

The Decline of the Japanese Warrior Class, 1840-1880

SONODA, Hidehiro

International Research Center for Japanese Studies, Kyoto, Japan

(Received 28 February 1989, revised manuscript accepted 8 April 1989)

Although the Meiji Restoration was neither a political reform aiming at the overthrow of the political régime supported by the samurai estate nor a social revolution initiated by non-samurai classes, the samurai class was abolished after the Meiji Restoration. Why? The decline of the samurai class began with strengthening military power during the last days of the Tokugawa régime. The encouragement of martial arts and the idea that all samurai were first and foremost "fighting men" originally stemmed from the samurai's pride in being members of an honorable estate and their sense of mission as the ruling elite. Unrelenting efforts to buttress their pride and a sense of mission caused the gradual separation of the samurai's specialized duty from the samurai's estate system, both of which long had been inseparably interconnected. With this separation the estate system of the samurai was destroyed, and the new organizing principle of the samurai society appeared: functional egalitarianism. The decline of the samurai class was an unintentional historical result caused by nation state formation.

Keywords: MEIJI RESTORATION (明治維新), SAMURAI (武士), ESTATE SYSTEM (身分制), EGALITARIANISM, OFFICIAL POST, SOCIAL MOBILITY, NATION STATE.

AN ANALYTICAL VIEWPOINT

The decline of the Japanese warrior class, the samurai class, is a historical topic that has been neglected by historians. Many studies focusing on political or economic aspects of the Meiji Restoration (1868) have appeared, but none has examined the decline of this class through the series of radical social transformations in the mid-19th century Japan. Since this topic has not been considered significant in itself, we have no satisfactory explanations for it. Before discussing the historical process of the decline of the samurai class, I would like to point out the significance of this problem and propose a framework for its analysis.

In this paper the term "class" and "social class" are not intended to have analytical meanings. They denote only the social group which occupies a designated position in a stratified society, the members of which share common values and vocations. It is traditionally said that Tokugawa society had four classes: the samurai, farmers, craftsmen and merchants. These classes are similar to what is referred to by the German term *Stand*, which corresponds closely to the Japanese term *mibun* or *mibunsei*. To translate *mibun* into English I follow Bendix and Lipset's opinion that "the proper translation of German *Stand* is estate, and the original meaning of the term was that status-differences between persons were legally defined, so that changes in status required legal sanction" (Bendix and Lipset, 1966: xv).

One of the main reasons why the study of the decline of the samurai class has been neglected is because of the smooth collapse of the political fabric of the Japanese ancien régime, *hōkensei*; usually this term has been translated into English as "feudalism" because of its similarity to feudalism in Western Europe. I do not translate it this way in order to emphasize the differences between traditional societies. As it is generally acknowledged, the abolition of the old political system (*han*) under the grand seigneurs (*daimyō*) and establishment of the new governing system in 1871, was decisive for the collapse of the ancien régime in Japan.

At the first stage of this radical reform, the leading politician of the Meiji government, Okubo Toshimichi, wrote in his diary, "Rather than face collapse as we do today, we can only make a bold and decisive commitment to change" (cited in Sakata, 1966: 123). The reaction to this reform, however, was quite different from his expectations.

Another important government leader wrote his astonishment in a letter: "In spite of the announcement of the abolition of *han*, no one was surprised at this" (cited in Sakata, 1966: 321). It was truly a very small political event with a huge historical significance.

Moreover, because this pattern of social change reflected the patterns of thinking about our problem, it also had a very important meaning for historians concerned with the decline of the samurai class. One of the most important presuppositions shared by Japanese historians was the identification of the collapse of the old political system with the decline of the social class which had supported it for such a long time. Is it possible to identify the collapse of a political institution with the complete decline of one social class as a historical reality rooted deeply in the social life? One of the most radical advocates of the abolition of the old political system, Torio Koyata, was at the same time an avid advocate of the maintenance of hereditary samurai privileges (Torio, 1911: 599).

Furthermore, it is widely known that aristocrats in West-European countries, although they experienced several institutional changes of polity, held on to their inborn privileges as aristocrats. In England it was not until 1870 that the aristocrats' privileges in the civil service were completely abolished and an open

recruitment system based on competition was introduced (Kelsall, 1955: 59-64). From the table below we can easily perceive that even in the latter half of the 19th century, the number of aristocrats in the ranks of commissioned officers was determined by institutional exclusiveness or the management of the institution by the privileged.

Table I. Social Origins of Members of the German, Swedish and British Army Elites, 1823-1913

	Germany Elite Total Officer Corps		Sweden Elite Total Officer Corps		Great Britain Elite Total Officer Corps	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Nobility	97	58(1824)	70	54(1823)	78	53(1830)
Other	3	42	30	46	22	47
Nobility	94	49(1872)	62	46(1865)	50	50(1875)
Other	6	51	38	54	50	50
Nobility	81	40(1898)		40(1890)	40	(1897)
Other	19	60		60	60	

(Janowitz, 1960, p.94. Otley, 1968, p.104. Kourvetaris, 1977, p.99. Razzell, 1978, p.253)

Thus the aristocrat's privileges of these countries was relatively independent of, or at least not directly subordinated to, the changes in the political system, and then only gradually did it become disorganized.

As it is apparent in the violent controversy concerning the purchase system in the mid-19th century England, the disorganization of the estate society caused many social problems which attracted intellectual attention (Harries-Jenkins, 1977: 59-102, Reader, 1966: 73-84). This is why some historical studies have focused on the decline of the estate system.

In other words, in European history, this "problem is so difficult," that "many historians have simply not tried to answer the question, when did the basic type of European stratification system change from a closed-class or 'caste' type to an open-class type of society (Barber and Barber, 1965: 110). Conversely, Japan witnessed a very drastic and clear-cut discontinuity between both types of stratification systems in the mid-19th century. To historians of Japan this problem seemed too simple to consider seriously, hence it has been neglected.

The second reason why the decline of the Japanese warrior class has not been adequately explained is because the historical realities have not fit with the theories used to analyse them. Many theories used by Japanese historians have been those that were originally made for the analysis of the modern European historical experience. What then has been the most fundamental assumption about the decline of aristocracies in Europe? Alexis de Tocqueville, whose

theory has been one of the most influential concerning this problem since the 19th century, said, "An aristocracy seldom yields (its privileges) without a protracted struggle, in the course of which implacable animosities are kindled between the different classes of society" (cited in Smith, 1960: 123).

It would seem that the conflict between the aristocracy and the rising bourgeoisie centering around the issue of privileges was surely a major problem in modern European history. This conflict model was, to a certain degree, valid for the analysis of this historical process, but its validity is limited.

Can we apply this model to the case of the Japanese warrior class? The leading diplomat, Sir Rutherford Alcock, who was the English minister to Japan in the last days of the Tokugawa Shogunate, wrote in his famous book *The Capital of the Tycoon* that the opening of trade in this period would cause the same historical development. He predicted: "What took place in Europe by the same development of wealth and intelligence, among the mercantile classes, enabling these to break the chains of feudal tenure, and create classes, enabling these to break the chains of feudal tenure, and create free cities as centres of resistance, would follow here. Foreign trade and intercourse do carry with them inevitably the germs of a social revolution to these Eastern states" (Alcock, 1863: 211).

Many studies of the Meiji Restoration written after the Second World War have basically followed this type of framework for their analysis of the collapse of the Japanese ancien régime (implicitly including an interpretation of the decline of the samurai class). According to these explanations, the ancien régime and the samurai class that had supported it were overthrown by those who had been oppressed under the Tokugawa Shogunate. Of course these studies differ greatly in their interpretation of which oppressed social class should be emphasized. Some emphasize the prominent role of the peasants in general, while others estimate highly the positive role of the wealthy farmers (*gōnō*) or wealthy merchants (*gōshō*). Moreover, some theorists carefully point out the importance of reformist samurai who strongly feared the radical upheaval of oppressed people in pursuit of revolution (in this case it is supposed that reformist samurai came from lower strata of the samurai class).

Here we need not criticize each explanation mentioned above. The problem we must deal with is how this framework, based on the conflict model, can adequately and consistently explain the process of decline of the samurai. An English chargé d'affaires, Francis Ottiwell Adams, who served at the time of the abolition of *han* made the very interesting observation that "If in Europe we had tried to execute such a great reform as this, it would have taken several years and the use of armed forces to make it succeed" (Kunaishō, 1968: 498). His view reflected very frankly the shared opinion among Europeans about the decline of the aristocracy in Europe, the decline of the aristocracy had brought on conflict between different social classes and the use of "armed forces" frequently accompanied such conflict.

In Japan, however, serious conflict necessitating the use of armed forces did

not accompany the decline of the samurai class and Adams believed that this demonstrated the unique behavior of the Japanese. After returning to England he wrote a voluminous tome on Japanese history. In it he ascribed the unique smoothness of the collapse of Japan's ancien régime to the "obedience" of the peasant and farmer to the government and to the "unhesitating loyalty to Mikado" of the samurai class. He perceived the difference in the patterns of decline of the aristocracies in Japan and Europe, and tried to explain the Japanese case by using the unique spiritual symbol of the "*Mikado*" (Adams, 1875: 278).

In Japan as well many patriotic interpretations excessively emphasized the historical role of the emperor in an interpretation similar to that of Adams'. They correctly paid attention to the unique process of aristocratic decline in Japan, but in order to explain this process they overemphasized the uniqueness of "the Japanese Spirit" and the emperor himself as the fundamental causal element in this process. Tokutomi Sohō, a representative patriotic intellectual for almost a half century from the mid-Meiji period on, wrote that the peaceful collapse of Japan's ancien régime was "a great social phenomenon which can not be seen in the history of foreign countries" and that "ultimately this was caused by dint of the essence of the fundamental national character (*kokutai*, implying a polity with the emperor acting as its keystone)" (Tokutomi, 1962: 321).

