

JAPAN IN TRANSITION

FROM TOKUGAWA TO MEIJI

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CHAPTER 13

THE EDO-TOKYO TRANSITION: IN SEARCH OF COMMON GROUND

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No city in Japan was so profoundly affected by the collapse of the Tokugawa regime as its political capital. In the space of less than seven years, Edo lost half of its population of more than 1 million, with a final exodus of more than 300,000 in 1868 alone. The decision on September 3 of that year to make Edo the capital of the new imperial regime, however, meant that the 1868 disaster was a momentary nadir, from which recovery was swift and sustained. By 1890, Tokyo had recaptured the dimensions of Edo, both in population and settled area. It is this pattern of precipitous decline and speedy recovery that sets the basic contours of the Edo-Tokyo transition.

The years around 1868 have tended to be treated as a historical no man's land, setting a comfortable distance between two distinct cities known as "Edo" and "Tokyo." Over the past two decades, Japanese scholars have produced much new and original research on the history of the city, but 1868 remains the great divide—between those historians for whom it is a beginning and those for whom it is an end.¹ It is easy enough to preach the need for a "common ground" between Edo and Tokyo, but the practical difficulties are considerable, given the discontinuity of most surviving primary materials. This chapter takes the initial

¹ For Edo, see Minami Kazuo, *Edo no shakai kōzō* (Tokyo: Hanawa shobō, 1959) and *Bakumatsu Edo shakai no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1978); and Nishiyama Matsunosuke, ed., *Edo chōnin no kenkyū*, 5 vols. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1972-1978). For Tokyo, see Ishizuka Hiromichi, *Nihon shihon shugi seiritsu shi kenkyū—Meiji kokka to shokusan kōgyō seisaku* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1973) and *Tōkyō no shakai keizai shi* (Tokyo: Kinokuniya shoten, 1977); Ogi Shunzō, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Nippon hōsō shuppan kyōkai, 1979).

steps: first, considering the transition from Edo to Tokyo in terms of the city's changing function within both a regional and national context; then venturing into the city itself, exploring the social dynamics leading into and out of the vortex of the 1860s.

EDO CENTRISM

Edo's unique character and extraordinary size derived from the superimposition of two political functions. On the one hand, it was the castle city of the *bakufu* domain—in a class by itself, given the pre-eminent size and strategic location of the shogunal realm. Purely as castle city, Edo would certainly have had a population exceeding half a million, several times greater than Kanazawa or Nagoya, the largest of the domain capitals. But the function that pushed Edo's population much higher was the *sankin kōtai*, that peculiar institution of national political control by which the daimyo were required to maintain large establishments in Edo for their hostage families, and to reside there themselves in alternate years to attend the shogun.

In contrast to Edo's direct administrative role, the *sankin kōtai* spared the *bakufu* the need of providing civil and military services for the nation as a whole. Its effect was to give the city a high degree of centrality, by dictating the systematic and extensive requisition of population and wealth from beyond its own administrative realm and economic hinterland. The initial impact of the Meiji Restoration on the city was thus paradoxical: in replacing the centralization enforced by the *sankin kōtai* with a more direct form of centralization, Edo lost population, and probably wealth as well, in the transition to Tokyo.

The heavy concentration of power and wealth in Edo made it a center of consumption previously unknown in Japan, working over the course of the Tokugawa period to stimulate the economic changes that form the backdrop of the transition. The *sankin kōtai* served as a vehicle for the regular transfer of a large share of domain income to the city of Edo. An undetermined amount of this was in the form of direct supply of the Edo mansions from the domains, serving in effect to bypass the Edo market and thus constituting a kind of autarkic system.² But the domains were necessarily dependent on the local Edo market for many needs, including fresh fish and produce, lumber, menial labor, and any bulky, low-value items that could not be economically supplied from the domains.

² I am grateful to Kitahara Itoko for this suggestion.

The combination of the demands of the domain establishments with those of the indigenous samurai population was so great that Edo could not possibly be supplied by its natural hinterland, but was forced to rely heavily on Osaka, the center of distribution of western Japan. Indeed, the provisioning of Edo was itself a major and continuing stimulus to the commercial development of Osaka. This dependence on the Osaka market emerged in the mid-Tokugawa period as a matter of profound concern for *bakufu* authorities, who in a variety of reforms sought to encourage the development of Edo's own immediate hinterland in the Kantō Plain (the so-called *jimawari*), typically at the expense of Osaka.³ One scholar has coined the term "Edo centrism" to describe this policy orientation.⁴ Whatever the efficacy of the policies themselves, the regional hinterland of Edo did in fact develop, and rapidly so. Reliance on the Osaka market remained heavy in such processed goods as lamp oil, sake, and cotton fabrics; but in other basic commodities, such as rice and soy sauce, Edo came to be supplied with little or no dependence on the Osaka market.

This development meant that by the time of the Tokugawa-Meiji transition, Edo had become the center of a unified regional marketing sphere, encompassing the Pacific coast of eastern Japan and extending west as far as the provinces of Ise, Mino, and Owari. The demand created by Edo and its large population was the critical force in stimulating and unifying this region, which was to become the leader in national population growth during the transition period.⁵

The Passing of the Sankin Kōtai

The first truly traumatic change in the basic social structure of the city of Edo came with the *bakufu* decree of October 15, 1862, which drastically relaxed the regulations of the *sankin kōtai*. The measure was taken to relieve the daimyo of the great expense of attendance in Edo, and thereby to encourage efforts to strengthen coastal defenses. The time that the daimyo were required to spend in Edo was effectively reduced by 82

³ Itō Yoshiichi, *Edo jimawari keizai no hatten* (Tokyo: Kashiwa shobō, 1966); William B. Hauser, *Economic Institutional Change in Tokugawa Japan—Osaka and the Kinai Cotton Trade* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), chap. 3.

⁴ Herman Ooms, *Charismatic Bureaucrat: A Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu, 1758-1829* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 88. In Japanese-language scholarship, it seems more common to conceive of "Edo-centered" policies as those which favor Edo City wholesalers versus rural Kantō merchants.

⁵ See Akira Hayami's chapter in this book.

percent—to one hundred days every three years—and permission was given to return the hostage families to the domains.⁶

The pace and extent of the exodus that followed is not known. Totman indicates that the *fudai* lords remained in the city as a show of support for the *bakufu*, although “a good many” sent their family members back to the domains.⁷ The *tozama* daimyo appear to have withdrawn in large numbers. Chōshū is even reported to have disassembled most of the buildings in its several estates and packed them back to Hagi.⁸ In almost all cases, however, the daimyo mansions in Edo remained inhabited and kept in repair; it is only from 1868 that eyewitness accounts report widespread decay and disrepair of the daimyo quarters. A survey made by the new government in June 1868, suggests that about 50,000 persons still remained in the daimyo estates.⁹ Figure 13.1 reflects my estimate that the population of the daimyo establishments dropped by about one-half (to 130,000) within a year after the 1862 relaxation, then continued to decline to perhaps 80,000 by late 1867, with a final decrease to under 30,000 by the end of 1868.¹⁰

Contemporary accounts make it clear that the departure of the daimyo greatly depressed the economy of the city. Some were far more directly affected than others. Those merchants who catered exclusively to daimyo clientele were hardest hit—from the elite privileged purveyors of cloth and confections down to the peculiar trade known as the *kenzan'ya* (“dealers in leftover gifts”), whose job it was to buy up, refurbish, and resell the lavish gifts that were ritually exchanged among the daimyo and privileged *chōnin* (townspeople).¹¹ But the resulting depression was pervasive and was compounded by the mounting inflation.

The most immediate social consequence of the daimyo exodus was the dismissal of large numbers of servants who had been employed on term

⁶ Toshio G. Tsukahira, *Feudal Control in Tokugawa Japan: The Sankin Kōtai System*, Harvard East Asian Monographs, no. 20 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 134–137.

⁷ Conrad Totman, “Fudai Daimyo and the Collapse of the Tokugawa Bakufu,” *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 34, no. 3 (May 1975), p. 583.

⁸ Tōkyō to, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, 7 volumes (Tokyo: Tōkyō to, 1973–1980), vol. 1, p. 1556.

⁹ Tōkyō to, ed., *Meiji shonen no bukechi shori mondai* (Tokyo: Tōkyō tosei shiryōkan, 1965), pp. 28–31.

¹⁰ I have accepted Sekiyama Naotarō's estimate of 180,000 for the domain samurai population (of whom 150,000 were in permanent residence, 30,000 in alternating attendance), plus 50,000 for their servants. *Kinsei Nihon no jinkō kōzō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1958), p. 228.

