A Historical Quest Through the Japanese Capital

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From Edo to Tokyo

By

Takako Suzuki

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To my mother Setsuko Suzuki

(1942 – 2006)

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culture published in English is essential for today's rapidly globalizing Japanese society. Finally, I would like to thank my family, my father Yoshihide Suzuki, my late mother Setsuko Suzuki, and my brother Hitoshi Suzuki for their encouragement and support. During our six years in the United States and after our return to Japan, it was they who gave me the chance to grow up with a Japanese identity and learn what it meant to be a Japanese person. My mother made ceaseless effort to educate her children in Japanese. She made it clear that the first language at home was Japanese. I remember how she used to read Japanese story books and Japanese translations of classic children's literature aloud to me. She also taught her children how to read and write Japanese syllabaries and kanji characters. In addition to homework, she gave her children assignments for Japanese composition while they were young. I learned from experience that everyday family conversations at the meal table cultivate one's sense of one's identity. I owe so much to everyone for their constructive feedback to publish of this work. Needless to say, I am responsible for any remaining mistakes.

PREFACE

Every person has a story to tell. The same may be said for cities as well. Tokyo is now an international megalopolis of the twenty-first century. Skyscrapers dominate the landscape, commuter trains run every six minutes, restaurants serve cuisine from around the globe, countless city lights and automobiles flood the streets: a scene out of science fiction movies enthralls us. But if you happen to take a detour from the main street, walking a few minutes will take you into a quiet residential area, a serene neighborhood with narrow alleys lined with bonsai plants and cats strolling above the fences. You might find a local sweets shop that has been in business for 160 years, or a kimono shop run by three generations of one family. In the media, Tokyo seems cosmopolitan to the core, but the past and the future coexist there effortlessly. The best aspect of living in Tokyo is enjoying upscale development and age-old tradition at the same time.

This book portrays the history of Tokyo to find out how the Japanese have experienced modernization since the Meiji Restoration of 1868. Academic research on Japanese history adopts a large-scale perspective of the nation. Polity, diplomacy, economic developments, industry, the increases or decreases in population, and statics and tables provide data but seldom tell the story of what it was like to live in an early modern city. The arguments are constructed on abstract concepts rather than flesh-and-blood reality. Scholars seldom speak of the hardships and joy of living in an overcrowded castle town. I will not say that the scholarly research is engulfed in smoke, but it is difficult for readers to make a connection between the academic arguments and the actual megalopolis unfolding in front of their eyes. Those who have begun to learn Japanese or on their first visit to Japan will find it difficult to relate the academic discourse to reality. At worst, they could lose a sense of what it feels like to live in Japan.

It is for this reason I have applied various methods and perspectives to focus on the historical background of Tokyo. I have applied research from local history, folklore, performing arts, architecture, urban planning, environmental studies, and comparative culture. Above all, I have based the thesis of this book mostly on research into Japanese intellectual history. I discuss how the early modern mindset of the Japanese created the premises of modernization in the country. As a response to classroom interests, some chapters include background explanations on early modern Japanese

religion, polity, and academic ideology. I also discuss how social change has shaped typical Japanese behavior patterns and traditional culture. From my point of view, tradition is not a set of rules to be obeyed without question. Rather, it is a ceaseless challenge to create something new of what is already there.

This book consists of three parts, each of which analyzes the impact of and Japanese response to modernization or Westernization. Since the Meiji Restoration began with the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate, I focus first on the lives of the samurai. I explain the political premises of samurai governance, the warrior code, and the role of the Japanese emperor during the Edo period. The Tokugawa regime was based on a traditional bifurcated sovereignty of buke rule. I also discuss how social status was maintained and how certain behavior patterns were shared. The officials of the new Meiji government consisted of bureaucrats with samurai backgrounds. It is necessary to understand educational matters of the Edo period. On the eve of modernization, a new social group with a shared educational background had evolved. They were the torch bearers for Westernizing Japan. The socio-political background, the fiscal difficulties of samurai class, dress codes and educational reform will be discussed in detail. Chapters one to four focus in on the impact of modernization and social change that transformed Japan into a modern nation-state.

In the second part, I have portrayed how daily lifestyle and customs changed in the face of early modern developments and innovation. Traditional cuisine, seasonings, sweets, garden plants, and pets are discussed in chapters five to chapter nine. I have analyzed the texture of traditional Japanese cuisine, garden leisure and pets to understand what it felt like to live in the capital when it was known as Edo. Representative Japanese culture and many stereotyped images derive from the Edo period. In academic research and aesthetics, the medieval period is the most influential. It must be emphasized that traditional social life patterns were formed during the Edo period; 265 years of peace had enabled the Japanese to become what we are now. These chapters are intended to focus on changes and connections seen in traditional culture. The early modern response and developments in everyday life, including daily pleasures, are placed at the forefront.

The third and final section focuses on the transition from early modern and modern Japanese history. The processes by which modern innovators developed Tokyo's urban infrastructure are analyzed. This is essential because the discussion from chapters ten to fourteen is about the modernization of the transportation system, mail delivery, tourism, the media, and the performing arts. The focus is more on the outcome of the

Meiji Restoration and how Japanese modernization shaped the texture of urban culture, the fabric of urban life. In the final chapter, I close with a welcome to further comparative research and an invitation to the Japanese comedy theatre and sense of humor.