This kind of patriotic interpretation presupposed that an anti-samurai class ideology in the name of "emperor-ism" (*ikkun-banminshugi*) took a positive role in breaking down the samurai aristocracy. For sure this ideology was used by the Meiji government to rationalize great reform, but this ideology, analogous to the egalitarianism that insisted on the equal rights before God in Protestant Europe, prevailed widely after the Restoration. We should not think of this ideology as a motive force in changing the samurai aristocracy. This problem will be analysed in greater detail below.

It is clear that the samurai class went into decline with the collapse of the old political system without attack from other social classes. This unique pattern of decline compared with that of European aristocracies requires a special explanation of why and how this came about. T. C. Smith and E. K. Trimberger have both addressed this problem. Smith's explanation, however, deals only with the preconditions for decline: basic change in the land holding system of the samurai class in the 17th century and the bureaucratization of samurai society throughout the Edo period which made possible "Japan's aristocratic revolution" (Smith, 1960).

He does not refer directly to the process of decline in the mid-19th century. We need to build a bridge over the gap between the basic changes in the samurai society to which Smith correctly refers and the final historical result of decline of the samurai class by analysing the gradual process of self-disorganization that occurred in the samurai class after the 1840s. It will become apparent that the decline of the samurai class was not directly produced by the basic social

changes that took place during the Edo period.

E. K. Trimberger on the other hand has concentrated her analysis mainly on the last phase of decline in the samurai class during the late Edo Period. But because her main purpose is to establish a typology of "the revolution from above," and apply it to the experience of Japan, Turkey, Egypt, and Peru, her analysis of the decline of the samurai class has several serious defects.

Her greatest error is to overemphasize the conflict between high and low ranking officials within the samurai class arising from competition for economic rewards and political power. Trimberger fails to understand that the reformist samurai were military bureaucrats who were specialized in modern military sciences just as Turkish military bureaucrats (Trimberger, 1978: 74). Generally speaking those samurai who took the initiative in the revolutionary transformations were not yet professionalized, military bureaucrats, but warriors who tried to build up strong military powers to cope with the Western countries.

Although she intentionally neglects the analysis of cultural aspects of the samurai society. But this was necessary in order to explain fully "the revolution from above" in Japan. Her interpretation is, after all, another version of the conflict model.

All past interpretations that identify the collapse of the old ruling fabric with the decline of the samurai class have shared the common basic presumption that the social powers or political ideology which overthrew the samurai class did not originate from within the samurai class itself. We will not be able to explain fully the historical paradox presented by the demise of the samurai class by using hypotheses insisting that elements from outside the samurai class determined its decline. Rather, to find the reason for this self-disorganization we must examine the social character of the samurai class at the time of the appearance of Western powers at Japan's doorstep.

Here it becomes necessary to touch briefly on the social character of the samurai class. In the Meiji period many books that criticized unfavorably samurai society by calling it *hōkensei* or *monbatsusei* (lineage system) were published. Fukuzawa Yukichi, undoubtedly one of the most influential authors and one of the intellectuals most strongly influenced by Western culture, created a famous catch phrase "The lineage system was an enemy of my father" (Fukuzawa, 1960: 6).⁽¹⁾

He roughly divided samurai society, in which there were over one hundred classifications of social status or official rank, into "an upper samurai group" and "a lower samurai group." Fukuzawa pointed out that each group was quite different from the other with respect to life chances, range of intermarriage, wealth, education, ways of conducting one's private economy, and customs of everyday life (Fukuzawa, 1877).

The great discrepancy of power and prestige between both strata within samurai society made the economic life, the way of everyday life and the value system of each completely different, and as a result of these differences they had maintained the very strict hierarchical estate system in which they did not

mutually associate.

Important here is the fact that for Fukuzawa "the enemy of his father" was not the entire samurai system, but rather this strictly closed estate hierarchy. Fukuzawa suggested carefully in the last part of *Samurai Society* that he "hoped" that "the formless spiritual dignity peculiar only to the samurai class would be maintained" (Fukuzawa, 1877). In yet another book he clarified this positive opinion of the historical role of the samurai class saying that "for the last thirty years it was only the samurai class that progressively introduced up-to-date modern Western culture into Japan, eagerly diffused it over our nation, accomplished the great reforms at the time of the Restoration and carried out the new progressive policy. Farmer and merchants and the like were but onlookers and only supplied the food and clothing for society" (Fukuzawa, 1898: 187-188).

Many intellectuals of the Meiji period including Fukuzawa and Torio shared an ambivalence consisting both of hostile feeling toward the hierarchical estate system and of positive appraisals of the dignity or historical role of the samurai class. Thus, upon superficial examination it may seem that contradictory opinion existed within the thought of one individual. Yet to the intellectuals of the Meiji period there were no contradictions and on the contrary, this seemed quite natural. This dualism in thought was rooted in the dualistic social character of the samurai. Previous studies of the samurai society in the intellectual or social history focused on the bonds between retainers and lords. These bonds, of course, formed the core of the hierarchical estate system in samurai society, so many historians were interested in explaining how these bonds were transformed and how, as a result of their transformation, the loyalty of the retainer to the lord changed during the Edo period.

This viewpoint is only one of many possible interpretations that can be used to shed light on the samurai society. This paper adopts a different analytical framework to examine the same problem. We must note that the system of normative orientation of the samurai class to specialized duty (*shokubun*) was also an important element of samurai society in addition to the bond between retainers and lords. The samurai's specialized duty, of course, was interwoven with his obligation as a retainer to his lord so neither can be observed as a pure social form.

Yet, analytically speaking, both systems are distinguishable from each other; this distinction is crucially important for the analysis of the decline of the samurai class. Let us briefly describe the fundamental character of the specialized duty of the samurai basing our observations on the elaborate and detailed study of the *shokubun* system by Ishii Shirō (Ishii, 1986: 167-230).

Ishii has pointed out through an analysis of the stable period of the Tokugawa régime the "military family" had the specialized duty to present themselves for "service through governing the nation" (*chisei no gohōkō*) as a civil servant or politician in addition to their original role as warriors since the establishment of the Tokugawa régime. Being called "*shoku*" or "*shokubun*," abstractly

this idea meant "social position" or "duty attended with social position." Since specialized duty was founded on "usefulness" the social definition of the samurai in this context was greatly different from the social definition of the samurai in the context of the estate system.

The principle of the samurai's specialized duty tended to stress the achievement or competency of the individual samurai as opposed to the principle of the estate system that attached great importance to inborn privileges. It must be admitted, however, that this principle of specialized duty was subordinate to the principle of inborn privileges by the last stage of the Tokugawa régime (Yamamura, 1976).

With the growing crisis in international relations brought on by pressure from Western powers, the idea of the specialized duty of the samurai increased in relative importance and began to destroy the traditional structure of samurai society. This is a key point in our discussion; the samurai was not merely the privileged class that had monopolized the official posts as private property like European aristocrats, but also retained the privileged "specialized duty" that bound them to public service. Originally, the samurai's main duty was military. This change in samurai class began with the transformation of the samurai's self-image as a warrior.

(1) According to *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa* (translated by Eiichi Kiyooka, Columbia University Press, New York, 1960) the translation of this part is "Feudalism is my father's mortal enemy." It seems that the word, "feudalism," is too vague to designate the exact meaning of the Japanese of *monbatsusei* used at the time.

THE RETURN TO MILITARY DUTY

The first step in the decline of the samurai class was initiated by its return to its original, specialized military duty. Traditionally, the samurai was a warrior tightly bound by the strong bonds between retainers and lords. Those bonds had undergone profound changes during the two hundred year peace of Tokugawa Japan. Among these changes were the demilitarization of the samurai which was concomitant with a tendency to become civil servants. The bureaucratization and demilitarization of samurai society gave Japan's historical development features that were conspicuously different from the knights of Europe.

In the early part of the Tokugawa period samurai were forced to move from the land to castle towns controlled directly by *daimyō*, whereupon they lost their base as independent warriors (Smith, 1965: 356). Moreover, samurai society became highly bureaucratized throughout the Tokugawa period, and consequently it was generally said that the samurai's basic character was transformed from that of the feudal vassal to that of the patrimonial bureaucrat

of the Tokugawa family or of a particular *daimyō*.

We can easily follow this transformation in the revision of the Samurai Code of Ethics (*Buke shohatto*). The first edition (1615) contained a very famous statement; "Devote yourselves to both literary and military accomplishments and strive especially for accomplishment in archery and equestrian arts" (article one). Ceaseless training in archery and horsemanship were particularly required because of their "essential importance for the military family."

In 1683 this article one was revised by dividing it into two parts. It was then re-written "be diligent in both literary and military accomplishments, and filial piety and maintain proper manner as a ruler" (article one of the revised edition). To this was added, "Constantly be prepared with soldiers and horses required for military affairs and save own money for the public purpose" (article three). Article one was strongly infused with the principles of civil government expressed in Confucian philosophy, and the "military" element in the sentence was weakened. In article three "training in military arts" was replaced by the fulfillment of the bureaucratized obligation of the military. Here we can see clearly the growing predominance of the civilian role of samurai and their bureaucratization (Shihō-shō, 1915: 90-106).

This transformation, however, was not crucial to the essential nature of the samurai class. Books concerning samurai ethics were published and read widely among samurai. It was of interest that these books elucidated not only "the ethics of the patrimonial bureaucrats," but also "the ethics of the independent warrior" and "absolute loyalty to the lord" which had been integral parts of samurai ethics since the 12th century. Despite this profound transformation, we should note that the samurai class was to the end founded on its "military" existence. At least, they were conscious of themselves as warriors (Ishida, 1970: 104).