¹¹ Nishiyama Matsunosuke, ed., *Edogaku jiten* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1984), pp. 220–221; Maeda Isamu, ed., *Edogo no jiten* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1979), p. 368.

contract. Particularly troublesome were those hired as military guards—in effect, rent-a-samurai. Numbering in the tens of thousands, this population of unmarried men had long been in disrepute as rowdy, unreliable, and given to drinking and gambling.¹² Their dismissal was therefore of great concern to the *bakufu*, which just one week after the *sankin kōtai* reforms issued an edict offering allowances to any contract soldiers who would return to the countryside. The employment agencies that handled such workers even petitioned the *bakufu* to take on 5,000 of them as foot soldiers, but the plan never materialized.¹³ At any rate, we hear no more about the problem after 1862.

In spite of the clear indications of distress resulting from the daimyo departure, it is puzzling that the impact was not greater. The enumerated *chōnin* population of Edo, for example, showed a decline of only 20,000 persons between 1860 and late 1867, less than 4 percent of the total. We can only hypothesize that the dependence of the city of Edo on the patronage of the daimyo was considerably less than might be expected from the sheer volume of resources expended in the *sankin kōtai*. I have already suggested that the daimyo establishments may have been supplied as much as possible directly from the domains, avoiding any involvement with the Edo market. It is also plausible that the domains had already been reducing their Edo expenses as far as possible in order to deal with their mounting financial crises in the last decades of the Tokugawa period. In other words, there might already have been a certain weaning of the Edo economy from the breast of the daimyo coffers.

The significance of the *sankin kōtai* for Edo, particularly with respect to the Edo-Tokyo transition, may have lain primarily in its physical aspect—in the vast area that the daimyo occupied and in the mansions and gardens that they maintained. Most accounts of Edo emphasize the imbalance between a samurai population occupying 70 percent of the urban area versus a *chōnin* population of roughly the same size, squeezed into a mere 15 percent of the land. (Shrines and temples accounted for the remainder.) This overlooks the majority of the “samurai” population (perhaps one-fourth of which was made up of servants), living in cramped barrack quarters no better than those of average *chōnin*. In addition, a good part of the land occupied by the daimyo estates scarcely qualified as urban, and would have made no economic sense as *chōnin* settlements anyway.

Still, a large number of the domain establishments were located on

¹² Minami, *Edo no shakai kōzō*, pp. 167–262.

¹³ Tōkyō to, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, vol. 1, p. 1557; Conrad Totman, *The Collapse of the Tokugawa Bakufu, 1862–1868* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1980), p. 22.

land in or near the center of the city—land, we have seen, that was of great utility to the Meiji government in setting up the new regime in Edo. In short, the negative impact of the withdrawal of domain samurai from Edo may in the end have been counterbalanced by the legacy of developed land that they left behind.

Finally, it should be noted that the daimyo exodus was not for good. In the complex process of the disposition of domain lands following the Restoration, most of the daimyo (the exceptions being “enemies of the court,” mostly *fudai* and *shimpan*) were permitted to keep at least some of their former holdings in the capital.¹⁴ Then, in 1871, following the abolition of the *han*, all of the former daimyo, together with the members of the Kyoto court aristocracy, were required to take up residence in Tokyo. This measure, not a little reminiscent of the *sankin kōtai*, does not seem to have met with much protest; remember that one consequence of the *sankin kōtai* itself had been to ensure that virtually all daimyo were born and bred in Edo. Ex-daimyo thus became fixtures in Meiji Tokyo. The majority were reduced to modest means and hence were of little consequence, but a number survived as prominent members of the new urban aristocracy and as powerful landholders. In 1878, for example, former daimyo accounted for one-half of the fifty largest landholders in Tokyo (those holding more than 10,000 *tsubo*, or 8.3 acres). Three decades later, in 1906, ex-daimyo still made up one-third of this group.¹⁵

The Yokohama Connection

“Edo centrism” also continued in the *bakumatsu* period as a powerful *policy* orientation that favored the independent economic development of Edo within its natural hinterland. This way of thinking was strongly reflected in the two most critical political decisions of the Edo-Tokyo transition: the opening of Yokohama in 1859 and the designation of Edo as the new imperial capital in 1868. The choice of Yokohama was the outcome of negotiations between Townsend Harris and the key *bakufu* representative, Iwase Tadanari.¹⁶ Yokohama had not even been on the list of ten possible ports submitted to the *bakufu* by Harris when treaty negotiations opened in late 1857, and the weight of foreign opinion strongly favored Osaka. Iwase shared with all other *bakufu* officials a determination to keep foreigners out of the three major cities, particularly Kyoto, for fear of interference in domestic politics.

¹⁴ Tōkyō to, ed., *Meiji shonen no bukechi shori mondai*.

¹⁵ Ishizuka, *Tōkyō no shakai keizai shi*, p. 116.

¹⁶ Yokohama shi shi henshū shitsu, ed., *Yokohama shi shi*, 30 vols. (Yokohama: Yūindo, 1959-1982), vol. 2, pp. 157-166.

But beyond this, Iwase contended on *economic* grounds that the new international port should be near Edo rather than Osaka. Osaka, he argued revealingly, was blessed with a prime location and was already the beneficiary of “70 to 80 percent of the profits of the entire nation.” Edo, by contrast, with little natural transport advantage, had “built its prosperity completely by human effort [*jinryoku*].” By locating the international port in Yokohama, he claimed, Edo merchants would prosper greatly, and the profits of the entire nation would accrue to the *bakufu* realm. In much the same language that would launch the Meiji Restoration a decade later, Iwase proclaimed that a “restoration” (*chūkō isshin*) of the *bakufu* would result from the opening of Yokohama, “laying the foundation for a rich nation and strong military [*fukoku kyōhei*].”¹⁷

Iwase’s skilled diplomacy carried the day, and the opening of Yokohama in July 1859 may be taken as the real start of the Edo-Tokyo transition. The hopes of concentrating foreign trade in Yokohama were fully realized. Within one year, the new port had outstripped Nagasaki as Japan’s center of foreign trade, and even after the opening of Hyōgo (Kobe) in 1867, Yokohama maintained an average annual share of 71 percent of all overseas trade until 1887. The gap then narrowed, and after 1895 Yokohama and Kobe each handled about the same volume of trade through the remainder of the Meiji period.¹⁸

The actual economic relationship between Edo and Yokohama, however, did not work for the “restoration” of the shogun’s capital (and hence regime) in the way envisioned by Iwase. His initial plan was to entrust the entire Yokohama trade to Edo wholesalers, but he failed to overcome Harris’s commitment to free trade. After the 1859 opening, a number of Edo merchants did set up Yokohama branches, dealing primarily in porcelains and other craft items. They suffered a severe handicap, however, in competition with rural merchants for the silk, tea, and oil that soon came to form the bulk of the export trade. Distressed at this turn of events, the *bakufu* intervened with a decree on May 9, 1860, requiring that five items (grain, oil, wax, cloth, and raw silk) all pass through Edo on the way to export. The decree proved unenforceable, though, and rural merchants continued to ship directly from the tea- and silk-producing areas.¹⁹

¹⁷ The quotations are from Iwase’s memorials of December 21, 1857, and circa January 4, 1858 (ibid., pp. 158-160). A partial translation of the second memorial appears in W. G. Beasley, trans. and ed., *Select Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy, 1853-1868* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 174-176.

¹⁸ Yokohama shi shi henshū shitsu, ed., *Yokohama shi shi*, vol. 3, p. 558; vol. 3 *ge*, p. 197; vol. 4 *ge*, p. 8.

¹⁹ Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 337-369.

In time, however, Yokohama worked to the advantage of Edo (and later Tokyo) by the stimulation of the capital's hinterland, particularly the silk regions of North Kantō. It was this "silk road" traffic, for example, that was a major determinant of the early Kantō rail network, which had Tokyo as its hub.²⁰ Tokyo also became particularly important as a distribution node for foreign goods entering through Yokohama. According to a 1878-1879 survey, 70 percent of all Yokohama imports (which themselves accounted for 77 percent of the national total) went directly to Tokyo; and of this share, two-thirds were then forwarded to other markets, primarily within Tokyo's eastern Japan marketing region.²¹

Also important was Yokohama's cultural impact on the Edo-Tokyo transition. The port served as the major gateway for foreign influence in early Meiji Japan, generating intense public interest in Western customs and establishing Tokyo as the primary point of diffusion of Western culture to the rest of the country. The opening of Yokohama in 1859 led to a boom in "Yokohama pictures," woodblock prints produced in Edo primarily for the Edo market and depicting foreign manners. From this point on, Western influence began to leave a visible mark on the city—in decorative innovations of architecture, in restaurants offering meat dishes, in photographic studios, and in many other ways.