This research has focused on the history of Tokyo to gain perspective and an overview of Japanese history and the influence of modernization. The combination of a bird's-eye-view and detailed descriptions of Japanese culture will enable readers to tap into the texture of Japanese lives. Since this book grew out of an introductory class for foreign exchange students on their first stay in Japan, each chapter is written to encourage students to try something new on the weekends. In those classes, information for weekend excursions was shared. This book is intended not just to be read but to inspire readers to go out and visit temples and gardens to take photos to share on social media. I hope that readers will visit historical sites and traditional Japanese gardens and museums to learn about and enjoy Japanese culture. I want to thank my students; I owe so much to them for their responses and the questions they raised in class. It is they who should be granted the greatest credit for this book. I wrote this book for all who wish to learn and understand the fabric of Japanese history and culture for the first time. Now it is your turn to open the door and step inside.

CONVENTIONS ON JAPANESE FEATURES

This book is based mostly on Japanese research published in Japan by Japanese authors. I owe my readers to provide an explanation on conventions of Japanese features. I followed the publishers style sheet and consulted the *Chicago Manual of Style* 16th Edition whenever necessary. I followed the *Monumenta Nipponica Style Sheet* on stylistic conventions, romanization, italicization, and capitalization on Japanese features. Japanese names are provided in the traditional order; surname first, given names last. In the main text, Japanese authors are referred by their family names. In cases of Japanese historical figures, names are provided in the same way; family name first, given name last. Research published in English by Japanese authors are cited in the Western style. Bibliography and citation of Japanese research written by Japanese authors follow the *Monumenta Nipponica Style Sheet*. Tiles of primary sources and titles of books and journals are put in italics. Overall volume numbers are cited for multi volumed academic series; subtitles and section numbers are omitted. I have also followed the *Monumenta Nipponica Style Sheet* when transcribing Romanized Japanese terms. Kana and kanji follow immediately after first mention of the Romanized transcription. The same editorial style is applied for different readings of kanji, transcription of Japanese phrases and nursery rhymes, topographical names, religious institutions, historical events, era names and dates. Apart from the features above, I included the dates of birth and death of Japanese historical figures in the text at first mention.

For the benefit of readers unaccustomed to research on Japanese studies, I chose to provide additional information in the reference list. In Japan, there is a common paperback series of academic works called *shinsho* 新書. There are other sources published in a handy paperback series called *bunko* 文庫. Major Japanese publishers offer such series for the wider public. I have provided the serial number for *shinsho* and *bunko* series in the bibliography. This will help readers locate the source cited in the text.

CHAPTER 1

COMPARISON BETWEEN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN JAPANESE CITIES: KYOTO, KAMAKURA, AND EDO

Introduction

Tokyo is a symbolic city of Japanese modernization, not only representing the ambivalence and contradiction of that movement, but also conveying energy, passion, and enthusiasm. In many ways, Tokyo represents the history of Japan and its people. Daily life is essential to shaping the character of a nation and its people. For many non-Western countries, it is difficult to maintain an equilibrium between tradition and modernization. To understand the fabric of Japanese culture, it is important to understand the background of Japanese tradition and the country's rationale for modernization and Westernization. What was the motive for accepting foreign civilization and reorganizing social systems, for adapting domestic customs to a different set of rules? In Japan, geography and the climate influenced the course of history, society, aesthetics, mindset, and sensibilities in many ways. The same can be of architecture and urban lifestyles. To provide a common ground for various topics, this work focuses on Tokyo, the capital of Japan. Through a comparative analysis between Tokyo, Kyoto, and Kamakura the characteristics and background of the capital are placed in stark relief. Each city reveals distinct features of urban planning that reflects the needs of its inhabitants. It is necessary to summarize four geographical and meteorological premises that influenced Japanese people and culture. Geopolitical circumstances have decided the fate of Japan.

The first point is geographic matters and climate. Geography is a vast topic that requires a book of its own. Kameda and Namamichi's research provide a detailed explanation of the matter. Japan is an island nation with a long coastline. The land area is only 380,000 square kilometers whereas the coastline reaches 34,00km. Its terrain is mountainous, and 70% of those areas are covered with forests. About 40% of the land is suitable for farming rice, the staple food of the nation. There are four seasons in Japan, and the country enjoys a

moderate amount of rainfall and a rich variety of flora and fauna. Mushrooms and nuts, seaweed and fish have made up the national diet.[1]

The second factor is that Japan was spared the fate of foreign invasion because it was isolated from surrounding countries. Foreign communication, diplomacy, and trade relied on seagoing vessels. Relative peace was maintained throughout history, especially, during the Edo period (1603-1868), when Japan enjoyed 265 years of peace. In premodern history, China and the Korean peninsula were confronted with the risk of foreign invasions.

The third aspect is that Japan is prone to natural disasters. Typhoons cause heavy rainfall, floods, and landslides, and there are earthquakes, volcano eruptions, and tsunami. Climate change has caused draught and famine from time to time. The frequency of natural disasters had effects on the Japanese outlook and attitudes to life, religion, society, culture, and the universe. This is a major focal point of this work.

Finally, the most significant characteristic is that the Japanese learned and imported foreign culture and civilization from abroad but still preserved native elements of their own. When it came to Buddhism, Confucian ideals, writing systems, and the like, the Japanese rearranged foreign elements to suit their domestic needs. In other words, they did not content themselves with becoming a small-scale reproduction of China. To be fair, foreign rules and ideas written in books did not apply to the real atmosphere of Japan. Intellectuals were constantly obliged to improve, reinterpret, and develop new strategies and solutions. Bearing these points in mind, we now investigate the historical background of Tokyo.