Ironically it was through this concept of "the military" that the integrated cultural ideal of the samurai was destroyed. The concept of "the military" was primarily oriented toward the goal of coping with the enemy. It was significant that the samurai class was deeply committed to this cultural heritage. The more deeply they were committed to their specialized duty the more thoroughly they had to do everything for it.

After the 1840s a number of samurai began to awaken to the emerging threat to Japan posed by the Western powers. To prepare for this situation it was emphasized that the return to the samurai's original military duties should supersede their civil duties. This attempt, however, only made clear the fact that traditional samurai ethics had become devotion to both literary and military accomplishments. But through the careful examination of various Bakufu (the government of the shōgun) and *han* (domain) edicts from this time, we can see that they stressed heavily the military aspect of samurai ethics.

For example, in 1849, the Bakufu posted the following official notice to the direct retainers of the shogun. To cope with the frequent appearances of foreign ships on Japan's coast, the official notice stated that "Originally both literary

and military accomplishments were crucially important in the pursuit of the specialized duty of the samurai, who, even at the lowest rank, are the shogun's guards, and are to be organized in emergencies under the head of each brigade to protect the shogun. This specialized duty, however, cannot be attained without ceaseless preparation." In this part "literary" and "military" elements in the samurai ethic superficially had the same significance. The actual purpose of this edict was to put an emphasis on the samurai's military duties.

This notice proclaimed that, above all, the military men who held organizational offices as well as those who did not have official posts should devote themselves earnestly to "the military arts" (*budō*) and to "the original military duty of the samurai class." At the same time it was stressed that "even civil officials who held organizational offices (*kattekata*) should maintain the same samurai ethic, irrespective of official post" (Katsu, 1897: 96-98).

Already, the traditionally stable harmony between military and civilian values had broken down. The concluding part of this notice further reflected the unharmonious nature of the samurai ethic. "Without distinction between those who have the capacity to be received in audience by the shogun and those who do not, and between those who have an official post and those who do not, the following persons should be recommended for promotion to the government after careful examination by the head of each group, without personal consideration: those persons who have devoted themselves to both literary and military accomplishments and have also been diligent in official service; those persons who have taught archery, horsemanship, the art of using the lances, swordsmanship, other military arts or military science; those persons who have been well educated as scholars; all these persons should have a good personality and a record of distinguished achievements in everyday affairs" (Katsu, 1898: 98).

Before Perry's expedition to Japan the tendency to stress the military aspect of samurai ethics did not go beyond this. Gradually, however, stress was put on military value with the growing international and then national crisis. For the samurai, weapons like swords and lances were not merely useful on the battlefield; they also symbolized the samurai's position as an estate. The sword especially had been regarded as a symbol of the samurai estate. Comparing the Japanese sword with the gun or cannon in the West, the sword became the symbol of Japanese spirit (*Yamato damashii*) in the mind of the samurai.

One year after the Meiji Restoration a conference was held in the National Assembly (*Kōgisho*) to discuss the abolition of the samurai sword. In this discussion the opinion that "those who are imbedded with Japanese spirit will not stop wearing their swords" was met with the approval of all the assembly's members except for the individual who had suggested the measure (Dajōkan, 1869: 110). It is a very interesting fact that the traditional ideas attached to the sword continued to be kept firmly in the samurai's mind. Here we should notice that this idealistic interpretation of the sword was a reflection of the decline of the traditional military arts as instruments of military power.

Traditional military arts were examined in the light of the practical require-

ments necessary for the creation of strong and modern military forces. Soon, traditional weapons were discarded in favor of the new modern Western weapons. At the beginning of the revival of the traditional military arts practicality was considered the most important criteria for military reform.

When Perry's squadron came to Japan, Tokugawa Nariaki (the former lord of Mito) wrote a memorial to the shogun saying "the samurai who live in the divine land (*shinshū*) should train themselves in swordsmanship and the art of the lance." He emphasized that if training in the martial arts were only perfunctory as it had been in the past, good results could not be expected. He stated that "From the practical point of view all samurai should train themselves in the use of the sword and the art of the lance, weapons the length and weight of which are the most suitable for use in combat." (Tokyo Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, 1913: 517).

This emphasis on practicality was the key element in instituting military reforms. The military academy of the Bakufu abandoned the instruction of archery in 1862 and limited training in the traditional martial arts to swordsmanship and the art of the lance alone. Before long even the sword and lance themselves lost their value as military weapons and soon became instruments used only for personal defense (Katsu, 1898: 261-279).

The change in traditional ideas about weapons and the martial arts occurred not because of the influence of values that competed with military values, but rather by the deepening of the military values themselves. Mori Arinori, who proposed the abolition of the sword wrote about the changing attitude toward traditional ideas as follows: "I most humbly think that although becoming accomplished in both literary and military arts has been officially a basic principle by which the samurai must abide, we should pay careful attention to the present social situation. The importance of military accomplishments depends upon the character of the social situation. The military power of the sword is, I think, very trifling since it can only protect one person" (Mori, 1867: 11).

Mori, who had just begun to study naval sciences in Great Britain as a student dispatched secretly by Satsuma *han*, was seeking the most reasonable way to strengthen the military power under "the present social situation" and naturally denied the traditional martial arts. This conclusion was derived from his reasonable thinking based on the traditional values of the samurai.

From this point Mori proceeded to make a very dramatic change in his thought. He abandoned the study of military science insisting that "Recently many people in Japan have begun to admit the importance of foreign countries and to study Western learning. They only, however, concentrate on the technical sciences and ignore the essential problem." For him "the essential problem" was the study of the legal system in order to establish the fundamental structure of the nation state (Mori, 1867: 56). The method for strengthening military power greatly depended upon the interpretation of "the social situation" of Japan surrounded by Western powers. Of course, any number of conclusions could

have been drawn, but among them the most reasonable one was that "there is absolutely no way to suppress the barbarians without mastering the barbarian's advanced technology" (Katsu, 1898: 54).

This logic would later be applied to the military reforms of the Bakufu and some *han* to prepare first for the expected international crisis and then for the civil wars that followed.

THE SAMURAI ESTATE AND SPECIALIZED DUTY

The changing attitudes toward military values contributed to the reorganization of the traditional armed forces of the samurai in two ways. Firstly, the original concept of military values emphasized in the samurai code of ethics was intended primarily to be a means of cultural refinement or personal cultivation in peaceful times, whereas the new military values were predominantly oriented to actual fighting. Therefore the old military institutions were reevaluated in the light of contemporary European military institutions; aspects no longer fit for modern warfare were discarded.

Secondly, due to the recognition of the necessity to use Western weapons, technology and scientific knowledge, ideas about human resources and the criteria of usefulness for armed forces began to change. These new ideas stimulated the formation of new organizational principles for the armed forces.

To realize a strong military organization it was first of all necessary to abandon the many traditional common soldiers (*zōhyō*) who previously were institutionally required. One opinion said that: "It is needless to say that the unnecessary common soldiers should be abandoned, that expenditures for food be reduced as much as possible and that well trained, strong soldiers be selected" (Tokyo Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, 1913: 64). Reproaches of this sort were common in this period, and there was a special reason for this.

According to the official edict that delineated the samurai's military obligations (*keian no guneki-ninzūwari*) which was announced early in the Edo period and continued to be the basic principle of military obligation until the last days of Tokugawa regime, the samurai who had a hereditary stipend (*karoku*) had to maintain the common soldiers under his command in proportion to their stipend. For example, a samurai having a 500 *koku* hereditary stipend had to maintain institutionally two regular samurai, one armor carrier, one bow carrier, one lance carrier, one box carrier, two horse grooms, one sandal carrier and two parcel carriers. Among eleven persons who were maintained for military purposes only two were regular soldiers. With an increase in hereditary stipend the ratio of the noncombatants (including the likes of a carrier of tea and lunch, a Buddhist priest and a carrier of rain-gear) to soldiers was increased.

Another opinion, written at the time when Japan was faced with the American soldiers of Perry's squadron, sharply pointed out the fundamental

defect in the traditional military system:

“At Uruga (where Perry’s squadron was anchored) the foreigners brigade consisted of persons equipped with firearms, including the crews of the small boats. This means that a hundred-man brigade was a brigade of one-hundred fighting men (*hyakunin soku hyakunin no sensō*). Comparing this with the forces dispatched by four daimyō families (which had a special obligation to protect the coastline of Edo bay), there were a large number of unnecessary common soldiers; less than one tenth of those dispatched were combatants. In the name of guarding against foreign ships this defect first should be taken care of for the time being” (Tokyo Daigaku Shiryō Hensanjo, 1913: 20). Military forces intended for actual combat naturally had to consist of “fighting men” (*sensō-nin*) only, all equipped with firearms. Until the period of civil wars in the 1860’s, this line of military reform was only partially completed. In Satsuma and Saga *han*, which had been the most eager to implement military reform, the old military system in which noncombatants accompanied the regular combatants was abandoned, and training in the use of firearms was introduced for all members of the samurai class in 1854 and 1857 respectively. The social effect of this and similar reforms will be analyzed below (Kagoshima-ken, 1941: 85, Hideshima, 1934: 247-248).

What we should consider here is why this kind of reform was not realized sooner. For this purpose let us trace the case of the moderate reforms made by the Bakufu to examine the essential problems involved in the implementation of this kind of reform. The starting point of this reform was the widely accepted opinion that a military force made up of as many strong, well-trained soldiers as possible should be created. For this the samurai were encouraged to devote themselves to training in the martial arts irrespective of official post, social status by lineage or position in the family.

The Bakufu proclaimed in the statement for the establishment of the military academy that: “Hitherto the military academy was established for the training of archery, the art of the lance, the art of swimming and so on with the shogun’s gracious message. Henceforth not only those persons who hold official posts, high ranking retainers (*hatamoto*) and lower ranking retainers (*gokenin*), but also their sons and dependents not in line for an inheritance, all of these who so aspire should participate in this program and earnestly train themselves in these arts.”