Yet, at the same time, the twenty miles that separated Yokohama from Edo-Tokyo (though travel time was greatly shortened by the railroad after 1872) served as a sort of cultural and political buffer between the capital and the West, as had been the earnest hope of *bakufu* officials in negotiating the commercial treaties. Tokyo was finally opened as an international market (as opposed to a port) in late 1868, six years behind the schedule stipulated by treaty. Even then, few foreign merchants actually settled in the capital. The Tsukiji settlement, at its peak in 1890, had only about 175 foreign residents, compared with nearly 5,000 in Yokohama.²² Even taking into account missionaries, diplomats, and government-employed experts, the foreign population in the capital during the transition period was far less conspicuous than foreign cultural influence. The separation of Yokohama from Tokyo thus obviated the common Asian pattern by which a semicolonial foreign settlement within a traditional city created a clear barrier between the "old" native city and the "new" modern city. In early Meiji Tokyo, "new" and "old,"

²⁰ Ishizuka, *Tōkyō no shakai keizai shi*, pp. 98-100.

²¹ Yokohama shi shi henshū shitsu, ed., *Yokohama shi shi*, vol. 3 ge, pp. 268-279; Ishizuka, *Tōkyō no shakai keizai shi*, p. 33.

²² Ishizuka, *Tōkyō no shakai keizai shi*, pp. 35-36; Tōkyō to, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, vol. 2, pp. 109-132.

"foreign" and "indigenous," were far more interwoven than elsewhere in Asia.

The Choice of an Eastern Capital

Of even greater consequence for Edo than the opening of foreign trade was the decision in 1868 to make that city the new imperial capital. In retrospect, the military realities probably left no alternative. The fledgling government still faced determined opposition in Tōhoku, and realized that an eastern base would be necessary to pursue what might be a prolonged campaign. There was, nevertheless, an extended debate in 1868 over the site of the new capital, and the arguments put forth were particularly revealing of official attitudes toward Edo.²³

Kyoto had never been a candidate as capital in the minds of the Restoration leaders, who were determined to break free of the entrenched aristocratic interests of the ancient imperial city. It was rather Osaka that was initially proposed as the new capital, by Ōkubo Toshimichi. In a memorial of February 16, 1868, he stressed the need for a fresh start, nearer to "the people" and to an international port. Behind the rhetoric apparently lay the urgent need for financial support from Osaka merchants, and the emperor actually paid a six-week visit to the city from mid-April. In the meantime, however, former *bakufu* retainer Maejima Hisoka in a memorial of April 2 proposed that Edo would be a more sensible choice. His most practical observation—one that impressed Ōkubo—was the availability of broad tracts of land vacated by the dai-myō, lands that could serve as convenient sites for the offices and institutions of the new regime. Osaka, by contrast, was densely settled, with narrow streets and a generally unimposing topography.

Maejima also raised economic arguments in favor of Edo, arguments that harked back to those of Iwase in 1857-1858. As a merchant city, noted Maejima, Osaka would survive the political transition easily, whereas Edo was in great distress owing to the loss of so much of its samurai population. This theme was reiterated even more forcefully in the compromise scheme of May 22, 1868, put forth by Ōki Takatō and his Saga colleague Etō Shimpei. The nature of the compromise was a "two capital" plan whereby the emperor would alternate residence every other year between his "Western Capital" (Saikyō) in Kyoto and the new "Eastern Capital" (Tōkyō) in Edo. In fact, the plan was never realized and, after May 1869, the emperor never returned to Kyoto. But the

²³ Tōkyō to, ed., *Edo kara Tōkyō e no tenkai—Tōkyō sento no keizaiseiteki igi*. Tōshikiyō, no. 1 (Tokyo: Tōkyō to, 1953), pp. 36-63.

interest is rather in Ōki and Etō's argument in favor of Edo. Basically, they observed, Edo was like "a babe snatched from the breast," utterly without self-supporting skills in the absence of daimyo patronage—in contrast to "multiskilled" Kyoto, which could survive as a city of artisans, or Osaka with its commercial wealth. Hence it was necessary, for the good of the nation, to save Edo from desolation by making it the imperial capital.

These arguments fall clearly within the established pattern of "Edo centrism," the policy of building up the economy of Edo in order to counter the commercial power of Osaka. One crucial difference, however, is that what was traditionally advocated as a matter of *bakufu* advantage was now construed in the *national* interest. In short, the underlying structure of an economically advantaged western Japan versus a politically advantaged eastern Japan was consciously perpetuated in the Edo-Tokyo transition.

Breathing Space

Edo's designation as the new imperial capital was no instant guarantee of recovery, and the political uncertainties of the first two or three years after the Restoration meant rather a brief lull between the exodus of 1868 and the beginning of new growth. From about 1871, however, the population of the city grew rapidly at an annual rate of about 3.6 percent throughout the remainder of the Meiji period.²⁴ (See Figure 13.1.)

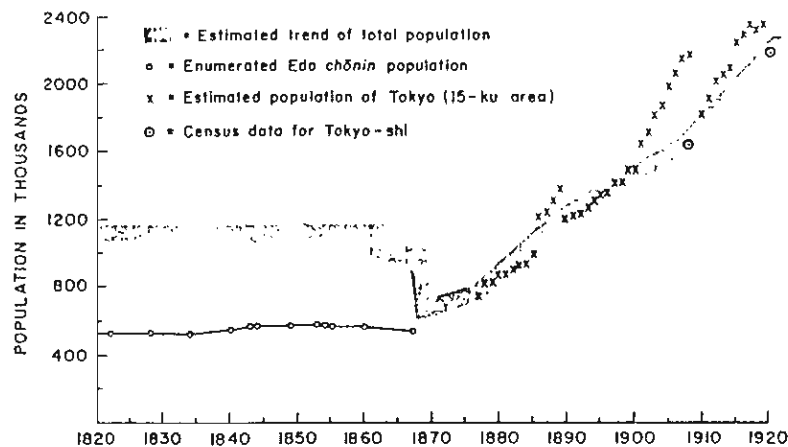


Figure 13.1. Population Change in the Edo-Tokyo Transition, 1820-1920

²⁴ This average is based on the two most reliable figures for the population of Meiji

NOTE: The surviving quantitative data consist of—

a) a sexennial series for the enumerated *chōnin* population of Edo until 1840. See Kōda Shigetomo, "Edo no chōnin no jinkō," *Shakai keizai shigaku*, vol. 8, no. 1 (April 1938), reprinted in Kōda Shigetomo *chosakushū*, 7 vols. (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1972-1974), vol. 2, p. 263.

b) a series for the enumerated *chōnin* population of Edo, classified by Kōda as "Type 1" (based on primary town-magistrate sources); see Kōda, chart facing p. 248. The graph shows only figures for enumerations made in the ninth month, and includes data for 1849 and 1853 from Nishiyama Matsunosuke, ed., *Edo chōnin no kenkyū*, 5 vols. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1972-1978), vol. 1, p. 534.

c) Tokyo population figures estimated from changes in household registration statistics. These were calculated annually by Tokyo prefecture from 1877 until the first national census in 1920; see Tōkyō fu, ed., *Tōkyō fu shi, gyōseihen*, vol. 1 (1935), pp. 117-119. These figures show a cumulative tendency to overestimation, described by Ogi Shinzō, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Nippon hōshō shuppan kyōkai, 1979), as "duplication of temporary (*kiryū*) residents" (p. 34), probably caused by underreporting of out-migrants (*de-kiryū*). This error was corrected in 1890 and again after the 1908 Tokyo city census, but it continued to accumulate thereafter in each case. The overall curve attempts to minimize this systematic error by limiting the points to 1877, 1890, 1908, and 1920.

d) true census figures, which are available from the Tokyo city (Tokyo *shi*) census of 1908 and the first national census of 1920; see Tōkyō tō, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, 7 vols. (Tokyo: Tōkyō tō, 1973-1980), vol. 4, p. 60.