1 Historical background of the capital Edo (Tokyo)

The development of the city Edo, now Tokyo, began when Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1542-1616) received fief of the Kantō plain regions in eastern Japan. He moved into the small castle of Edo in 1590. He quickly refurbished the castle and the city. After his victory over his opponents, the Toyotomi family, he was appointed as a *sei i taishōgun* 征夷大将軍 by the emperor in Kyoto; he ruled Japan as a hegemon, a national leader of all the country's feudal lords. In Japanese history, he is known as one of the unifiers of Japan. Since then, Edo was the political capital of the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603-1868). Japan enjoyed 265 years of peace during the reign of the Tokugawa shogun. Ieyasu and his successors worked hard to transform Edo into a grand megalopolis. Edo Castle was reconstructed with moats, stone walls, and an imposing castle tower, along with a keep. Mansions for retainers and feudal lords, and Buddhist temples were built. Simultaneously, infrastructure for commerce and traffic was constructed; major bridges of

the Sumida River, the marketplace of Nihonbashi, a port and a wharf with storehouses were completed at great speed. To prevent floods in the eastern district, a channel was dug, leading to today's Sumida River. River improvement works during the early seventeenth century were intended to change the river basin of Tonegawa 利根川. Edo quickly evolved to become the largest castle town of Japan, the main city of samurai warriors.

In summary, Edo was established to meet the political and military needs of the shogunate. Its population was a majority of samurai warriors from the beginning. Commoners-that is servants, merchants, carpenters, craftsman, and artisans-moved in as well. In no time, it began to suffer from the increased population, and there was an urgent need for drinking water in the city. Waterways were constructed in a short space of time. I note that most inhabitants of Edo were male samurai retainers, with women comprising only a quarter of the population. As the years passed, this rough and masculine temperament was a characteristic feature of Edo's urban culture. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the population rose to 1,400,000, surpassing London and Paris. After the fall of the shogunate with the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Emperor Meiji (1852-1912) moved to Edo from Kyoto; the city was renamed Tokyo and entered the stage of modernization.[2]

2 Characteristics of Kyoto

Compared to Tokyo, Kyoto in western Japan is renowned for its history, tradition, and cultural heritage. Kyoto was founded in 794 by Emperor Kanmu 桓武 (737-806). In the seventh and eighth centuries, Japan followed the model of the Tang Dynasty China. Its major cities were built under the format of Changan 長安, as is shown by the fact that the roads are laid out in a grid, with horizontal and vertical roads cutting the city into regularly shaped squares. In ancient times, there were impressive city gates that marked the boundary of the capital; they have long since been destroyed. City roads and gates were a symbolic vista of big cities.[3] The imperial palace, major temples, and shrines were located in the city, but there is no trace of military installations like moats, fieldworks, fortresses and gun batteries. Kyoto is surrounded by mountains on three sides, but its southern flank is totally open. Military leaders have failed to defend the capital in combat. It was common knowledge from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries that Kyoto was a difficult city to defend.[4] The Emperor Kanmu chose to relocate the capital to Kyoto because it offered advantages in terms of land and water transport. Kyoto is closer to the coastline compared with Nara, which is located inland. There were various reasons for relocating the capital. Shimizu Masayuki points out that the emperor chose to maintain a distance from the

leading Buddhist temples of Nara, which had gained political influence and interfered in policy. He claims that this move created a sense of religious vacuum, which eventually became the foundation of a new Buddhist movements in Japan. In contrast with Nara, only two temples were built to provide religious protection in Kyoto.[5] Obviously, Kyoto was a city built for the needs of aristocrats, Buddhist monks, intellectuals, and the imperial family. It was then and remains to this day the symbolic center of Japanese culture and religious tradition. It is not surprising to know that Florence, Italy, and Kyoto are sister cities. For more than a thousand years, Kyoto was home to the imperial family, but since the Meiji Restoration, Tokyo has been the national capital of Japan.

3 Characteristics of Kamakura

To understand why city roads were considered the centerpiece of a capital, I introduce the city of Kamakura in Kanagawa prefecture. It was founded in 1185 by Minamoto no Yoritomo 源頼朝 (1147-1199), the first military leader in Japan to establish a government of the warrior class. Since 1180, he chose to keep his distance from Kyoto and located his capital in a place that was best suited for military purposes. This was a significant move and a turning point in Japanese history. The buke or the military class had taken the initiative to establish its political center; to maintain distance, they chose a location outside the traditions of previous political rulers.[6] Kamakura is surrounded by mountains and is open to the sea on the southern coast. From land, there are only seven trails to approach it, and they are mountainous passages full of steep cliffs and rocks. However, Yoritomo constructed a main street in the middle of the capital; it runs to this day form the Tsuruoka Hachimangū 鶴岡八幡宮 shrine to the sea.[7] It must be noticed that no impressive city gates were erected in Kamakura. The reasons are unclear; perhaps there was simply not enough space, or Yoritomo could not afford to install such expensive features. Whatever the reasons, Kamakura broke away from the traditional format of an imperial capital. Kamakura is virtually a valley, a natural fortress with little level space, but efforts to install a main road were undertaken under severe conditions. Kamakura bears mixed features of a classical capital and a military-focused city. There are questions among researchers about whether to consider Kamakura as a fortress city, but in comparison with Kyoto, Kamakura has a clear rationale for military defense.[8] It is a favorite tourist spot in the vicinity of Minami Osawa campus of Tokyo Metropolitan University; an hour and a half train ride will take you there. Edo was refurbished 400 years after Kamakura, and the military leaders had abandoned the concept of main streets running in a grid. It

is no mystery that the roads of Tokyo are narrow and complicated as if it were a maze. When you drive your car, don't forget your driver's license or your courage.