This statement contained a significant problem; this military academy was merely an educational institution, not integrated into the regular military organization of the Bakufu. Even if training in this institution could have attained its objectives, its effect would have been scattered throughout the old military organization. As a result of this the military organization in which “a one-hundred man brigade was a brigade of one-hundred war-men” could not be established. The well-trained soldiers who were the product of this academy could have nothing more than latent military power.

To build up a truly powerful military system this latent military power

needed to be organized into a new military system fundamentally different from the traditional system. However such a fundamental reformation of the Bakufu's military organization could not be realized without a radical transformation of the hierarchical estate system in samurai society. Institutionally, the samurai's military obligation was determined by the hereditary stipend which the master of each samurai family had been given (such as in the above-mentioned case of a 500 *koku* retainer). This hereditary stipend was also the base of the hierarchical estate system within samurai society. Therefore a reform of military obligations necessitated the reform of the whole of samurai society.

Having confronted this problem, the Bakufu tried to maintain the basic traditional system of military obligations. Then within the limits of this principle the Bakufu carried out the compromising reforms on two different levels. One was the obligatory subscription of money or persons to the Bakufu (*heibu*) in proportion to hereditary stipend in order to establish a new military organization controlled directly by shogun. The other was to create a new system of hierarchies for the new military organization.

In 1861 the new military system, which was named the *shinei jōbigun* (the shogun's standing army), was established. It comprised heavy infantry, light infantry, vanguard light infantry, light cavalry, heavy cavalry, light artillery, heavy artillery and military police. The members of this military force consisted of some of the lower ranking shogun's retainers who did not have an official post, various persons transposed from their official posts in the traditional military system, and irregular samurai subscribed by *heibu* at a rate of one person per 500 *koku*, three persons per 1,000 *koku* and ten persons per 3,000 *koku*.

No change in actual military obligations was made, and therefore the hierarchical estate system itself was not basically changed by this reformation of the Bakufu's military organization. The heavy infantry was to be filled with the highest ranking persons recruited by *heibu*. For this, the Bakufu specially ordered that "as many persons as possible should be recruited by *heibu* from amongst the residents of the retainers' domains."

Moreover, the Bakufu stated clearly that "in the estate hierarchy they should be treated the same as those who do not have permission to wear a sword" (*mibun no gi wa taitō ika*), and that "their stipend depends upon their respective master's favor." They expressed the nature of the relationship between lord and retainer in the estate system. Even the regular samurai, who were not recruited by *heibu*, also had to follow this principle. One's specialty in the military organization was to have been determined by one's capacity to have an audience with the shogun or the amount of one's hereditary stipend. Herein we can see a clear reflection of the estate system (Katsu, 1897, in the following the quotations of the military reform of the Bakufu came from the same source).

Were there any changes in the hierarchical estate system due to this kind of military reform? We should take notice of the fundamental difference between the traditional means of building up a strong military power and the new one.

In the end, the different means employed to implement military reform in this period would cause an important structural change in the basic military unit, a household consisting mainly of lord and retainer. According to the traditional idea of military organization, the ultimate source of military power was based upon a strong personal identification of the retainer with his lord; samurai military organization was composed of a series of such relationships that existed between lord and retainer. Therefore in a time of crisis, bonds based on a strong personal identification, between the shogun and his retainers (*daimyō* were, in a sense, the shogun's retainers), between the *daimyō* and their retainers and between the *daimyō*'s retainers and their own retainers should have become more necessary than ever. How this idea of the traditional military system tenaciously persisted even after the Meiji Restoration is demonstrated by the following quotation.

A memorial, entitled a "Discussion on *hōkensei*," was submitted to the National Assembly at the time when the abolition of *han* was being contemplated. It said, "Our nation is surrounded by oceans, so we have never experienced invasion by barbarians until now. Also from now on we properly should make the *daimyō* the steadfast bulwark of our nation in order to protect ourselves from invasion. If this bulwark were to be abolished and in its stead a centralized bureaucratic system (*gunkensei*) were to be introduced, the samurai will lose their lords and common people will lose their masters. In such a situation, it will be impossible to protect our country's coastline even with well-trained and well-equipped soldiers" (Dajōkan, 1869: 67).

By the last days of the Tokugawa régime, however the general direction of military reform had changed so that no longer were the strengthening of personal bonds between lord and retainer emphasized; rather, it was realized that military reform had to be based on the improvement of weapons. In other words, military reform was no longer a matter of strengthening the spiritual power of "fighting men" as it had been traditionally believed. Military leaders realized that it was more effective to improve the weapons they used in order to make a viable military force a reality. This difference was decisive. Although at one time it had been useful to emphasize the personal bonds between lord and retainer, a relationship that had been the source of spiritual power for soldiers, taking them happily to their deaths on the battlefield, this idea was based on the presumption that the weapons they used were unchangeable. When it became necessary to take changes in weapons into consideration, no matter how one considered the ethics of the relationship between lord and retainer, any way of thinking about military reform also had to take on a different character. According to the new idea of military organization the new type of soldier should be a "war man" equipped with new weapons rather than a retainer embedded in an association with his lord in the hierarchical estate system. The desire to create a military force in which all members carried firearms was one logical outcome of this way of thinking about military reform. The more deeply committed to his specialized duty the samurai was, the more earnestly he sought

to strengthen military power, taking the samurai even further away from this traditional bond. From this viewpoint traditional ideas concerning building up a strong military power were not denied; instead they were merely ignored. This explains why such traditional ideas persisted strongly even after the Meiji Restoration.

This new phenomenon, caused by the introduction of Western weapons, can be called the individualization (in Japanese *tanshin-ka*, a word taken from the historical documents of that time) of the samurai. This was, of course, quite different from European individualism in its ideological background and its social functions in history. In this case individualization means the general tendency in this period for the individual samurai who was independent from the bond of lord and retainer to become a unit of the military system, in contrast to the traditional system. This tendency can be clearly seen in the discussion below on the recruiting of samurai as newly commissioned officers. The officers who formed the core in the military organization predominantly depended on personal qualities which could not be reduced to anything having to do with the family as a military unit.

One memorial proposed that "At the present time in the military academy there is no order or system in the curriculum because of the mixture of high and low ranking samurai. Without any special consideration for their rank the valuable regular samurai are urged mainly to train in the same skills and drills as the soldiers recruited from farmers; there is no instruction of subjects for high ranking officers. We cannot but deplore this state of affairs. It is naturally expected that the truly gifted among several thousands of samurai under the Bakufu will be great generals, if suitably trained."

In the shoguns's standing army it was relatively easy to train the rank and file who had already existed as common soldiers in the traditional military system. All that had to be done was to equip them with firearms. To train an officer in the new military system was, however, especially difficult beyond even the general observation that "it is very easy to get a thousand common soldiers, but it is one of the most difficult of things to get an able commander."

It was absolutely essential to distribute the new type of officers who were familiar with Western military sciences in order to complete the newly established military system, but they could not be taken directly from the traditional military organization based on the estate system. For this purpose the organizing principle of the system had to be changed radically. One memorial written in this period sharply pointed out that "Only in times of peace could the commander depending on pedigree and social status win great respect. In times of emergency the long standing isolation of commanders from the common soldiers, however, will exert a baneful influence upon their relationship. It will be impossible for ignorant officers to win respect and gain authority as a commander."

Hence it was necessary to eliminate first "the ignorant officer" and at the same time to recruit a new type of samurai officer from a wider range of recruitment

irrespective of social rank or position in family, although such means were not authorized under the traditional system. This reform would bring about a significant and serious structural change in the hierarchical order of the estate system. This problem caused conflicts over how to take this new type of officer into the shogun's standing army.

Conflicts occurred between the group that emphasized the samurai's specialized duty to build up, above all, a strong military, and the group that emphasized the maintenance of the hierarchical order of the estate system. The focus of this conflict was on who would be recruited and what kind of qualifications they would have after being commissioned.

According to tradition both civil and military posts could be occupied in principle only by the head of each family. The younger brothers of the family head, or his sons (at least until his death), had, therefore, no access to an official post. To recruit able officers these limitations had to be removed and in their place rules for recruitment based on the achievement or ability of samurai candidates had to be established. When officers of both high and low rank were taken into the infantry, artillery and cavalry, one group insisted that: "these posts should be filled with officers recruited according to achievement, irrespective of social rank and whether or not they be second or third sons." Contrary to this, another group said: "Second and third sons had better not be commissioned. No special allowance can be made even for persons who are commissioned owing to their outstanding achievements to establish new households; there are adoptive families for them, so they should seek the family that will adopt them."

This group was caught on the horns of a dilemma; on the one hand they had admitted already the necessity of the new type of recruitment but, on the other hand, they simultaneously tried to maintain the traditional principles for the distribution of official posts. Adoption became the expedient used to overcome this difficulty. Tokutomi Sohō called adoption in the Tokugawa period, when social mobility was strictly limited, "proxy of free competition." Although adoption could be a "proxy" of the new organizational principle, it could be nothing more than that (Tokutomi, 1907: 235).

For this purpose, official posts first had to be separated from the household as a basic military unit and then the official posts fixed in the hierarchical order of estate had to be re-organized according to new principles based on achievement or ability creating specialized functional positions. It was argued that as long as official posts were not a part of personal privileges acquired by personal achievement, but instead were regarded as a part of the privileges derived from household or social status in samurai society, a continuing supply of able men for official posts could not be maintained because the old type of recruitment created "incessantly lazy persons supported by hereditary stipend."