For an estimation of the total population of late Edo, I have made two adjustments to the officially enumerated *chōnin* population. First, I have added a figure of 85,000 for non-enumerated *chōnin*, consisting of residents of the shrine and temple lands (*jicharhi*), the Yoshiwara and the outcaste communities; here I have relied on Naitō Akira, "Edo no toshi to kenchiku," supplementary volume to Suwa Haruo and Naitō Akira, *Edo zu hyōbu* (Tokyo: Mainichi shimbunsha, 1972), p. 25. I have assumed that this figure remained constant until 1867. Second, I have accepted Sekiyama Naotarō's estimate of the samurai population of Edo, including dependents and servants, as 500,000; see Sekiyama, *Kinsei Nihon no jinkō kōzō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1958), p. 228. I have represented the decline of the samurai population in the 1860s in three stages: a sudden drop of 100,000 following the relaxation of the *sankin kōtai* in 1862; then a more gradual decline of 50,000 domain samurai until early 1868; and finally a precipitous decline of 300,000, some two-thirds of which were shogunal retainers, in the course of 1868. The winter of 1868/69 was the nadir for the total population of the city, which I estimate then to have been about 650,000—based on an 1869 *chōnin* enumeration of 504,000 (see Ogi, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*, p. 34), plus a continuing non-enumerated *chōnin* population of 85,000 and a samurai remainder of 60,000.

This sustained population growth was of course a reflection of the impact of the reforms of the Meiji government: centralizing national administration, freeing the movement of goods and people, encouraging modern industry, and consequently stimulating the growth of the urban

Tokyo: for 1877 (from Ogi, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*, p. 37), when the cumulative distortions in the household registration (*koseki*) statistics were least; and for 1908 (from Tōkyō tō, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, vol. 3, p. 658), when a true census was first conducted. See *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, vol. 4, pp. 58-59, for the problem of inaccuracies in *koseki* statistics.

sector. Whereas Edo's immense population had been sustained primarily by political mechanisms and only secondarily by the economic growth of its regional hinterland, in Meiji Tokyo more of a balance was achieved between the two. It is true that Tokyo's function as national capital was crucial to its rapid recovery from the trauma of the 1860s, but this function was less critical than it had been for Edo.

The political arrangements of the *bakuban* system, particularly the *sankin kōtai*, had worked over time to prime a pump of economic development in eastern Japan that was self-sustaining by the time of the Edo-Tokyo transition.²⁵ For the first two decades of the Meiji period, Tokyo's growth was more regionally oriented than it would be after the 1890s, with the completion of the national rail network and the beginning of modern economic growth. This was in part because of the capital's decreased dependency on the Osaka market following the collapse of the *sankin kōtai*, and in part a reflection of the continued growth in the traditional economy of eastern Japan.²⁶ In certain respects, the strong pull of Tokyo as the paramount city of eastern Japan worked in the Meiji period to enhance its competitive advantage versus Osaka, as seen clearly in the 1880s reorientation of the Hokuriku rice market from Osaka to Tokyo.²⁷ In this sense, Meiji Tokyo was the fulfillment of "Edo centrism."

The shape of Figure 13.1 insistently reminds us, though, that early Tokyo remained a lesser city than Edo. It was only after two decades of sustained growth that the limits of Edo, both in population and in settled area, would be surpassed; and still another two decades would be required before Tokyo could match Edo's share of the national population (somewhat under 4 percent). Nor was the rate of Tokyo's growth in any way exceptional: the 90 percent population increase that the capital experienced in the 1878-1897 period was the exact average of the net increase in population for the twenty cities of more than 30,000 persons.²⁸

Those cities which most conspicuously outstripped Tokyo in rate of growth were the international ports—and Osaka. The obvious relevance of foreign trade to urban growth reminds us of the importance of Yokohama both in stimulating the growth of the Kantō region and in cush-

²⁵ The pump-priming metaphor is from Albert Craig, *Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 30.

²⁶ See the Hayami chapter in this book.

²⁷ Kazuo Nakamura, "Eastern and Western Japan," in Association of Japanese Geographers, ed., *Geography of Japan* (Tokyo: Teikoku shoin, 1980), pp. 190-191; Kurosaki Chiharu, "Tō-zai daishōken to sono henbō," *Rekishichirigaku kiyō*, vol. 6 (1964), pp. 23-40.

²⁸ Calculated from figures in Takeo Yazaki, *Social Change and the City in Japan—From Earliest Times through the Industrial Revolution*, trans. David L. Swain (Tokyo: Japan Publications, 1968), pp. 312-313.

ioning the impact on Tokyo, essentially diverting population that might otherwise have accrued to the capital. The more rapid growth rate of Osaka is a reflection of the higher level of economic advancement of the Kinai region. Tokyo, by contrast, had a less developed industrial hinterland, and its indigenous artisan population was largely dedicated to the small-scale production of handmade items for daily use. In the early Meiji period, Tokyo's artisan production was often Western in form (leather shoes, cloth umbrellas, trousers, and so forth) but rarely in mode of production.²⁹ The government set up several model factories in Tokyo, but these were typically in the suburbs and had little impact on the city as a whole.

The Meiji half of the transition period might thus be interpreted as a sort of breathing space for Tokyo, which had declined in relative population far more than other cities. Tokyo did of course catch up, and proceeded from the turn of the twentieth century to resume a pattern of centralizing momentum that recalled Edo. But this was the product of developments that lay beyond the limits of the transition period: the completion of the nationwide trunk-railway network in the 1890s, the increased political centrality of the capital under the Meiji Constitution, and the impact of modern industrial growth in the capital region.³⁰ The breadth of Tokyo's political and economic reach over twentieth-century Japan was in effect a convergence of two vectors: that of the "Edo centrism" of the latter half of the Tokugawa period, and that of the policies of the Meiji state which came into full force in the early twentieth century. In between lay the transitional "breathing space."

In the city of Tokyo itself, vacant daimyo estates provided the new government with ample space for its offices and choice residential lots for its followers, many complete with buildings.³¹ Indeed, the space was more than enough, and in a curious transitional scheme (in 1869) large areas were set aside for the cultivation of tea and mulberry. The plan failed. Neither crop did very well in Tokyo, and the hopes for a booming export industry in tea and silk were dashed.³² However quixotic, the "tea and mulberry policy" reveals the amplitude of space in early Meiji Tokyo.

The Meiji government was spared the need of devoting energy and resources to the construction of an appropriate capital, and in the end

²⁹ Ishizuka, *Nihon shihon shugi seiritsu shi kenkyū*, pp. 345-351.

³⁰ Sugiura Yoshio, "Innovation Diffusion and Urban System in Japan during the Meiji and Taisho Era, 1868-1926," *Geographical Report* (Tokyo Metropolitan University, Department of Geography), vol. 13 (1979), p. 38.

³¹ For details of the disposition of samurai land, see Tōkyō to, ed., *Meiji shonen no bukechi shori mondai*.

³² Ibid., pp. 70-94; Ogi, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*, p. 53.

merely made a few relatively simple adjustments in Edo's plan and infrastructure: widening and straightening streets to accommodate the onslaught of wheeled traffic, upgrading the water supply to control epidemic disease, and sponsoring fireproofing projects to protect Tokyo from the "flowers of Edo." As a physical resource, Edo needed only to be adapted rather than replaced, establishing continuities of form that have survived to the present.³³ The "breathing space" of the transition made this leisurely accommodation possible.

EDO-TOKYO RESIDENTS AND THEIR CULTURE

Bakufu Retainers in the Edo-Tokyo Transition

The direct retainers of the shogun, the so-called *jikisan*, constituted a segment of the Edo population roughly the same size as that of the domain samurai—but one very different in its implications for the culture of the city as a whole and, in particular, for the dynamics of the transition to Tokyo. Consisting of about 25,000 households, the *batamoto* and *gokenin* were a wholly indigenous population within Edo; and despite their scattering in 1868 and their generally inconspicuous presence in Meiji Tokyo, it is likely that they functioned as a critical pivot in the Edo-Tokyo transition, in ways that have yet to be fully explored.

The shogunal retainers differed sharply from the domain samurai in their close integration with the commoner city, both culturally and economically. They depended on the Edo merchant class for all of their needs, and contact between the two was constant. Moreover, the increasing poverty of the *jikisan*, it has been argued, meant that the *gokenin* majority was for all intents and purposes becoming more and more like *chōnin*.³⁴ The covert sale of *gokenin* status was becoming increasingly frequent in the *bakumatsu* period, and many engaged in domestic by-employments, such as making umbrellas or other handicraft items, while others were permitted to build rental apartments and let them out.³⁵ Many of the lower-ranking *jikisan* themselves lived in barracks little different from the back-street tenements of the commoner districts.

³³ Fujimori Terunobu, *Meiji no Tōkyō keikaku* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1982), p. 272.

³⁴ Kozo Yamamura, *A Study of Samurai Income and Entrepreneurship* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 133.