Summary: Uban planning and political needs

In sum, the three cities each have distinctive characteristics owing to their history and their inhabitants. Even daily lives are different in the Kantō and Kansai areas in terms of the tastes of seasonings, pronunciation, vaudeville culture, sense of humor, urban custom, business practices, local vegetables, preference for *udon* or *soba* noodles, and baseball teams, ad infinitum. However, the common points must not be overlooked. There are no stone masonry walls surrounding the cities. Since there was no fear of foreign invasion, any military installments were meant for domestic enemies. Mountains and rivers are considered boundaries and vistas. In Tokyo, Mount Fuji, Mount Tsukuba, and Mount Hakone served that purpose. Similarly, note that city squares or plazas are absent in Japanese castle towns. Main streets and city gates were major features of old cities such as Kyoto and Kamakura. As a capital, Edo had its roots as the castle town of the Warring States period, whereas the Edo period was largely peaceful. A refined urban culture flourished during those 265 years of peace and stability. The traditional lifestyle, etiquette, social customs, and behavior patterns have its roots in the Edo period. We now discuss about the history of Japanese culture through the perspective of urban life in Tokyo.

Notes

[1] Kameda Naoki, Nakamichi Catherine, 日本のしきたり英語表現事典 *The Quick Guide to Traditional Japanese Customs* (Maruzen Shuppan, 2019), 7. Unless otherwise noted, the place of publication of all Japanese works cited is Tokyo.

[2] For an overview of the history of Edo as a capital, see Oikawa Yoshio, *Edo no naritachi 1 Edo jō daimyo yashiki*. (Shinsen Sha. 2007); "Edo"江戸. In *Nihon rekishi daijiten* (Shogakukan, 2007), EX-word; and Ōishi Manabu, *Chimei de yomu Edo Tokyo* (PHP Kenkyūsho, 2001), 25-60; see also Abe Takahiro. "Jōkamachi no kokkaku". In *Nihon no kenchiku bunka jiten*, eds, Hirai Kiyoshi, Goto Osamu (Maruzen Shuppan. 2020), 592-593.

[3] Fujita Meiji. "Toshi, shūraku to ryōiki". In *Nihon no kenchiku bunka jiten*, eds, Hirai Kiyoshi, Goto Osamu (Maruzen Shuppan, 2020), 20-21; Fujita Meiji. "Tojō no kokkaku". In ibid. 588-589; Abe Takahiro. "Gairo to vista". In ibid. 610.

[4] Shiba Ryōtaro, "Kyō e no 'nanakuchi' kassentan". In *Rekishi no naka no Nihon* (Chuō Kōron Sha. 1997), 225, 223-233; Shiba also notes that Kyoto was ill suited to be self-sufficient in terms of providing rations (ibid. 229).

[5] Nito Atsushi, "'Yamase sento' no haikei: Nagaokakyo kara Heian kyō e". In *Toshi to ōken*, ed. Imatani Akira, (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2008), 44; Shimizu Masayuki, *Nihon shisō zenshi* (Chikuma Shobō, 2014), 79; see also Fujita Meiji. "Tojō no kokkaku". In *Nihon no kenchiku bunka jiten*, eds, Hirai Kiyoshi, Goto Osamu (Maruzen Shuppan, 2020), 588-589.

[6] Sato, Hiroo. "Bukeseiken no seiritsu to seijishisō no tenkai". In *Gaisetsu Nihonshisōshi*, eds. Sato Hiroo (Kyoto: Minerva Shobō, 2011), 91.

[7] On Wakamiyaōji 若宮大路, see Abe Takahiro. "Gairo to vista". In *Nihon no kenchiku bunka jiten*, eds, Hirai Kiyoshi, Goto Osamu (Maruzen Shuppan, 2020), 610.

[8] Hongo Kazuto, *Tatakai no Nihonshi: Bushi no jidai o yominaosu* (Kadokawa group publishing, 2012); Fujikawa Masaki. "Chūsei toshi no kokkaku". In *Nihon no kenchiku bunka jiten*, eds, Hirai Kiyoshi, Goto Osamu (Maruzen Shuppan, 2020), 590-591.

CHAPTER 2

BUSHIDO 武士道 THE WARRIOR CODE: SAMURAI MENTALITY AND ETHICS

Introduction

The samurai 侍 or bushi 武士 (warriors) are considered as an ideal for the Japanese people. They embody role models of traditional ethics, social values and sense of responsibility, and self-sacrificing endeavors. Such a view can be seen in Nitobe Inazō's 新渡戸稲造 *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* (1900) , which was originally written in English. Nitobe is known to have written this book to introduce Japanese ethics to the West, although researchers have pointed out that the work reflects Nitobe's personal ideals and that it was written when the samurai families had disappeared from Japanese society. In other words, the traditional domestic samurai custom of *shitsuke* 躾 (manners) and *kateikyōiku* 家庭教育(family ethics and training methods) were lost from society. For this reason, there is an acute sense of nostalgia and an identity crisis in Nitobe's views. The revival of *bushido* 武士道 (the way of the samurai) took shape when the Japanese needed to look back on their cultural heritage for spiritual guidance. This section discusses the historical background of the samurai through a comparative analysis of the Warring States and Edo periods. Social roles and the required skills and mindset had changed greatly over 265 years.[1]