Hence the reformist group could not but propose a plan for a new system of appointing men to official posts. According to this plan lower ranking samurai who were commissioned to prestigious official posts could not also obtain "the

special hereditary stipend of one hundred *koku*” customarily added to one’s regular stipend. Moreover, households established when men who were not family heads were appointed to official posts were abolished as a rule at the time when they vacated their positions because of illness or death. It was also hoped that the social prestige of the newly recruited officers would be limited so that they would not be permitted audiences with shogun as a hereditary privilege. Even in the case of the officer with extraordinary achievements to his credit, this hereditary privilege, it was insisted, should be limited in the future to his sons and grandsons.

Finally, the reformist group’s basic desire was to separate new official posts from household, hereditary stipend and social status, all of which were tightly connected to each other in the hierarchical estate system. Therefore, they tried as much as possible to interpret the fundamental character of the new official post as goal-oriented or functional. As a result it was insisted that, as a rule, the allocation of official posts should be based on the individual samurai’s achievements or ability in his specialized duty.

We cannot think of this opinion as having been caused by the economic interests of lower ranking samurai. It was certain that the reformist group consisted of lower ranking samurai who had been newly recruited into official posts, such as in the case of Katsu Kaishū.⁽¹⁾ If the opinions mentioned above had originated out of their economic self-interest, their attitude toward the estate system could only be called irrational, since they insisted on limiting the privileges they had newly acquired by appointment to official posts. Had they kept only their own interests in mind, they would have striven to bolster an advantageous position in the system. Instead they only insisted that the traditional military organization which had malfunctioned should be rationalized.

The military reforms of this period were not brought about by a change in military or socio-political ideology. Rather, they stemmed from the traditional belief system that the samurai had maintained as an intrinsic part of their specialized duties. Faced with a growing international threat to Japan, those who awoke to their original duty as a fighting man tried to remove the unnecessary parts of the old military organization based on the estate system. Hence all the samurai had to do was to adapt thoroughly their usual belief system to changes in the social situation in the mid-19th century.

The concept of military values and the idea of the samurai’s specialized duty played crucially important roles in these drastic military and social changes. With these changes the samurai class as an estate gradually turned into the professionalized performer of military functions. And they were going to be not the instrument of God but the instrument of the coming modern nation state of Japan.

Let us summarize our discussion here. The hierarchical order of the estate system was a social system in which merit or achievement was insignificant. This social system was based on the denial of the independence of the individual, whose ability and achievement would be the grounds of a new principle for the

organization of a new military system. The recognition that "a one-hundred man brigade was a brigade of one-hundred fighting men" individualized the samurai involved in the estate system and would make them all independent fighting men. Ability became the standard by which the newly individualized samurai would be measured. This change, itself based on several elements, was the underlying force that caused the destabilization of the samurai's estate system in the last days of the Tokugawa régime.

(1) In Trimberger's interpretation the gaining of an official post has of crucial importance because the official post itself was the source of power and prestige. And it was the discontent of those who were blocked off from official posts that caused the radical national movement. Military bureaucrats who could gain high official posts through "great social mobility" feared the breakdown of the state which had been the source of their power (Trimberger, 1978: 43). Trimberger overemphasized the development of specialized officials in Tokugawa Japan, which were not as developed as in Ottoman Turkey. She insisted that "Men with new and Western skills—most often often of lower samurai origins—did rise to the highest offices in (Chōshū, Satsuma, and Tosa) *han* government," but "less so" in the Tokugawa Bakufu (ibid.74). However Saigō, Ōkubo and Katsura (the big three of the Meiji Restoration) were not military bureaucrats, but rather traditional samurai. The highest Bakufu official, Katsu, was one of the first military bureaucrats trained in the Western style.

THE SAMURAI'S FUNCTIONALISTIC SELF-INTERPRETATION

Although military reform was stimulated by the international threat, by itself this threat could not deliver the decisive blow to the estate system of samurai society. Before long, however, civil wars would increase the instability of the estate system, bringing about a fundamental change in the samurai's self-image.

The process of change that the samurai's self-image underwent involves a paradox. The encouragement of martial arts and the idea that all samurai were first and foremost a "fighting man" originally stemmed from both pride in being members of an honorable estate and a sense of mission as the ruling elite. Unrelenting efforts to buttress their pride and sense of mission, however, caused the gradual separation of the samurai's specialized duty from the samurai's estate system, both of which long had been inseparably interconnected. The concept of specialized military duty gradually changed from being a privilege of the samurai estate to a social obligation to carry out military functions. Provided that the samurai remained in charge of military affairs, they could not help but become separated from the estate system.

The samurai fell into a dilemma; for the samurai to pursue resolutely and single-mindedly their military duty would only accelerate the disintegration of

that specialized duty from the estate system, and result in the loss of the source of their social honor and status. Conversely, if the samurai were to abandon fulfillment of their military duty they could not satisfy their sense of mission as a member of the honorable military estate. This was truly a dilemma. The movement for radical military reform indicated that there were samurai who tried to overcome this dilemma by concentrating primarily on their military duty.

Let us briefly examine the basic character of politics aimed at strengthening military power during the last days of the Tokugawa régime. It is important to distinguish between two stages in military development markedly different in their historical significance. The first stage was that in which the Bakufu and *daimyō* together continued to build up new military forces under the implicit understanding that a strong military force was to be used to oppose Western powers. The understanding shared between the Bakufu and *daimyō* during this period became evident with a change in the Bakufu's traditional policy concerning firearms.

Traditionally the Bakufu had strictly prohibited *daimyō* from bringing firearms into the capital, Edo, in order to protect the Bakufu from the possibility of a *daimyō* rebellion. In 1849, however the Bakufu changed this policy and requested that *daimyō* bring firearms into Edo for the purpose of protecting the coastline of Edo Bay from the Western powers. This stage was characterized by a lack of serious political and military conflicts between the Bakufu and *daimyō*, and can be called the pro-Bakufu or anti-Western stage.

Although it was difficult to identify exactly when the second stage began, the Bakufu and some *daimyō* began to build up strong military forces with the objective of fighting domestic opponents. One contemporary observer noted that the newly emerged social atmosphere after the assassination of Ii Naosuke in 1860 was permeated with "a spirit of competition in military affairs" (Hideshima, 1934: 321).

What is important for our analysis is to note that all the samurai were confronted with internal conflict; the samurai had to strengthen the military power of their own political units. It was the fate of the *hōkensei* in which every political unit (*han* and the Bakufu; the Bakufu was essentially one of the *han*) was by nature politically and militarily autonomous. As a result of this serious "competition in military affairs" the samurai would gain a more military functionalistic existence than ever. In the end they would arrive at the point where the samurai in the hierarchical estate system would become obliged to disorganize the very system that had nurtured them.

This process of self-disorganization was not uniform throughout the nation; the final results of this process varied greatly from *han* to *han*. The following delineates the most typical course that led to the self-disorganization of the samurai estate. This is, of course, a theoretical abstract that can be called the ideal type in the disorganization process of the samurai estate.

In 1866 the Bakufu engaged in combat with Chōshū *han*. The vice

commander-in-chief who observed the battle reported that many *han* ordered to depart for the front were accompanied by numerous noncombatants, and that guns the combatants had were matchlocks which had been introduced three centuries earlier, and that only the Bakufu, Satsuma *han* and Saga *han* had modern artillery pieces and Mine rifles. This observation was correct. The samurai's indulgences of peaceful ordinary life were not easily disturbed just by the anticipation of an international crisis.

To startle the samurai from their dream of eternal security, a more direct crisis, that is, a military defeat, was needed. In the fighting that commenced in the summer of 1866, the armed forces under the Bakufu continued to be badly defeated by Chōshū's army. The cause for defeat partly lay in the difference in spiritual readiness between those who were prepared to die in battle and those who were worried about what souvenir they would take home. The main reason behind Chōshū's victory, however, was the difference in the quality of their weapons.

One memorial written from the front said that "Chōshū soldiers shoot us from across a river that is four or five *cho* (about four or five hundred meters) wide. Because they all use Mine rifles their bullets rain down upon us. Our bullets, on the contrary, cannot easily reach them. Owing to these circumstances those who withdraw from the front unanimously insist that "Even if we must go to the extent of selling our armor and incur a debt, we must buy Mine rifles. Without them, we will not go to the front"(Osatake, 1942: 678).

The Mine rifle was absolutely necessary in this stage of military reform. Without it, it was impossible for the samurai to fulfill his specialized duty. This defeat became a turning point for military reform; which would take a course identical with the gradual military reform of the past, only implementing it within a shorter period and giving it a more radical thoroughness. This reform crystallized in the individualization of the samurai.

After the bitter defeat by the modernized army of Chōshū *han*, Kishū *han* announced in the summer of 1866 that it would organize brigades of riflemen. Two months later a new order that "Without distinction to social status in samurai society, all samurai should regard themselves as individualized soldiers" was also posted, and following this order it was decided that all noncombatants such as attendants and the like who were not organized as riflemen were to be abandoned. After the regular samurai who departed for the front to fight with Chōshū *han* returned home, a blanket military reform to cover all regular samurai was undertaken. In this reform, all official posts of the traditional military organization were abolished and all regular samurai except those who had official posts as civilians were organized into brigades of riflemen.

The basic line of this reform was almost the same as that of Chōshū *han*, which started its own radical reforms one year before, under Murata Zōroku's supervision in order to cope with the Bakufu's armed forces. Chōshū *han* abolished traditional weapons and organized Mine rifle brigades from footmen

and the former attendants of regular samurai. The noncombatants whom the official code of military obligation had obliged the regular samurai to provide were abandoned, and as a result, the former masters of these noncombatants remained "solitary horsemen" (Inoue, 1975: 78).

Although the brigades that made up the core of the traditional military system were organized only from regular samurai with more than middle social status, these brigades were disbanded because, "Ultimately they were an organization for hand-to-hand combat using swords and lances. In modern warfare with rifles and artillery they are both harmful and useless." In general, it was the tendency of reforms that were implemented during this period to individualize the samurai without distinction to social status in samurai society. These reforms were doubly significant for the decline of the samurai estate.