³⁵ Kodama Kōta and Sugiyama Hiroshi, *Tōkyō to no rekishi* (Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha, 1969), p. 251; Matsumoto Shirō, "Kinsei toshiron—Hairyō machi yashiki no keisei to hatten o chūshin ni," in Fukaya Katsumi and Matsumoto Shirō, eds., *Bakuhatsu shakai no kōzō*, vol. 3 of *Kōza Nihon kinsei shi* (Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1980), pp. 109-146.

Culturally, too, it is perhaps best to see *chōnin* and samurai in Edo as complementary rather than opposed. The popular culture of Edo that emerged in the last century of Tokugawa rule is inevitably described as *chōnin*, or "plebeian," but this is misleading. Samurai writers were conspicuous in the formative phrase of Edo popular literature in the 1770s and 1780s; and among the early *edokko* ("Edo-born") were the *fudasashi*, merchants whose job was to broker the rice stipends of the *pkisan*, a profession that was in no way "plebeian" and involved daily contact with samurai.³⁶ In the early nineteenth century, direct samurai involvement in the creation of popular culture declined, but they remained among its avid consumers. It was this symbiotic relationship between *chōnin* and samurai in Edo culture, for example, that accounts for the increasing resemblance of speech patterns of the two classes. By the mid-nineteenth century, the everyday language of the *gokenin* was little different from that of the *chōnin*.³⁷

As a class, nevertheless, the shogunal retainers were still the political elite of Edo, and hence potentially of great significance as a force for continuity in the transition to Tokyo. This role was greatly undermined, however, by the extensive dispersal of the *bakufu* retainers in 1868. Following the defeat of the Shōgitai at Ueno on July 4, many die-hard shogunal loyalists fled north to continue their resistance. But far more moved later that year to the newly created 700,000-*koku* Tokugawa domain of Shizuoka; the figure of 14,000 families given by Katsu Kaishū as the size of this group would account for well over half of the total retainer band.³⁸ Others left the city and faded into the countryside, as the new regime encouraged them to do.

A minority of the *bakufu* retainers, however, proclaimed their loyalty to the new regime and remained in Edo. Their numbers must have been small. A survey from early 1871 records an ex-samurai (*shizoku* and *sotsu*) population of only 66,000 for all Tokyo *fu*, under 10 percent of the total.³⁹ Even if we assume two-thirds of this group to be former *bakufu* retainers (a generous assumption in view of the domination of the new regime by domain samurai), they would amount to no more than six or seven thousand families, less than 30 percent of their former number.

The greatly diminished numbers of ex-*bakufu* retainers in Tokyo, however, may belie their importance in the transition process. Apart from

³⁶ Nishiyama Matsunosuke, *Edokko* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1980).

³⁷ Matsumura Akira, *Edo Tōkyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōkyōdō, 1957), p. 16.

³⁸ Katsu Kaishū, ed., *Suijinroku* [1890], 2 vols. (Tokyo: Hara shobō, 1968), vol. 2, p. 327.

³⁹ Tōkyō to, ed., *Tōkyō shi shikō* (Tokyo: Tōkyō to, 1911-), *shigaihen* 51, p. 794.

such prominent figures as Katsu Kaishū and Enomoto Takeaki, it is likely that the former shogun's men performed critical transitional functions at the middle and lower levels of the central government during the early Meiji period. Their influence was probably even greater in the Tokyo city and prefectural bureaucracies, since they possessed a fund of expertise on the city and its traditional governance. In contrast to those who chose to serve the Meiji government was a vocal minority who acted rather as critics of the regime—men such as Narushima Ryūhoku and Fukuchi Ōchi. Whatever their loyalty, however, the *ex-bakufu* retainers seem to have shared an orientation that might be interpreted as cosmopolitan rather than provincial, national rather than clannish. If such an interpretation is valid, this characteristic certainly relates to the nature of late Edo as increasingly a truly national capital, its culture increasingly the common culture of Japan as a whole.

The spoken language of the city of Edo-Tokyo provides some particularly interesting suggestions about the role of the shogunal retainers in the broader cultural transition. When James Hepburn, in the preface to the second (1872) edition of his famous Japanese-English dictionary, noted that "one conversant with Yedo dialect will have no difficulty in being understood in any part of the country, amongst the educated classes," he was probably referring to "proper Edo" (*hon'Edo*), the relatively polite version of Edo dialect spoken by the *hatamoto* and *go-kenin*.⁴⁰ In short, the language of Edo, particularly as spoken by the *bakufu* retainer class, had by the end of the Tokugawa period become a "common language" for all Japan.

After the Meiji Restoration, the speech of the shogunal retainers became the nucleus for the emerging standard language of modern Japan. Edo language had developed as an amalgam of various dialects and had already been diffused through the alternating residence patterns of the *sankin kōtai*. In the third (1886) edition of his dictionary, Hepburn observed that a critical change had taken place: "The language of Kyoto, the ancient capital of the country, . . . has been considered the standard and of highest authority; but since the restoration and the removal of the capital to Tokyo, the dialect of the latter has precedence."⁴¹ In other words, the Edo dialect that had been a "common" language was transformed into a "standard" language. The culture of the *bakufu* retainer class served as the point of departure for the transformation of Edo as a provincial culture into Tokyo as a national culture.

The course of this transformation inevitably meant a widening gap

⁴⁰ See Matsumura, *Edo Tōkyōgo no kenkyū*, pp. 13-16.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

between "Edo" and "Tokyo." In language, for example, what emerged as "standard" Tokyo speech showed many influences from outside, both from provincial Japan and from foreign languages as well. As in so many other ways in the latter part of the transition period, the perception of "Edo" and "Tokyo" as two contrasting entities gradually emerged, the one increasingly "traditional" and the other increasingly "modern." The establishment, in the 1890s, of this sense of *opposition* between "Edo" and "Tokyo" marks the end of the Edo-Tokyo transition. Those who most publicized this contrast and lamented the passing of "Edo" were none other than former *bakufu* retainers, in such magazines as *Annals of the Edo Society* (*Edo-kai shi*, 1889-) and *The Old Bakufu* (*Kyūbakufu*, 1897-).⁴²

Cultural Continuity

The most provocative approach to the Edo-Tokyo transition in recent scholarship emerges from Ogi Shinzō's highly original and meticulously detailed study of daily life in early Meiji Tokyo.⁴³ Ogi sees the period from the Meiji Restoration until about 1889 as a distinct and unique era in the history of the city, one characterized by the underlying continuity and stability of Edo commoner culture in the face of traumatic political events that transformed the elite city. Ogi seizes upon "Tōkei," the common early Meiji reading of the characters for "Eastern Capital," as a rhetorical device to suggest the special character of these two decades. Ogi interprets "Tōkei" as a city in which the disappearance of the old samurai elite cleared the way for a culture that was predominantly "commoner" (*shominteki*) in tone—"more Edo-like than Edo," as Ogi would have it.⁴⁴

Ogi carefully documents the essential continuity from Edo to Tokyo in daily life style, showing that the diet, clothing, and housing of the great majority of the citizenry remained unchanged through the 1880s. This perspective is a healthy corrective to the common depiction of Meiji Tokyo as a hotbed of westernizing "civilization and enlightenment," which had little real impact on the lives of most of the residents of Tōkei. In the area of popular entertainment, as well, such characteristic late Edo

⁴² Ogi, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*, pp. 17-21; Mizue Renko, *Edo shichū keisei shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1977), pp. 38-41.

⁴³ *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*. Ogi has also written a short, popular version of much the same material: *Tōkei jidai: Edo to Tōkyō no hazama de*, NHK Bukkusu, no. 371 (Tokyo: Nippon hōsō shuppan kyōkai, 1980).

⁴⁴ Ogi, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*, p. 2.

forms as *rakugo* and Kabuki enjoyed continuing if not increased popularity in early Meiji Tokyo.⁴⁵

Indeed, as a way of grasping the Edo-Tokyo transition, it seems preferable to expand Ogi's exclusive focus on early Meiji to envision the entire era from Bunka-Bunsei (1804-1830) through the 1880s as the final great flowering of Edo culture. Spanning the Edo-Tokyo transition, this era was characterized by the establishment of Edo popular culture as wholly distinct from that of Osaka and Kyoto, and by the permeation to the great middle range of Edo society of a wide variety of popular pastimes. Nishiyama Matsunosuke has developed the concept of *kōdō bunka*, perhaps best translated as "a culture of movement and performance," encompassing sightseeing, pilgrimages, flower arranging, tea ceremony, and theatrical and musical performances of every kind: all were practiced in nineteenth-century Edo-Tokyo to an extent previously unknown.⁴⁶

One particularly important reflection of this era was rapidly rising literacy among all classes. The spread of "temple schools" (*terakoya*) continued from late Edo into Meiji Tokyo with virtually no interruption, while *terakoya* textbooks constituted one of the most flourishing sectors of the publishing market in the *bakumatsu* period.⁴⁷ The characteristic forms of late Edo fiction continued to be widely read, if not written, in the early Meiji period.⁴⁸ But nineteenth-century Edo-Tokyo culture was not communicated in books alone. Although often denigrated as "decadent," this was in fact the great era of the color woodblock print, the Edo *nishiki-e*, which in quantity, in the skill of the artisans, and in the literacy of its content reached levels that far outstripped the "classic" era of the late eighteenth century. The final capitulation of woodblock printing to lithography, photography, and movable type in the 1890s serves clearly to mark the end of an era.