1 The samurai warriors of the Warring States period: A comparative analysis

The morale of the samurai warriors during the sixteenth century can be summarized in three points. To begin with, feudal lords were waging war against each other, so a notion like "the survival of the fittest and strongest" was common sense during this period. This led to another social feature called the *gekokujō* 下克上, which refers to inferiors overthrowing superiors.[2] It must be noted that *ashigaru* 足軽 (foot soldiers) and major generals resigned, changed sides, or simply ran away as soon as they soon discovered

that a warlord was dishonest and incompetent. Accountability mattered above all. Victory in battle was prioritized because one must win to survive. In the heat of warfare, mutual trust and honesty are required between leaders and subjects. Those who succeed in a military coup carry out their plans with a group of followers. Once the mission is completed, the leader will become the next target of usurpation. For this reason, military leaders needed to gain support from their vassals and followers.[3] It was necessary for a feudal lord to express and appeal moral virtues and discipline required of the military leader, such as courage, bravery, fairness, honesty, and so on. It was not only a matter of ammunition; but they also need to express their ability in combat, their courage, and their ethical virtue. This was how the warrior code *bushido* 武士道 (the way of the samurai) had developed. During the Warring States period, many incompetent war lords self-destructed because of a lack of trust and respect from their soldiers.[4] Finally, it must be agreed that the Japanese during the Warring States period were aggressive, adventurous, outspoken, pragmatic, and innovative. Both winners and losers, and men and women stand out. It is easy to tell who's who because everyone had a strong sense of ego. This break from the medieval paradigm of samurai warriors can be traced to the fact that in 1543, Portuguese ships washed up on the coast of Tanegashima 種子島 and introduced firearms and rifles. This changed the format of war tactics; the ones who procured more firearms and were more skilled in logistics gained victory. This was how the unifiers Oda Nobunaga 織田信長(1534-1582), Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉(1537-1598), and Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 carved themselves a niche in Japanese history.

2 Efforts to restore peace and social stability: Changes in social conditions

In the previous section, we have seen how talent, skills, and virtue were required to impose a nationwide cease-fire. Maintaining domestic peace required systematic policy making. Major policies were carried out by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, in terms of establishing a tax collection system, confiscating swords, and disarming local armed forces. In 1583, *kenchi* 検地(land survey) was carried out to provide a nationwide basis for collecting the tax rice. Most significant administration was the *katanagari* 刀狩り(sword hunt) in 1588, which was intended to disarm regional forces. Swords were confiscated and farmers disarmed. The warriors were ordered to leave their estates and move into castle towns. Hence, they became urban inhabitants. They had a choice of leaving their estates to maintain their status as warriors or to abandoning their swords to remain on their estates. The outcome was crucial: this policy

prevented local militant groups from developing and gaining political influence. Compared with China, no powerful military cliques were formed.[5] From the seventeenth century onward, the nature of the samurai had been altered; they ceased to be regional forces but became urban citizens and bureaucrats, enjoying the benefits of urban life. This was not simply a change in economic basis and source of income; it changed the social role and rationale of samurai warriors, as we see in the following section.

3 Transformation of warriors into gentlemen: Social and economic conditions of the Edo period

Moving from their estates into castle towns was not a matter of simple housing or residential requirements. The samurai warriors became dependent on their domain lords in political and economic terms. They were no longer independently able to support themselves or maintain their occupation. They came to live on stipends distributed according to the size of their fief, rank, and social status. As a result, the samurai class faced economic constant difficulties during the Edo period. In worst cases, their debts amounted twice their annual incomes.[6] This was due to the economic system of the Edo period. At first, the tax rice collected in the domains had been distributed according to feudal rank and status.[7] In the new procedure, rice was exchanged for money to pay daily expenses. Food and necessities such as miso soybean paste, soy sauce, seasonings, commodities, luxury goods, tea and sweets, sake were bought at stores, with payments made in cash. Even the rent was to be paid in cash. Since the monetary system differed in eastern and western Japan, coins had to be exchanged for gold, silver, or bronze, and exchanging money developed into a thriving business. The new system meant that incomes were essentially fixed because the amount of the rice harvest would not increase in a short period of time. On the contrary, the cost of living in urban areas would rise. The situation was similar to living on a pension. In short, the economic system of the Edo period was contradictory; it was legally based on agriculture, but trade and commerce relied on the monetary system.[8] Reality was tough for many, and most low-ranking samurai had to earn a living from part-time work. Wives and daughters wove silk cloth and sewed kimono in return for cash and foodstuffs. Some taught swordsmanship, reading and writing, pasted paper lanterns and umbrellas, playing instruments behind screen at the kabuki theater, sold flower shrubs, or taught bonsai art. Debts, rather than enemy forces, had become a major threat in life of the samurai.

This change of lifestyle introduced another problem; it became necessary for the warriors to adapt to civilian life as bureaucrats and local administrators. They were obliged to work with colleagues, not comrades in arms. Some found it difficult to settle in with civilians; they engaged duels and fights and were punished for acts of violence by having their property confiscated.[9]

In addition, there was little social mobility, no chance of promotion, and few alternative carrier options. The samurai feared losing face, family inheritances, fiefs, and status. A single breach of etiquette or precedent would be a disgrace to their ancestors. They were now required to follow rules; display good manners, speak in low voices, and work hard without complaint; no questions were to be asked, and one did what one was told. People were advised to keep a low profile, not to stand out, and to avoid arguments and quarrels in the workplace. This seems like the protocol of a modern workplace. Conformist attitudes and peer pressure had taken over Japanese society. The descendants of the adventurous Japanese had turned into a vastly different group of people. The outcome was as follows: there was a venting of anxiety and a generation gap evident in early-seventeenth-century writings. Members of the older generation felt obsolete, ignored, and isolated. By today's standards, this was an identity crisis. By the early nineteenth century, the once brave hatamoto 旗本 (bannermen) of the Tokugawa regime lost the morale of warriors and were emersed in urban luxury and decadent culture.[10] To sum up, the familiar stereotypes of Japanese behavior patterns and customs had emerged in the samurai class.