Firstly, the individualization of the samurai was based on the idea that it was most important for the samurai to be practical in actual fighting. This idea deprived the traditional military system, founded on hereditary stipends, of its military importance. Therefore the hereditary stipend became a mere social privilege without any important public significance. Originally the hereditary stipend had been rationalized as the recognition of one's predecessor's, especially military, service (*senzo no kō*) and accordingly it was expected that the samurai would fulfill their own military obligations in proportion to their stipend. It had been not only the samurai's social privilege or private property, it was also symbolic of his public obligations. Having lost its military significance, however, the hereditary stipend exposed its inherent nature as a form of private property.

Secondly, the nature of individualization can be seen clearly in the statement "without distinction to social status"; the individualization of the samurai was realized through the leading principle of this line of reform, which attached greater importance to the individual samurai's military function than to his social status in the hierarchical estate order. Moreover the rifle became the standard weapon which the individualized samurai were to handle so that the individualization substantially meant the equalization of military functions of each samurai.

On the one hand the hereditary stipend lost its public significance which had been one of its essential elements, while on the other the samurai's military function as a public obligation, formerly highly stratified, was rapidly equalized. We should notice here that both the samurai's public and private aspects, and the functions and privileges which had been tightly unified under the hereditary stipend, began to separate from each other. The reform method by *heibu* was the compromising reform plan in which public functions were extracted from the estate system while leaving the hereditary stipend as it was. But the samurai's new functionalistic self-interpretation transformed the orthodox interpretation that military obligation should be based on hereditary stipend or social status in the hierarchical estate system to the new idea that the samurai's stipend and social status should be based on their military functions.

This transformation of the samurai's self-interpretation was the ultimate outcome of the practicality in military affairs. The editor of *Nanki Tokugawa-shi* (The History of the Kishū Tokugawa Family) who experienced first-hand Kishū *han's* military reform wrote that, "Properly speaking, when brigades of riflemen were organized the system of hereditary stipends should also have been reformed because both samurai whose stipend was 1000 *koku* and samurai whose stipend was 20 or 30 *koku* had the same function (*yō*)" (Horiuchi, 1910: 203). In this we can observe a perfect example of the samurai's functionalistic self-interpretation which was rising rapidly at this time.

According to this opinion, which stood in opposition to the traditional idea of samurai, the samurai had only a social existence predicated solely upon the achievement of a specialized military duty. Hence, as long as the individual samurai had the same military function or contribution, it was naturally thought that their stipend should be the same without distinction to social status.

In Kishū *han* the stipend system's fundamental reform was not realized until one year after the Meiji Restoration. Nagaoka *han*, which fought wholeheartedly with the Meiji government army in the *Boshin* war, reformed its stipend system as part of the radical reforms it made in its military system in 1868. The main thrust of this reform was to abolish the official order of military obligations and to establish the brigades of riflemen. The lord of Nagaoka *han* personally announced the stipend reform saying:

"I earnestly rely on your exertions in order to devote ourselves diligently side by side to our purpose of keeping a firm solidarity. Until now, based on the recognition of each predecessor's service, the stipends of each samurai have been unequally distributed and furthermore, military obligations have corresponded to one's social status in samurai society. Recent military reforms, however, have made all samurai organize into riflemen's brigades so that those who have decided to devote themselves to putting this military reform into practice will not risk their lives in emergency without a strong identification between men of high and low social status. It will also be impossible to maintain naturally a firm solidarity without sharing the pleasures and pains of both high and low status. Therefore, although I feel sorry for how those who are men of rank will suffer, it has been decided to change drastically the past stipend discrepancies among my retainers" (Imaizumi, 1909: 120).

In this announcement it was clearly pointed out that "the past stipend discrepancy" has hindered the newly established military forces from realizing "a strong identification" or "a firm solidarity" among all ranks. According to the traditional principle of relationships between lord and retainer, however, the discrepancies in stipends had been the basis for the lord's protection of retainers and also the retainer's loyalty to their lord, and had been even the source of "the strong identification" and "the firm solidarity" between lord and retainers.

By then the basic unit of military organization had ceased to be the household

but rather had become the individualized samurai, so that second or third sons who could fulfill a military function independently could get a stipend. The basis for this stipend reform was that "the warrior's stipend should be equal because at present there are no distinctions in armor or other weaponry since the introduction of the Western military system, in which mainly cannons and rifles will be used to cope with enemies." This principle was not completely realized. Considering the situation realistically, a policy of compromise was taken to mitigate strains caused by radical reforms.

Hence, 100 *koku* was chosen to be the standard stipend, and stipends of more than 100 *koku* were cut so that in some cases it dropped from 1000 to 500 *koku*, from 700 to 300 *koku* and from 600 to 200 *koku*. Conversely stipends less than 100 *koku* were increased from 97 to 100 *koku* and 20 to 50 *koku*. We can acknowledge here that the stipend of the "fighting man" did not correspond to social status in the hierarchical estate system, but to his function as a "fighting man."

Compared with the samurai's specialized duty, his social status, traditional military obligation and even his hereditary stipend based on the hierarchical estate system lost their crucial significance in defining the social character of the samurai. In order to return to their original, military duty, the samurai in the estate system started to transform themselves into "fighting men" for actual fighting. This transformation, however, only energized samurai making them as functionalistic as possible within the limits of the traditional samurai estate system. The samurai's newly-emerged functionalistic self-interpretation and the military reforms that were based on it deviated from the orthodox idea that the samurai should remain to the end a member of the samurai's estate system which had been highly stratified according to the principle of inborn privileges.

The new samurai should base his social existence above all on his specialized duty, rather than on his status in the estate system. In this interpretation the logic for the disbandment of the samurai estate system was hidden. The samurai could be a samurai only because he could perform the samurai's specialized duty; there were no other reasons by which the existence of the samurai could be rationalized.

Therefore those who did not have the ability to fulfill the samurai's specialized duty could not be a member of the samurai class as it was newly defined. Conversely, even if those who were not members of the samurai estate could perform the samurai's specialized duty they would now become members of the samurai class. Without this functionalistic self-interpretation of the samurai it is difficult to understand the reform plan of the early Meiji period to reorganize the samurai estate by using the principle of meritocracy.

Although the Meiji Restoration was neither a political reform aiming at the overthrow of the political régime supported by the samurai estate nor a social revolution initiated by non-samurai classes, there were several samurai who anticipated the coming decline of the samurai estate before the final reformation. This was because the samurai were rapidly shifting the basis for their social

existence away from membership in the samurai estate to the performance of their original specialized duty.

Hence, the idea that the samurai estate should be abolished and that the samurai's specialized duty should be allocated widely to all social classes originated within the samurai class itself. Kawai Tsugunosuke, the senior counsellor of Nagaoka *han* at the time when the reforms were made, left words which were full of meaning in this sense. Kawai told one commoner whom he had looked after, "Make careful use of your ability. I have had a long-cherished desire to raise you from your commoner's status to the rank of a regular samurai. The climate of the age, however, is about to change drastically. Before long the present established estate system will be entirely destroyed and then a new ruling class will be born. The way to rise to greatness in the world will not be the way of regular samurai. The new principle by which social position will be determined will not be by the lineage or social rank of one's family, but by individual ability" (Imaizumu, 1934: 390).

EQUALIZATION OF THE FOUR SOCIAL CLASSES

The decline of the samurai class was the direct outcome of military reforms enacted during the last days of the Tokugawa régime. A dual process was at work here; on one hand the samurai's military duty was separated from the hierarchical estate system; on the other, the transformation of the criteria by which the samurai's social character was defined made the estate system irrelevant to samurai society. Moreover the impact of this change was not limited to the military alone, because changing values, centering around the military, gave birth to professions required for the management of the modern nation state.

The decline of the samurai class brought about the dissolution of the hierarchical estate system, namely the political, social and military privileges that the samurai estate long had monopolized. It was, to change the viewpoint, the process by which the ethos and the professions needed for the management of the modern nation state were established. Therefore, prior to the political reforms enacted by the Meiji government, the samurai's newly defined duty, which was not only limited to military affairs, was given a fairly stable position in the samurai's new self-image.

One high official in the Meiji government proposed the adoption of the Chinese examination system for civil servants. He did not have any intention of introducing the Chinese system exactly as it had been administered in China. In a memorial he said that the Chinese system had "serious defects, especially in its range of subjects." He then proposed that the following subjects be introduced in the examination: Japanese literature, Chinese classics, political economy, calligraphy, astronomy, geography, military science, jurisprudence, medical science and natural history. The principle on which he grounded this proposal was not Confucian philosophy, but "the idea of practicality" which

was the paramount value in military reform. In a discussion at the National Assembly there were more radical, which is to say more practical, opinions that, "No limits should be put on the samurai who have aspirations. Those who have talent and knowledge should be selected irrespective of their social status; attaching importance to an applicant's virtues"; and, "I agree with the proposal and would like to say that the science of agriculture should be added to the subjects which have been proposed." The result of the vote on this proposal was as follows; Yes—146 *han*, No—9 *han*, don't know—28 *han*, and abstain—5 *han* (Spaulding, 1967: 20-32, Dajōkan, 1869: 44-51). We can see here that many samurai accepted their new specialized duty, which had been extended to many fields.

A former Bakufu official said at this time that "To accomplish my aspirations the only thing I can do is to get employment in the new central government. If this is not possible I cannot devote myself to advocating that people become as civilized as possible so that they can enjoy their natural intelligence" (Ichimura, 1920: 81). In these words the samurai's consciousness in the transitional period was very eloquently expressed. He was no longer a pure "fighting man" but a fervent advocate of Western civilization. Such attitudes were caused by the awakening of the samurai to a broader sense of duty and mission.