One enduring, indeed defining, characteristic of Edo culture was a strong spirit of opposition to Osaka and its customs. This was the cultural counterpart of "Edo centrism," a sense of the need to enhance Edo's independence of western Japan.⁴⁹ Such a tone was central to the image

⁴⁵ Ibid., chap. 3.

⁴⁶ Nishiyama Matsunosuke, "Edo bunka to chihō bunka," *Iwanami kōza Nihon rekishi*, vol. 13, *kinsei 5* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1964), pp. 183-186.

⁴⁷ Ogi, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*, p. 457; Konta Yōzō, *Edo no hon'ya-san—Kinsei bunka shi no sokumen* (Tokyo: Nippon hōshō shuppan kyōkai, 1977), p. 189.

⁴⁸ P.F. Kornicki, "The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in the Meiji Period," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, vol. 41, no. 2 (December 1981), pp. 461-482.

⁴⁹ Nishiyama, *Edokko*; Sofue Takao, *Kenminsei—Bunka jinrui gakuteki kōsatsu* (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1971), p. 123.

of the *edokko*: proud, fast-talking, easy-spending, and contemptuous of the cautious, penny-pinching ways of the stereotypical Osaka merchant. This attitude may be traced directly through the transition period, and explains both the pride of the Edo citizenry at being residents of the new "imperial capital" and, at the same time, their haughty contempt of the new elite from western Japan.

Patterns of Immigration

The broad perspective of a basic continuity between the culture of late Edo and early Tokyo, as revealed both in daily life and popular culture, is highly suggestive. One danger, however, particularly as the concept is applied by Ogi Shinzō, is the neglect of the parallel process of *change*. Edo culture was not merely surviving, it was evolving—in new directions and in response to major changes in the social structure of the city.

One important way of analyzing the process of change is in terms of spatial differentiation *within* the city, especially in terms of the familiar distinction between *shitamachi* (the low-lying and densely settled eastern sector of the city) and *yamanote* (the hilly upland area to the west). But it would first be useful to consider some basic indicators of social change within the city as a whole, and the ways in which these relate to cultural evolution. Ogi's own explanation for the eventual demise of "Tōkei" focuses on such changes: basically, he sees a huge increase in the proportion of immigrants as undermining the foundations of the traditional urban culture, working particularly to destroy the solidarity of neighborhood society. He dates this process from 1889, his own terminal date for "Tōkei."⁵⁰

What was the basic pattern of immigration in the Edo-Tokyo transition? Edo, like any premodern city, required a constant flow of immigrants to maintain its population. In the seventeenth century, when the city was growing rapidly, Edo was overwhelmingly a city of immigrants, the majority of them male. From the early eighteenth century, however, the population stabilized and the flow of immigration slowed. Available statistics confirm two predictable consequences of a stable population: an equalization of the sex ratio and a declining percentage of those born outside the city.

The sex ratio figures are shown in Figure 13.2. Bearing in mind that the Edo figures exclude samurai and priests (which would tend to raise the overall sex ratio), note that this graph suggests that the unique interlude is not, as Ogi proposes, early Meiji (which appears merely as the

⁵⁰ Ogi, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*, pp. 583-588.

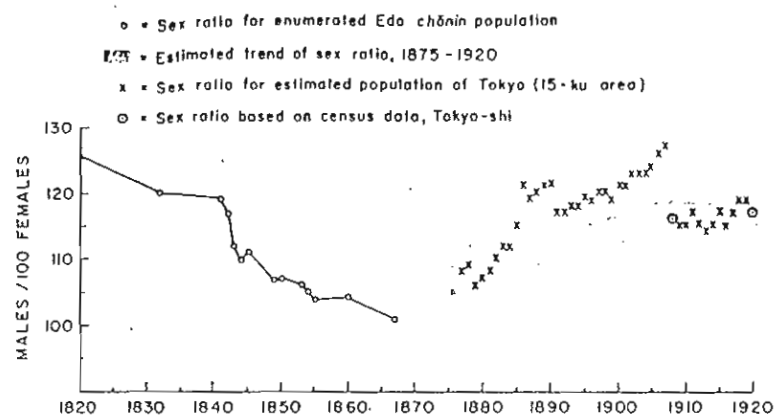


Figure 13.2 Edo-Tokyo Sex Ratios, 1820-1920

NOTE: Data for Edo (until 1867) from Kōda, "Edo no chōnin no jinkō" (see Figure 13.1, above), chart facing p. 248; the projected value for 1798 (135 M/100F) is from Tōkyō fu, ed., *Tōkyō fu shi, gyōseihen*, vol. 1 (1935), p. 92. For Tokyo, the figures have been calculated from Ogi Shinzō, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū* (Tokyo: Nippon hōshō shuppan kyōkai, 1979), p. 34, and *Nihon chiri taikō* (Tokyo: Keizōsha, 1930), vol. 3, p. 382. The values for the Tokyo city census of 1908 and the national census of 1920 are from Tōkyō to, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, 7 vols. (Tokyo: Tōkyō to, 1973-1980), vol. 4, p. 60.

The Meiji figures prior to the 1908 census show an evident tendency to progressive exaggeration of the sex ratio, with a partial correction as a result of the 1890 adjustments in the *kiryū* population. The exaggeration presumably results from the same cause—underreporting of out-migrants—that caused the overestimation of the total population in the same years (see Figure 13.1). In other words, the unreported out-migrant population was closer to equality of sex ratio than was the total reported population. The "estimated trend" line attempts to compensate for this error.

start of a new upward trend in the sex ratio), but rather the period of the Edo-Tokyo transition itself (which shows as a distinctive trough).⁵¹

What about more direct indicators of change in the pattern of immigration to Edo-Tokyo? Enumerations of *chōnin* after 1832 provide a breakdown of "native born" (*tōchi shushō*) versus "elsewhere born" (*tashō shushō*).⁵² These show the latter group rising from 24 percent in 1832 to a peak of 31 percent in 1843, and then declining gradually to a low of 22 percent in 1867. Clearly this indicates a decline in immigration to Tokyo after the Tempō period, a decline that is confirmed by a few

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 287-317.

⁵² Kōda Shigetomo, "Edo no chōnin no jinkō," *Shakai keizai shigaku*, vol. 8, no. 1 (April 1938), reprinted in Kōda Shigetomo *chosakushū*, 7 vols. (Tokyo: Chūō kōronsha, 1972-1974), vol. 2, pp. 244-265.

detailed neighborhood studies available from the 1860s.⁵³ After 1868, however, with the rapid growth of Meiji Tokyo, the flow of immigrants swelled. Even with a decline in urban mortality rates, the great bulk of the average annual increase of 3.6 percent must have been immigrants, whose numbers in annual increment and hence in total share of the city population rose steadily.

The pattern of migration appears to have changed little in the course of the Edo-Tokyo transition: migrants continued to be predominantly male, and to come from the same regions as in the past. The Hokuriku region, for example—Echigo province in particular—emerged in the late Tokugawa period as a disproportionately large source of Edo immigrants, a function that continued unabated into the twentieth century.⁵⁴ On these grounds, we would predict that the pattern of immigration was a source of stability in the transition. This is particularly true if we project backward from the twentieth century White's finding that urban immigrants tended to be relatively well prepared for the urban milieu, and did not necessarily constitute a segregated and oppressed subclass, as much Japanese scholarship has suggested.⁵⁵

The changing ratio of "native born" versus "elsewhere born" is suggested in Figure 13.3, which is based on a direct (and hence approximate) comparison of the late Tokugawa *chōnin* enumerations with those of the 1920 census and which assumes a regular rate of increase in the percentage of "elsewhere born" within the city.⁵⁶ By this projection, the size of the immigrant population surpassed that of the "native born" in about 1909. If one considers only the adult population, however, then immigrants became a majority about two decades earlier, in 1889. This tends to support Ogi's concept of the period from the 1890s on as a new era in which the immigrant population was now dominant—as it had been two centuries earlier at the crest of the city's first great period of expansion.