4 Social roles and obligations in the Edo period: Generation gap and identity crisis

To understand the historical background of the bushi and the warrior code, it is necessary to examine the major works of the Edo period. As discussed above, the samurai were required to be trained in martial arts and cultural studies. The *Shisho gokyō* 四書五経(Ch. *Si-shu Wu-jing*), four books and five classics of Chinese were on the required reading list: *Analects* 論語, *Mencius* 孟子, *The Great Learning* 大学, *The Doctrine of Mean* 中庸. *The Book of Changes* 易経, *The Book of Rites* 礼記, *The Book of History* 書経, *The Spring and Autumn Annals* 春秋, *The Book of Odes* 詩経. The members of the early modern Japanese ruling class learned how to read and write using these texts. This was how they became local administrators and bureaucrats of the shogunate.

Many works on the ethical code of the samurai warrior were written from the medieval period onward. During the early modern period, the question of the ideal behavior patterns of the bushi was raised in major works by intellectuals. The medieval spirit and mentality of the samurai is portrayed in *Heike Monogatari* 平家物語 (*The Tale of the Heike)*, which was written in the thirteenth century. Buddhist teachings conveyed in ballads to pacify the spirits of the war dead. Empathy for the losers is prominent in the narrative. This text provides insight from the perspective of comparative culture and is later discussed in the chapter on performing arts. Two jurisdictional texts were compiled in the early days of the Tokugawa shogunate: the *Buke shohatto* 武家諸法度 (*Laws for the Military Houses*). completed in 1615, and the *Shoshi shohatto* 諸士諸法度 *(Laws for the Warriors)* was also completed in the same year. Texts on personal guidance for samurai warriors can be divided into four categories. The first category is a series of training instructions in martial arts, the main purpose is to achieve victory. Teamwork and loyalty within the feudal house were regarded as coming next. Major works are Miyamoto Musashi's 宮本武蔵 (1584?-1645) *Gorin no sho* 五輪書 (*The Five Rings.*) finished between the years 1643-1645, and Daidoji Yuzan's 大道寺友山 (1639-1730) *Budō shoshin shū*.武道初心集 which is estimated to have been written between the years of 1720 and 1730, the last years of Yuzan's life. The oldest copy of this book is dated 1834. In addition, there is Obata Kagenori's 小幡景憲(1572-1663) *Kōyō Gunkan* 甲陽軍鑑 which is estimated to have been finished in 1630, although the oldest copy dates from 1656. It is a book about war tactics. These works emphasized realistic aims to achieve victory but gradually became authoritative instructional texts. The second category is a memoir of a Tokugawa vassal. A veteran wrote his experiences for the future generation, and it shows resentment toward the young and a venting of nostalgia for the old days. This is Ōkubo Hikozaemon's 大久保彦左衛門(1560-1639) *Mikawa monogatari* 三河物語(1626.）It was written as a memoir for his descendants to remind them to be prepared for mortal combat. Okubo's memoir reveals episodes of the ethics and role models of Tokugawa retainers, along with the values and samurai bravery of the Warring States period. His message is to be the watchdog of the Tokugawa family and to strike when needed. It is an interesting text to understand how older people felt the need to pass their legacy to future generations. The third category is guidance for bringing up a new generation of samurai. It is the *Yamaga gorui* 山鹿語類(1663−1666）by Yamaga Sokō 山鹿素行 (1622-1685). His message is clear: the samurai must be the role models of Confucian ethics. He intended to educate the samurai from the warrior into a gentleman. It was because of Yamaga Sokō and other Japanese intellectuals insisted that

the samurai set the example of Confucian ethics. Now the samurai class was obliged to become role models of neo-Confucian morals. They were to study the Chinese classics to become *shitaifu* 士大夫(Ch. *shidafu*) gentlemen; administrative skills were required along with martial arts. This branch of discussion is called *shidōron* 士道論 in comparison to *bushido*. It put more emphasis on intellectual skills and learning and eventually transformed samurai into rulers of a civil society.

Yamaga Sokō's argument is understandable for modern readers since it places importance on self-cultivation and discipline with a rational narrative. However, not all were satisfied with such a sophisticated discourse. Some preferred strong words and eccentric expressions to vent their feelings. Thus, we come to the problematic text *Hagakure* 葉隠 (1716). Its author was Yamamoto Tsunetomo 山本常朝(1659-1719) of the Saga domain. The book places a strong emphasis on loyalty and self-sacrifice. It is an idealization of the old warrior code of the Warring States period. Yamamoto insists that one must be prepared for death and defeat. You must never fear death; you must draw your sword and strike the enemy without hesitation. To be fair, this is partly nostalgia for heroic deeds. Peace had prevailed, and there were no battles to be fought. It must be noted that Yamamoto regretted living in an age when self-immolation upon the death of one's lord was prohibited. He could not practice self- disembowelment at the death of his lord. For him, he had lost his chance to express sincere loyalty to his lord. He became a monk, spent his later days in bitter resentment. His message was to be prepared and to live your life so that you will not regret your past mistakes of cowardice. The workplace is to be your battlefield; you are to concentrate on your duty. Note that this book was never actually published during the Edo period; people thought it was far too eccentric. It became a book of recommendations during World War II for young soldiers to be prepared for self-sacrifice and death. It was also the novelist Mishima Yukio's 三島由紀夫(1925-1970) favorite book. *Hagakure* is filled with peace time heroics, more out of an aesthetic enthusiasm than rational thinking. The reasons why it was converted to wartime ideology are clear. It reflects the inner crisis, social contradictions, and ambivalent nature ingrained in the samurai class.