This was already superior to the traditional samurai's attitude that attached more importance to the relationship between the lord and his retainers. This is why a former Bakufu official could seek an official post in the new government without serious value-conflicts. And the new government, the main national policy of which was to maintain the independence of Japan from Western powers, needed many talented personnel who could devote themselves to the management of the nation both as civil official and as military officers. Thus it was the new central government that was most strongly obliged to base the reorganization of the samurai on meritocratic principles.

There were two plans for reorganization which were basically different in their orientation toward social mobility. First, there was a plan to select the samurai who could not perform their specialized duties and make them non-samurai. Second, there was a plan to select commoners who could perform the samurai's specialized duty. The former was the leading principle extracted from the historical experience of military reform to disorganize the samurai estate; the latter was its adaptation to commoners in order to modernize Japanese society.

After the Meiji Restoration Kishū *han* announced the following edict at the time its stipend system was about to be reformed: "A stipend reform will be soon commenced. Therefore those who don't have official posts, providing they will earnestly train both in literary and martial disciplines, will be promoted on the basis of their abilities. Moreover, as recent reforms have lessened drastically official posts, there are many persons who don't have enough stipends and suffer because of it. Hence it has been decided to permit the regular samurai to live in the commoner's living district and to make a living as each desires, whether it be as a doctor, farmer, merchant, or the like" (Horiuchi, 1910: 317).

In this way the talented samurai who could fulfill the samurai's specialized duties were given official posts, and the samurai who were not sufficiently qualified were "allowed" to have "desirous" jobs which previously had been regarded as those of commoners. We can see here that the samurai was separated not only from the hierarchical estate system but from the samurai's specialized duty. This idea was historically very significant because, in the last days of the Tokugawa régime, reformists made plans to make the existing samurai (more exactly the existing members of the samurai estate) as functionalistic as possible. But the plan after the Meiji Restoration was to establish a new samurai class based on one's ability to perform the samurai's specialized duty. In this sense the samurai would no longer be an estate but, would be an open social class. Hence the samurai's specialized duty began to have a strong tie not with the existing samurai, but with talented persons irrespective of their social origins.

In the National Assembly the group which insisted on the introduction of a centralized political system into Japan to take the place of the *hōkensei* submitted their memorial saying, "The regular samurai who cannot perform their duty should be permitted to take jobs as farmers, artisans and merchants after being given a temporary allowance in proportion to their social status." Another person proposed a more detailed plan to deprive samurai who could not fulfill the duties demanded by their social status of their membership in the samurai estate and their hereditary stipends. According to this plan several achievement tests were to be imposed on all samurai within three years. As a result of this test, if it became clear that samurai could not perform their duties as samurai, they would be gradually deprived of their privileges. Conversely it was also suggested that "irrespective of status, samurai and commoners, persons who were men of learning and talent should be promoted." The man who proposed this plan was one of the pioneers of Japanese military engineering where learning and talent had a special importance; he thought it was absolutely necessary to weed out the incompetent samurai and to recruit men of talent (Dajōkan, 1869: 153).

Even the opinion leader who attached importance to maintaining the samurai's membership in the new government's military organization shared a similar opinion: "If there is no man in a samurai family who can fulfill his obligation to serve in the military, after considering the family's private circumstances, they should be stripped of their hereditary stipend and their status as samurai within a limited number of years. Commoners who, of their own accord, show a desire to serve in the military should be given samurai status after examining their knowledge and capacities" (Torio, 1911: 599).

In 1868 the central government announced that "talented samurai in each *han* and commoners in both town and country" would be selected and Cabinet Consultants (*sangi*) would be appointed from among them. At the same time it was decided that *han* representatives, who would have seats in the National Assembly at a ratio of three persons to one for large *han* (over 400,000 *koku*), two persons to one for middle *han* (100,000-390,000 *koku*) and one person to

one for small *han* (below 90,000 *koku*), should be selected on the basis of ability (Tokyo Teikoku-Daigaku, 1932: 121-152).

This form of channeling talented individuals from *han* to the central government would form a model for the navy, army and university, to be run by the government. Nevertheless we cannot trace the successive line of development in the administrative and legislative fields, simply because the fundamental design of the state structure in this period was too vague to make this meritocratic reform plan a reality. It did not become clearly apparent that the legislative institution would be introduced and members of the legal professional should be recruited as administrators of the central government until the German state system was introduced into Japan as the model for a new structure.

On the other hand we can see the successive development of other, non-political and more technical professions relating to the management of the nation state. In 1869 the newly established navy issued an order to each *han* stating that students aged from eighteen to twenty be supplied to the navy training center in proportion to their size, with large *han* providing five students, middle *han* providing four students and small *han* providing three students. There were no clear rules regulating the selection of students in each *han*. But we can easily understand that this new recruiting system was faulty since when the naval academy was established the following year, over fifty percent of the students were eliminated by examination (Kaigun-Heigakkō, 1919: 1-7).

The new rules of the naval academy clarified the vagueness, stating "Irrespective of place of origin, be it *fu*, *han*, or *ken*, or of social origin, be it nobility, samurai or commoner, those who are over fifteen years old and pass the examination of the naval academy can become commissioned officers" (Kaigun-Heigakkō, 1919: 20). We should notice that already the post of commissioned officers was to be acquired only through a competitive examination open to all social classes. It is of interest to note that in contrast to the reaction precipitated by military reform in England during this period (Harries-Jenkins, 1977), the introduction of a competitive examination system into Japan did not give rise to opposition by the samurai class.

In 1870, a military academy was also established for senior and junior students. Senior students, who hoped to be trained quickly in modern military sciences, consisted of two types. One was the student who was supplied by the *han* at a rate of four students or less for large *han*, three or less for middle *han* and one or less for small *han*. The other was the freely recruited student. All students had to pass the examination that tested their physical condition, calligraphy, Japanese history, Chinese classics and arithmetic, in order to be admitted (Naikaku-kanpō-kyoku, 1893: 156-163).

Junior students were true cadets who would form the essential part of the army. They were, of course, recruited through competitive examination and had to pass courses on required subjects (which numbered sixteen for infantry cadets, seventeen for cavalry and twenty-five for artillery) over four years. The

introduction of competitive examinations in the navy and army was one of the first radical reforms that the Meiji government undertook. To remain independent, it was thought that Japan should modernize its armed forces as quickly as possible. For this it was absolutely necessary for the navy and army to recruit as many talented persons as possible. This is why competitive examinations open to all classes were introduced in the early stage of radical reform.

We can observe the same development in the university run by the central government which had been the center for the introduction of Western sciences into Japan since the last days of the Tokugawa régime. From the beginning, admission to the university was open to all classes. But some of the students were also supplied by the *han* at a rate of three students for *han* of more than 150,000 *koku*, two for *han* of more than 50,000 *koku* and one for *han* of less than 50,000 *koku*. The students recruited by this method, however, failed to meet consistently the qualification level for students. Hence in 1871, an examination of academic subjects was conducted to eliminate unqualified students (Tokyo Teikoku-Daigaku, 1932: 121-152).

The new principle of social equality of the four classes caused by the reorganization of the samurai class was embodied in tendencies commonly shared by the navy, army and university run by the central government. The character of social equality expressed in these tendencies was, of course, quite different from that of European egalitarianism. "Equality" in this historical context meant that whoever had the ability to perform the samurai's specialized duty could have an "equal" chance to do it. Conversely, all Japanese people should have "equal" functions or duties to the state which had been exclusively occupied by the samurai estate. To realize the national policy of "enrich the country and strengthen the military," it was thought that "equal" allocation of the samurai's specialized duty to the four classes was absolutely necessary. We would like to call this type of social equality "functionalistic egalitarianism" because it was distinguished by the "equal" requirement of all persons in their duties or functions to the state.

Functionalistic egalitarianism was not the recognition of "equal" human rights as a political ideology which was of European origin and played a significant role in European history, but was the unintentional outcome of the samurai's thorough pursuit of practicality in service to the state. In giving explanations of the decline of the samurai class it is important to acknowledge that a distinct form of egalitarianism had already become established during the last days of the Tokugawa régime when Western political ideology, which had a strong influence on the equalization of highly stratified societies and on the decline of the aristocracy in Europe, began to be introduced into Japan.

In 1872, the conscription edict was promulgated. This edict included several ideas which were recently introduced into Japan, such as "human rights" and "the right to freedom."

"To transform radically the old political régime, the centralized system of ancient times was restored with the return of the *daimyo*'s fiefs to the govern-

ment. The samurai who had hereditary privileges and did not have to work for their living got reduced stipends and were not allowed to wear swords. All people of the four classes are about to receive the right to freedom. These reforms are measures aimed at equalizing the great discrepancies between high and low social status and to make human rights uniform. On this basis soldiers and peasants will be able to be unified in one organization. The samurai are no longer the samurai of the past and commoners are no longer the commoners of the past. Both of them are equally the subjects of the Empire. Hence it is natural that there must be no discrimination in the way they serve the state" (Naikaku-kanpō-kyoku, 1893: 230).

Although the words "the right to freedom" and "human rights," were used in this edict, it is clear that the essential character of equality of the four classes was expressed by the notion of equal duties or functions in serving the state.

This functionalistic egalitarianism was materialized on a larger scale when conscription and the modern educational system, which were completely egalitarian, were introduced in 1872. It was not conscription and educational reform as such that disorganized the samurai estate. They were rather the final outcomes of the decline of the samurai class through a meritocratic reorganization of the samurai estate.

POLARIZATION OF THE SAMURAI CLASS

After undergoing these reforms the samurai class was separated into two groups; the group of samurai who could hold official posts in the central or local government, the navy, the army, the public educational organization and so on; the other was the group of samurai who could not find such official posts and were forced to take up vocations that previously would have been held only by commoners. Under the newly established centralized political system the samurai were no longer the samurai estate; but the persons who achieved the samurai's specialized duty were, in a sense, the new samurai.