⁵³ Minami, *Bakumatsu Edo shakai no kenkyū*, pp. 3-120.

⁵⁴ Sofue, *Kenminsei*, pp. 17-19; Minami Kazuo, "Toshi ryūyūmin," in Toyoda Takeshi, Harada Tomohiko, and Yamori Kazuo, eds., *Kōza Nihon no hōken toshi*, 3 vols. (Tokyo: Bun'ichi sōgō shuppan, 1982-1983), vol. 2, p. 339; Tōkyō to, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, vol. 4, pp. 49-50.

⁵⁵ James W. White, "Internal Migration in Prewar Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1 (Winter 1978), pp. 81-123.

⁵⁶ Ogi, *Tōkei shomin seikatsu shi kenkyū*, pp. 41-42, uses the Meiji statistics for "legally domiciled population" (*honseki jinkō*) and "temporary-resident population" (*kiryū jinkō*) as equivalent to the native-born and immigrant populations; but this is unacceptable, since (among other problems) the *kiryū jinkō* was greatly overreported in Meiji Tokyo, as reflected by the periodic attempts to correct the registers.

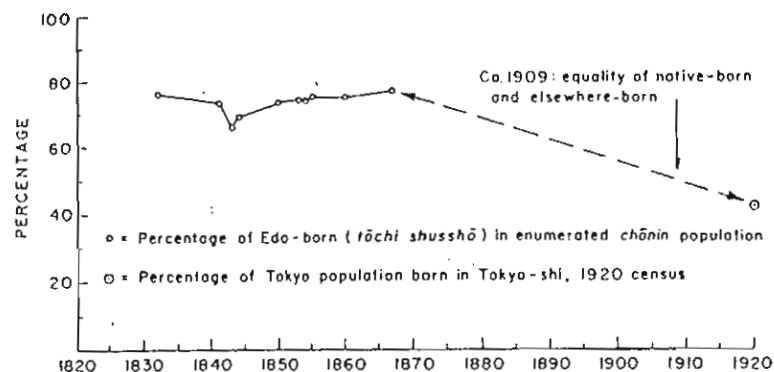


Figure 13.3 Native-Born Population in Edo-Tokyo, 1830-1920

Data from Kōda, "Edo no chōnin no jinkō" (see Figure 13.1, above); Nishiyama Matsunosuke, ed., *Edo chōnin no kenkyū*, 5 vols. (Tokyo: Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1972-1978), vol. 1, p. 534; and Tōkyō to, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, 7 vols. (Tokyo: Tōkyō to, 1973-1980), vol. 4, p. 47.

Neighborhood Solidarity

In Edo, the fundamental unit of urban life above the household was the *machi*, an administrative unit that typically consisted of the lots along both sides of a block-long street. The *machi* were essentially modular, enclosed by gates that were always guarded and closed at night. They were governed through a peculiar and pivotal class of "superintendants." Called by a variety of names—*ienushi* formally, *ōya* colloquially, and *yamori* noncommittally—these men wore two hats. Their basic roles were as caretakers and rent collectors for the landlord class. At the same time, they came to be assigned functions of political control, passing on official directives from the city magistrate's office to their tenants and assuming responsibility in five-man groups for any offenses their tenants might commit. The *yamori* (as I shall call them) numbered about 13,000 in Edo, and they emerge in the literature of the Edo-Tokyo transition (particularly in *rakugo* storytelling) as mediating father figures, watching over and yet protecting their "house children" (*tanako*).

The collapse of the traditional system of local administration in 1868 posed a severe threat to neighborhood stability. The new regime consciously aimed at uprooting the entrenched local authorities and replacing them with functionaries designated by the new national bureaucracy.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ The details of local administrative reform are to be found in Tōkyō to, ed., *Kusei enkaku* (Tokyo: Tōkyō to, 1958). A good summary appears in Tōkyō to, ed., *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, vol. 2, pp. 151-164.

The primary targets were the headmen (*nanushi*), the 260-odd officials who stood between the neighborhood *yamori* and the three hereditary city elders. By late Edo, the headmen had become entrenched hereditary powers, and they were replaced in early Meiji by appointees of Tokyo prefecture. At first, it was difficult not to rely on the former headmen, but over time their numbers were reduced, and the "ward heads" who replaced them (*chū-toshiyori*; later, *kochō*) came to be civil servants fully incorporated into the centralized prefectural bureaucracy.

Below the new ward heads, however, at the neighborhood level, the new government chose to leave most matters to informal and semiformal structures, which in effect meant the continued dominance of the *yamori*. This course of action was not evident from the start. On the contrary, the earliest edicts of the new government seemed intended to uproot the *yamori* as well as the headmen. They were even barred from any sort of administrative function in the new system, and the very word *ienushi* was legally banned in November 1869, to be replaced by (*chisho*) *sahamin* ("[land] superintendant").⁵⁸ But thereafter the government seems to have been content to let governance at the neighborhood (*machi*) level go its own way. In early 1870, some of the *sahamin* were permitted to undertake *machi* business without pay, and eventually a paid position of *machi* secretary (*chōyō kakari*) was established; typically, it was filled by a *sahamin*.

More important than this tenuous administrative continuity, though, was the uninterrupted role of the landlords and their *yamori* agents as the de facto holders of power in neighborhood Edo-Tokyo. There had been far fewer restrictions on land dealing in Edo than conventional wisdom would allow, and the liberalization by the new regime served largely to confirm what had long been practice. The city remained one in which landed power was restricted to a stable elite, and the majority of residents were renters.

Those scholars (principally Edo specialists) who depict the class structure of the city as a fundamental opposition of landlord and tenant also mislead.⁵⁹ On the contrary, neighborhood society in nineteenth-century Edo-Tokyo was highly differentiated, with not one but many lines of opposition. The *yamori* himself occupied an ambiguous middle ground between landlord and tenant: he held no property, but received housing as a fee for his services. Another peculiarity of Edo-Tokyo property holding that complicated the social hierarchy was the widespread practice

⁵⁸ Murata Shizuko, "Meiji ninen Honkokuchō nichōme koseki shitagaki ni tsuite," *Nihon rekishi*, no. 218 (July 1966), p. 45.

⁵⁹ For example: Matsumoto Shirō, "Bakumatsu ishinki ni okeru toshi no kōzō," *Mitsui bunko ronsō*, no. 4 (March 1970), pp. 105-164.

of leasing land upon which to build one's own house. This distinction between landowning and houseowning probably had its roots in the short life expectancy of houses in fire-susceptible Edo, but it has survived in Tokyo until the present.

The very complexity of organization at the neighborhood level may have been a critical factor in the stability of urban society at its base. The upward shift in the lowest level of official bureaucracy in the Meiji reforms meant that neighborhood control was left to the informal mechanisms of local power. We may assume that in early Tokyo these traditional mechanisms proved adequate to assimilate the new immigrants flowing into the city. In time, however, strains emerged, as the proportion of immigrants increased. New types of organization emerged to cope with the strains, and these may be taken as marking the effective end of the transition period.

One of these was the *chōnaikai* (neighborhood association), which numbered a mere 39 in 1897 but rose to 452 on the eve of the 1923 Kantō earthquake. While diverse in origin, the *chōnaikai* were essentially a means of sustaining local community solidarity in the face of rapid population turnover.⁶⁰ Parallel with these were the prefectural clubs (*ken-jinkai*), which sought to offer comradeship to immigrants of common origin. The *kenjinkai*, like the *chōnaikai*, were basically products of the twentieth century and as such mark the end of the transition period, during which the traditional mechanisms of neighborhood solidarity continued to function with little need for new organizations.⁶¹

"EDO" AND "TOKYO"—TWO CITIES OR ONE?

Ogi Shinzō's concept of the "Tōkei era" helps focus attention on two useful distinctions for analyzing Meiji Tokyo: the "provincial city" versus the "imperial capital," and the *shitamachi* versus the *yamanote*. Ogi argues that in the first two decades of Meiji, Tokyo was essentially provincial and dominated by the commoner culture of the *shitamachi*.⁶²

Tokyo, of course, *was* the "imperial capital" as of late 1868, but it

⁶⁰ Henry D. Smith II, "Tokyo as an Idea: An Exploration of Japanese Urban Thought until 1945," *Journal of Japanese Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1 (Winter 1978), p. 66.