Finally, it is worth noting that the discussion of the warrior code and its connection with Confucian ideals emerged from the margins of samurai society. It was the intellectuals who were voicing their thoughts on role models. In addition, these intellectuals were sons of *rōnin* 浪人(masterless samurai).[11] The way of the samurai might have been the pretext for a job hunt. It was an ideology or ideal concept recommended for the rulers of early modern Japanese society.

Summary: Roots of stereotype behavior patterns in Japan

Both traditional and typical social behavior patterns took shape among the samurai warrior class. There was no warfare for 265 years. For the samurai retainers, the situation was contradictory, but it was they who governed the nation and became the participants in the Japanese modernization during the Meiji era. In order to understand their legacy in terms of Japanese norms, it is important to evaluate the question of loyalty toward rulers and superiors. For this it is necessary to compare the difference between Chinese and Japanese interpretations of neo-Confucian norms.

In general, the Japanese overemphasized *chū* 忠 (Ch. *Xhōng*), which refers to loyalty toward political leaders and superiors. In the nineteenth century, some Japanese intellectuals stressed that *chū* 忠 and *kō* 孝 (Ch. *Xiaō*) were to be understood as a single virtue. Obviously, loyalty for the national leader dominated filial obligations. There was no question on this matter. Under a life-or-death situation, the Japanese should choose loyalty without hesitation. Eventually, family obligations were sacrificed. Shimada explains how neo-Confucian interpretations differ between the Chinese and the Japanese. It is said that the Japanese tend to understand loyalty and filial piety as one, whereas the Chinese distinguished the two and considered both equally significant.[12] To wrap up, it must be remembered that in China, *kō* 孝 (filial piety), respect for ancestors and elderly family members, was always valued above loyalty. The Chinese had to fulfill family obligations and the interests of their family elders. Traditionally, loyalty in China was maintained under the condition that a political leader proved able and competent. Minamoto also points out that East Asian intellectuals who follow neo-Confucian ethics as a spiritual guide urge subjects to leave office if a ruler is mediocre or a fool. However, the samurai lived under a hereditary system, so that principle would have been difficult to follow. Minamoto states that the warrior class was influenced by neo-Confucian ideals, but the traditional sentiment or ethos of the samurai was maintained.[13] It should be said that this created an ambivalent situation. Sometimes, one had to choose between orthodox teaching and personal feelings. The Japanese samurai had to decide whether to follow their heart or to conform with the norms of society. Throughout history, the samurai or the ruling class of Japan faced contradictory situations. In social life, civilians must follow obligations that differ from those that apply in warfare. As long as peace within the nation was maintained, the samurai could lead the life of an average bureaucrat or government official. Once the nation was threatened by foreign military powers, the samurai officials were obliged to take up arms and fight. This double bind compelled the samurai to question their identity and spiritual background. This was how the national character

or Japanese ethos emerged in the process of modernization. All in all, the seeds of the Japanese identity crisis were sown during the Edo period among the ruling elite. Strangely, from the nineteenth century onward, Japanese intellectuals stressed the loyalty of vassals and subjects and never argued for accountability among the political leaders. The question of political responsibility for the rulers and sovereigns had been abandoned. From then until the end of World War II, loyalty to the emperor was emphasized to the extreme.[14] This is a topic for further research.

China, Korea, and Japan share many cultural similarities, but this overemphasis on loyalty is a major distinguishing characteristic of Japanese ethics. The samurai mentality, or the traditional mindset of the Edo period, still lives on in Japanese workplaces. Even the managers at the student affairs offices of Japanese universities carry the legacy of the bushi.

Notes

[1] Nitobe Inazo, *Bushido*. Trans. Yanaihara Tadao (Iwanami Shoten,1993). See also "*Mikawa monogatari*" and "*Hagakure*". In NST 26; Tajiri Yuichiro, *Edo no shisōshi: Jinbutsu, hōhō, renkan*. (Chūō Kōron Sha, 2011), 39-47, 47-52; Shimizu Masayuki, *Nihon shisō zenshi* (Chikuma Shobō, 2014), 238-242; Ueda Tetsuyuki "Hagakure Bushido to shinimi shisō". In *Nihon shishōshi nyūmon*, ed. Sagara Toru (Perikan Sha, 2004), 229-246; Koike Yoshiaki, *Hagakure: Bushi to 'hōkō'* (Kōdansha, 1999); for ethics and peacetime service for the lord, see Sagara Toru, *Bushi no shiso*. (Perikan Sha, 2004), 13-72, 54, 73-92, 95-96, 93-121. Sagara's research is based on Japanese ethics. See also Sagara Toru, *Bushido* (Hanawa Shobō, 1968), 77-78, 79-80; see also vol.3 of *Sagara Toru chosakushu*. (Perikan Sha, 1993), 91-92; Minamoto, Ryoen, *Tokugawa shisō shōshi.* (Chūō Kōron Sha, 1995), 77-90; Watanabe Hiroshi, *Nihon seiji shisōshi: Jūnana~ jūkyū seiki* (The University of Tokyo Press, 2011), 33-50.

