to specify the position the person holds. Thus, if Mr. Suzuki were a company president, he would be referred to as “Suzuki Shachoo,” or just “Shachoo.”

How to appropriately deal with all of these terms in a natural manner is the recurring nightmare of Japanese translators - in particular in samurai films, where archaic terms are frequently used.

Since many of these terms of reference and suffix combinations are either rarely used or nonexistent in English, it is inevitable that some of the flavor of the original Japanese dialogue is lost when it is translated into English. The following brief guide to the most common terms should help you notice some of the nuances and increase your appreciation of the film.

Suffixes: There are 4 basic suffixes.

-san is the basic neutral polite suffix, equivalent to “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” “Miss” or “Ms.” in English. We usually do not subtitle this suffix.

-sama denotes someone in a higher social position than the speaker, or whom the speaker holds in great esteem.

-kun is the standard suffix added to the names of boys and young men. It is also used by older men in reference to younger men, especially subordinates. “Kun” is more intimate than “san.”

-chan is the equivalent of “kun” for babies and girls, but it is also used when an intimate friendship or other relationship exists between the speaker and the person being referred to. While “chan” is rarely applied to adult men, in situations where two men have had a long and close relationship, they will often be “chan” to each other. “Chan” also pops up in the mass media a lot; perhaps the strangest example of this is that in Japan, Arnold Schwarzenegger is often called “Shuuwaa-chan.” In Lone Wolf & Cub, Daigoro refers to his father as “chan,” although most children would call their father “Too-chan” and their mother “Kaa-chan.” Perhaps because he doesn't have anyone else to “-chan”, Daigoro dispenses with the prefix.

In addition to the top 4, there are many suffixes that denote positions, such as “Shachoo.” Of these, the most commonly heard is “-sensei,” or “teacher,” which is applied not only to teachers, but also to doctors, masters of particular art-forms (such as tattoo) and mentors. Recently, due to all the people sucking up to other people by calling them “sensei,” real sensei have been complaining about “sensei-inflation” reducing the prestige of the term, but in samurai films, a sensei is really a sensei.

Historical suffixes: There are several suffixes that are often used in samurai films but which are now considered archaic.

-tono roughly equivalent to “sama.” May also be pronounced “-dono.”

-himeji Princess or Lady.

Terms of Reference: The most common terms of reference are:

otoo-san someone's father.
chichi my father (very polite).
okaa-san someone's mother.
haha my mother (very polite).
onii-san older brother.
onee-san older sister.
otooto my younger brother.
otooto-san someone else's younger brother.
imooto younger sister.
imooto-san someone else's younger sister.
oji-san uncle.
oba-san aunt.
ojii-san grandfather.
obaa-san grandmother.
anata "you."
omae lit. "in front of me." A less polite way of saying "you."
kisama, "You bastard!" Your basic
onore fighting words!
kimi A very sweet way of saying "you."
sempai "someone above me in a hierarchy."
kohai "someone below me in a hierarchy."

A considerable amount of historical research was necessary when translating the Lone Wolf & Cub films and in compiling these liner notes. Among the many sources we have consulted, the following were especially helpful:

- 1) "Tokugawa Japan - The Social and Economic Antecedents of Modern Japan" Chie Nakane, Shinzaburoo Ooishi and Conrad Totman, eds. Univ. of Tokyo Press, 1990
- 2) "Japan - A Historical Survey" Mikiso Hane. Scribner, 1972
- 3) "A History of Japan: 1615 - 1867" George Sanson. Stanford Univ. Press, 1963
- 4) "Kozure Ookami", vols.1-28, Koike Kazuo & Kojima Goseki, published by Koike Shoin, 1995 (re-issue)