⁶¹ Sofue, *Kenminsei*, pp. 12-14, shows roughly equal proportions of contemporary Tokyo *kenjinkai* to have been founded in three periods: in Meiji; between the end of Meiji and the Pacific War; and in the postwar period. I assume that the majority of the Meiji group were founded in the twentieth century.

⁶² Ogi Shinzō, "Tōkei saiken," in Ogi Shinzō and Maeda Ai, eds., *Tōkyō 1*, Meiji Taishō zushū, no. 1 (Tokyo: Chikuma shobō, 1978), p. 143.

did not take on a look appropriate to the grand term "Teito" until the 1890s. The offices of the early Meiji government were located in an ad hoc manner in and around the grounds of the former Edo Castle, whose surviving walls and crumbling gates were still the city's grandest monuments, an ever-present reminder of the *bakufu* city. The Imperial Palace, which had been moved into the old Nishinomaru of Edo Castle, went up in flames in 1873, and was not rebuilt until 1888; its very absence is an appropriate symbol of the transition era. It was only in the 1890s that the two characteristic districts of Tokyo as a modern imperial capital took shape: the central business district of Marunouchi and the national government center of Kasumigaseki. Both stood clearly and grandly apart from the old center of Edo to the east, and a strong sense of opposition between the two was established.

During the early Meiji period, however, "provincial" Edo and "national" Tokyo were far more interwoven, and one draws a distinction between the two at the peril of missing the essence of the transition. The true monument of Meiji Tokyo was the Ginza district, reconstructed in brick after a disastrous fire in 1872. The initiative for the project came from the central government, in no small part because such leading figures as Ōkuma Shigenobu and Yuri Kimimasa, who then lived in the downtown area, had lost their homes in the fire. The project was also construed as a means of impressing foreigners with Japan's modernizing vigor. But the Ginza area was an old artisan district, and the merchants who moved into it were mostly local, Edo-style *chōnin* eager to adapt to new ways. The end result was an astonishing amalgam of national and provincial, indigenous and Western, "Edo" and "Tokyo." Often judged a failure in terms of the grand intentions of its planners, who had envisioned a Regent Street in the center of Tokyo, the resulting Ginza was in practice a great success, setting patterns of merchandising, display, and architectural form that continue to the present.⁶³

Less well known than the Ginza was a similar blending of the old "Edo" and new "Tokyo" in what constituted the modern business district of early Tokyo. Located southeast of Edobashi in the very belly of the *shitamachi*, on a mix of both *chōnin* and samurai land, was an assortment of buildings of diverse and often eclectic style, housing a variety of leading Meiji banks, insurance companies, newspapers, commercial associations, and—the only survivor today—the Tokyo Stock Exchange. Put together under the entrepreneurial aegis of Shibusawa Eiichi, this area combined the feel of riverside Edo with such Tokyo-like amenities as gas streetlamps

⁶³ On the failure of the Ginza see, for example, *ibid.*, p. 140; on its success, see Fujimori, *Meiji no Tōkyō keikaku*, chap. 1.

and the first electrical generating plant. It was one of those early Meiji phenomena that could be understood only as neither "Edo" nor "Tokyo," as the two would come to be distinguished.⁶⁴ Not so with its successor, the uniform rows of brick buildings that Mitsubishi constructed in Marunouchi after 1896. The Marunouchi business district, like the grand baroque plans for Kasumigaseki which were being laid at the same time, served to set "imperial" Tokyo apart from the old commoner districts to the east that were increasingly being perceived as the realm of "Edo." Although the Kasumigaseki plan was realized only in part, it did become the nucleus of a coherent national government district, a visible "imperial capital" that sets late Meiji clearly apart from the transition era.

The division of the city as a whole into two mutually opposed cultural zones, the "plebeian" *shitamachi* to the east and the "elite" *yamanote* to the west, similarly tends to restrict our understanding of the Edo-Tokyo transition. The *shitamachi/yamanote* distinction is an old one, dating back to the first century of Edo's history, but one that continued to change with the city itself.⁶⁵ In late Tokugawa, the distinction seems to have been between center and periphery. *Shitamachi* was clearly the "downtown" area centered around Nihonbashi; there is no evidence that the conception extended to the eastern flatlands of the city as a whole. *Yamanote* was geographically vaguer, referring to the hilly western uplands in general. The cultural sense of *yamanote* in late Edo is difficult to document, since the term does not appear frequently in the surviving literature, but it appears to have suggested rusticity, in opposition to the urbanity of the center.⁶⁶

It is reasonable to assume that this same conceptual structure dominated the early Meiji period, although the dynamics of the transition launched a critical transformation. Particularly important was the enforced removal in 1871 of the (ex-)daimyo and the imperial aristocracy to Tokyo. They were settled primarily on the lots of *ex-bakufu* retainers around Kōjimachi and in the former daimyo villas of Aoyama, Azabu, and elsewhere. It was their residential style, of detached houses set back behind gated walls and surrounded by gardens, that would in time become the *yamanote* ideal. But the formulation of that ideal awaited a critical development that began only near the turn of the century: the emergence of a modern middle-class culture and its residential concentration in the *yamanote*. One factor in this transformation was probably

⁶⁴ Fujimori Terunobu, "Ushinawareta 'Shibusawa Shōgyōgai,'" *Bunka kaigi*, no. 135 (September 1980), pp. 26-33.

⁶⁵ Takeuchi Makoto, "Edo no chiiki kōzō to jūmin ishiki," in Toyoda et al., eds., *Kōza Nihon no hōken toshi*, vol. 2, pp. 302-309.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 304-305.

the residential model of the foreigners, perched high in the hills above Kobe and Yokohama; it is hard to find a precedent for this practice in an agricultural society that generally reserved the low-lying, watered areas for the elite, relegating the poor and the holy to the hills.

This revised sense of *yamanote* was paralleled by an even more sweeping redefinition of *shitamachi*, which came to be seen not as the city center, but rather as an eastern hemisphere set in mutual opposition to the *yamanote* to the west. The key development in this change was the industrialization of the city beginning in the 1880s, a process that for reasons of locational advantage was centered in the low-lying areas. The result was a new and distinctively modern *shitamachi*—more a periphery than a center, and in general poorer and less middle class than the western side of the city.

Critical to this transformation of the *shitamachi/yamanote* distinction was the incorporation of a historical dimension, by which the one became equated with "Edo" and the other with "Tokyo." In the process, the distinction would broaden further into a characteristic array of ideal-type dichotomies: *shitamachi* as old, traditional, unchanging, artisanal, indigenous, plebeian, and emotional; versus *yamanote* as new, modern, changing, imperial, bureaucratic, elite, and intellectual. From this framework, it is a logical progression to the conception of the Edo-Tokyo transition as envisioned by Ogi Shinzō and, more recently, by Edward Seidensticker, both of whom see the period after 1868 in terms of the replacement of "Edo" by "Tokyo."⁶⁷

The *shitamachi/yamanote* distinction thus became increasingly "real" in the twentieth century, both conceptually and as an objective description of the urban ecology. As such, it has appeared as a familiar distinction in the writings of social scientists interested in Tokyo, although most seem aware of its limitations. Ronald Dore's skillful concept of "Shitayamachō" (that is, a neighborhood which is both "*shitamachi*" and "*yamanote*") is the classic example.⁶⁸ But the distinction is far less adequate for the transition period, prior to industrialization and the emergence of a modern middle class.

In short, the sense of *opposition* between "Edo" and "Tokyo" emerged

⁶⁷ Edward Seidensticker, *Low City, High City—Tokyo from Edo to the Earthquake* (New York: Knopf, 1983).

⁶⁸ R.P. Dore, *City Life in Japan—A Study of a Tokyo Ward* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958), chap. 2; Robert J. Smith, "Pre-Industrial Urbanism in Japan: A Consideration of Multiple Traditions in a Feudal Society," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, vol. 9, no. 1, pt. 2 (October 1960), pp. 241-257; James W. White, *Migration in Metropolitan Japan* (Berkeley: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1982).

only after the transition period, beginning in the 1890s. In the process of the transition itself, the "two" were rather a constantly changing "one," separated largely by a somewhat capricious change of name in 1868. The real tensions were not between "Edo" and "Tokyo," but rather between the center of the city and its many peripheries: subcenters, suburbs, the port of Yokohama, the domains and prefectures, and indeed the very nation of Japan. In sorting out the complex dynamics of these interactions, we will be able to free ourselves of the picture of a "dying" Edo versus an awkwardly maturing "Tokyo," and establish a broad middle ground where Edo and Tokyo overlap, interact, and produce syntheses that are neither one nor the other.