[2] The romanization follows the glossary of Bodart-Bailey, Beatrice, M. *The Dog Shogun: The Personality and Politics of Tokugawa Tsunayoshi*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 345-350; and the glossary in Kate Wildman Nakai, *Shogunal Politics: Arai Hakuseki and the Premises of Tokugawa Rule* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Council of East Asian studies, Harvard University Harvard University Press, 1988), 265-297; is used where needed.

[3] Sagara, *Bushi no shiso*, 54, 95-96; Sagara, *Sagara Toru chosakushu*, vol.3. 91-92.

[4] Shiba Ryōtarō, Clouds Above the Hill, vol.3. (New York: Routledge. 2014), 20.

[5] Isoda Michifumi, *Bushi no kakeibo*. (Shinchōsha, 2009), 36-41. Isoda explains how the lifestyle of the samurai changed by moving from their estates into castle towns (ibid. 36-38.); see also Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan from the Tokugawa Time's to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press. 2020), 13, 14-17.

[6] Isoda Michifumi, *Bushi no kakeibo*, 56-60, and especially, 57.

[7] One *koku* , is equivalent to 180 litters of rice; the value of land for taxation purposes was expressed in *koku*. One *koku* of rice was enough to feed one person for

a year. One *koku* equals about 180 liters or 5 bushels. One *hyō* 俵, of rice is equivalent to 0.4 to 0.45 *koku*. See Bodart-Bailey, *The Dog Shogun*, 347; Shiba Ryōtarō, *Clouds Above the Hill* vol.4. (New York: Routledge. 2014), 369.

[8] The ryō 両 was a unit of currency. One standard gold coin = One ryō= 60 momme 匁; 16 shu 朱 silver coins = one ryō 両; 10 bu 分 = one shu silver coin; 100 sen 銭 = One yen 円. In eastern Japan the economy was based on gold currency, whereas in western Japan it was based on silver currency. Bronze coins were also used so it was necessary to exchange money. A domestic floating exchange rate system existed in the Edo period. For details, see Ōishi Manabu, eds. *Komonjo kaidoku jiten* (Tokyodō Shuppan, 2012), 396-397; see also Hayashi Hideo, supervising editor. *Nyūmon komonjo shōjiten*(Kashiwa Shobō, 2007), 544-545; Bodart-Bailey, *The Dog Shogun*, 348.

[9] Minamoto Ryoen, Tokugawa shisō shōshi (Chuō Kōronsha, 1995), 77-78; Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan from the Tokugawa Time's to the Present* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020); W.G.Beasley.The Japanese Experience: A Short History of Japan (Berkely: University of California Press, 1999).

[10] Minamoto Ryoen, *Tokugawa shisō shōshi* (Chuō Kōronsha, 1995), 211.

[11] For details on early modern Japanese intellectuals as "ideology merchants" see Herman Ooms, *Tokugawa Ideology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985).

[12] Shimada Kenji, *Shushigaku to Yōmeigaku* (Iwanami Shoten, 1999), 28-29, 96-101.

[13] Minamoto Ryoen, *Tokugawa shisō shōshi* (Chuō Kōronsha, 1995), 85-86.

[14] For a general picture of intellectual thought in the final days of the shogunate, see Minamoto Ryoen, *Tokugawa shisō shōshi* (Chuō Kōron Sha, 1995), 208-242, 243-255; Shimizu Masayuki, *Nihon shisō zenshi* (Chikuma Shobō, 2014), 277-292; Tajiri Yuichiro, *Edo no shisōshi: Jinbutsu, hōhō, renkan*. (Chuō Kōron Sha, 2011), 195-217; for further reading, see Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, 'Anti-Foreignism and Western Learning in Early modern Japan: The New Thesis of 1825. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, Council of East Asian Studies, 1986); J. Victor Koschmann, *Mito ideology Tokugawa kōki no gensetsu kaikaku hanran*. Trans. Tajiri Yuichiro. Umemori Naoyuki (Perikan Sha, 2000) [J. Victor Koschmann. 'The Mito ideology: discourse, reform, and insurrection in late Tokugawa Japan, 1790-1864' (Berkely: University of California Press, 1987)].

CHAPTER 3

MODERNIZATION AND EDUCATION: A LEGACY FROM THE EDO PERIOD?

Introduction

For 265 years, Japan was lucky to enjoy of domestic peace and was spared the fate of foreign invasion. Local administration was maintained in the hands of the samurai, who still bore arms but governed with ink brushes and literary skills. It is fair to say that the samurai class had come to shape a literary, skilled middle-class society on the eve of modernization. High literacy rates and advanced learning skills are essential for maintaining national independence and for modernization. However, there is a question to ask before we proceed to the topic of educational history in Japan. Why and how did the Japanese emperor continued to exist during the Warring States period to the end of the Edo period? Seen from an international perspective, the leader of a new regime will take political authority and the right to rule from the former sovereign. However, in Japan the members of the imperial family did not go into hiding; nor were sent into exile. They stayed in Kyoto with the other aristocrat families, just as their precedents had done. Why did the Japanese emperor manage to survive and return to power in 1868; how was that possible? This precedent does not signify that the Japanese leaders were peace lovers by nature, blessed with innate benevolence. One may surmise that some sort of transition had occurred within those politicians, or perhaps the imperial family decided to take on a new political role in the modern nation state. To understand Japanese modernization, including educational affairs, it is necessary to analyze traditional Japanese polity and the historical role of the emperor. What was the specific political role of the Japanese emperor? Did he play a significant role in Japanese polity? The answers lie in the premises of traditional polity and the rationale for shogunate rule. As is commonly the case in East Asia, Japan was a hereditary society, and a clear hierarchy of social class and status existed. However, researchers on Japanese history stress that the emperor and the rulers of Ja-