The samurai's specialized duty which had been very vague in relation to official posts in the Tokugawa period⁽¹⁾ was gradually integrated into official posts open to the four classes. The samurai in the new political system were tantamount to selected, official post holders.

This new definition of the samurai was clearly expressed in the central government's edict of 1872. It declared that commoners holding official posts would be treated as samurai in their social status, including their children and grandchildren, while holding official posts (Naikaku-kanpō-kyoku, 5-1, 1893: 230). At the beginning of our discussion we noticed the dual social character of the samurai class; it consisted of hereditary social status and specialized duty. Throughout the Tokugawa period, the definition of the samurai class had been based on hereditary social status (the estate system) which took precedence over the samurai's specialized duty. But, during the early Meiji period, specialized

duty took precedence over all other factors in defining the samurai.

Analytically we must distinguish the old samurai estate from the new samurai class. Until recently studies concerning the decline of the samurai class have concentrated on the samurai estate's decline; the hereditary stipend-cut and compensation policy for the hereditary stipend, the samurai's unemployment, and the frustrated samurai who became rebels (Fukaya, 1973, Gotō, 1968, Kikkawa, 1935, Wagatsuma, 1940).

However, if we give more attention to the newly defined samurai class, our conclusion is different.

Table 2. Number of ex-samurai and commoners who held official posts in 1881
social origins

	ex-samurai	commoners	peerage	total
central, local government, navy army, police, court and so on	53,032	25,143	153	78,328
municipality	15,524	74,734	8	90,266
number of families	425,658	7,204,750	495	7,631,103
population	1,933,888	34,421,921	2,690	36,358,994

(Teikoku Tōkei Nenkan, 1881)

How many members of the ex-samurai class (*shizoku*) held official posts? Although we can get only incomplete data on this question it is possible for us to infer general tendencies from the available data. In 1881, the ex-samurai and their families made up 5.3 percent of the total population. This small group occupied 68,556 of a total of 168,594 official posts, or 40.7 percent.

Moreover the higher the official post the higher the rate occupied by the ex-samurai. At the level of central and local government, about 70 percent of the official post holders were ex-samurai. In 1885 among 93-high ranking officials who were above the bureau heads of the central government, we find 4 peerage (*ex-daimyō* and so on), 88 ex-samurai and one commoner. Calculating from these data we conclude that about 16 percent of the ex-samurai were official post holders in 1881.

Yamaji Aizan, a contemporary historian and journalist, pointed out that, "If the Meiji government had not established the elementary school the ex-samurai's rebellion would have been fiercer because a lot of the ex-samurai would have suffered from lack of job opportunities. And the Satsuma rebels could have gathered together many more frustrated ex-samurai. Fortunately, however, there were lots of posts as public school teachers so that the talented ex-samurai could support themselves. That was why the Satsuma rebellion failed" (Yamaji, 1965:

8-9).

While public school teachers may not always be considered holders of official posts in a strict sense, they were, nevertheless, employed by public organizations and lived on salaries paid by these organizations. And education, or more generally learning itself, had been traditionally thought as a part of the samurai's specialized duties. Iwakura Tomomi, who was a leader of the early Meiji Government and had been an eager advocate of social policy for the declining ex-samurai, stated:

"Since the establishment of the Kamakura Bakufu it was believed that the samurai was a fighter with a sword and a lance riding on horseback. After the mid-Tokugawa period, however, the samurai's identity drastically changed. Their specialized duties were not only military, but also literary. With this change there were very few local governments which did not have any schools, and there were very few younger samurai who did not want to take literary lessons" (Iwakura, 1906: 644). Iwakura's opinion was commonly shared by many contemporary observers of the samurai society. It was widely thought that learning and teaching were part of the samurai's specialized duty. It is, therefore, reasonable for teachers in public schools to be counted as official post holders.

Neither *Teikoku Tōkei Nenkan* (*Yearbook of Statistics of Imperial Japan*) nor *Monbushō Nenpō* (*Yearbook of Ministry of Education*) give us nationwide information on teachers' social origins. The only way to get the total figure is to infer from fragmentary knowledge. It is said that "almost all" teachers in the Meiji Period came from the ex-samurai class (Haraguchi, 1968: 131). Examination of the fragmentary data suggests that "almost all" is an exaggeration. In the case of Sakai Prefecture including Kawachi, Yamato and Izumi in 1880, only 600 teachers came from the ex-samurai class among 1,830, about one third (Fujitani, 1880).

Conversely former castle towns were apt to have teachers who came from the ex-samurai class. An elementary school in Niigata Prefecture had all ex-samurai teachers and in Toyohashi 30 out of 48 were ex-samurai teachers (Ishitoya, 1957: 45). Asō Makoto, a sociologist studying Japanese elites, insists that about 40 percent of teachers at elementary schools in 1883 were ex-samurai teachers (Aso, 1982: 76). Although Asō did not show the empirical data upon which his claim was based we can tentatively use 40 percent as a reasonable estimate.

As the total number of elementary school teachers was 78,000 in 1881, about 31,000 were ex-samurai teachers. Let us add these to the number of official post holders mentioned above. We get 99,556 as the figure for official posts occupied by the ex-samurai.

What, then, was the percentage of ex-samurai who held official posts? To answer this question we need to create a basis for calculation. Official posts under the Tokugawa régime were allocated not to individual samurai, but to the family as a basic unit. After the samurai were permitted to take any vocation they might choose in 1871, every member of the ex-samurai class who could work became a member of the working population. What we need to know here,

however, is the percentage of the ex-samurai who held official posts in the early Meiji period from among the heads of samurai families, who had, as a rule, qualifications to hold official posts under the Tokugawa régime. We know the number of ex-samurai families from the *Statistical Yearbook in Imperial Japan*. So we can estimate that 23 percent of the ex-samurai families (99,556/425,658) were supported by a member who held an official post after the Restoration.

Moreover, the samurai families who voluntarily became farmers and merchants and some non-samurai class families who received the nominal title of samurai were included in the category of the ex-samurai in the above statistics. These families should be excluded from our estimation. The best population for our calculation is the number of families who were given the public bonds to compensate for hereditary stipends in 1876; they numbered a total of 313,517 families. From this figure, 31.7 percent of ex-samurai families (99,556/313,517) were supported by someone who was receiving a salary from an official organization. Thus about one third of samurai families lived on salaries paid by public organizations instead of their traditional hereditary stipends.

This rate gives us an insight into the basic character of the social transformation which the samurai class underwent in the Restoration period; it was not a mere decline, but was a self-transformation from samurai estate to modern official post holder. To be sure, the samurai estate was abolished completely when the principle of social equality of the four classes in recruiting bureaucratic officials and military officers was introduced and the hereditary stipend system was formally replaced by public bonds. The samurai's specialized duty separated from hereditary privileges occupied an important position in the bureaucratic organization of the Meiji régime, and most of the samurai who had assumed such official duties were persons who succeeded in reforming themselves into a professional or semi-professional class in a new nation state.

Finally, let us consider the disposal of the hereditary stipend. As we have seen through the discussion of military reforms, the rationale for the payment of hereditary stipends changed from one of public privilege paid as a compensation for the fulfillment of public functions to mere private property which no longer demanded the fulfillment of public functions. This transformed stipend of the samurai became the subject of debate in the early Meiji period.

Two antagonistic opinions, radical and realistic, were presented in the debate. One official who was in charge of the disposal of the samurai's hereditary stipend said that, "There is no reason why those who are incompetent should hold a stipend; we should deprive such individuals of it" (Ōkubo, 1973: 123). The other opinion admitted that the hereditary stipend should be, as a rule, determined by the samurai's achievements, but, at the same time, it took a view that the hereditary stipends actually "have been owned as private property for several hundreds years." This realistic opinion insisted that the samurai's hereditary stipends had to be maintained as private property (Ministry of Finance, 1876: 102).

The final reform of the samurai's hereditary stipend was planned generally

according to the more radical opinion. However, it was mitigated by consideration of the reality that many samurai had regarded their hereditary stipends as private property. The hereditary stipend of the samurai was not confiscated, but compensated.

The decline of the samurai class was not the direct outcome aimed at by reformist samurai, but was the unintentional result of the pursuit of "enriching the nation and strengthening the military." Therefore both radical and realistic opinions, although they were antagonistic to each other, coexisted within the individual samurai's thought.

The national policy of maintaining Japan's independence from Western powers brought with it the radical reform of the samurai's stipend, and this reform plan eventually brought about the thorough disorganization of the samurai class, an unintended side-effect. To mitigate this side-effect, the realist's standpoint was necessary. The following paragraph from a diary written by Kido, the leader of the radical stipend reform movement in the Meiji government, tells us eloquently of the dilemma between the original intention and the unintentional results.

"Going back to my *han* last spring I made a plan to reduce gradually the samurai's hereditary stipend, which has many defects, and to relocate the samurai to desired vocations. To this end, while the samurai class remains as it is, there is no reason at all why the present samurai should maintain their hereditary stipends for several hundred years; however, if they will be forced to give up their stipends, many hundreds of thousands of samurai will necessarily starve. The change of social atmosphere in the present time is unavoidable. Until now the non-samurai classes have not doubted that the samurai should maintain their stipends, so they are also responsible for the present situation. As a result, the samurai's stipend has gradually come to be regarded as private property. To deprive the samurai of it will be cruel if the method by which it is done is not suitable. The samurai were not criminals, but members of our nation. I think that there are some methods which are almost cruel and not suitable for dealing with the samurai. I deeply ponder over what method will be best for Japan's future" (Kido, 1899: 174-175).

The samurai estate was disorganized not by the anti-samurai ideology that required an equal chance to compete, but by the viewpoint of rationalization of the state structure. Equality was mainly the equality for people to contribute themselves in service to the state. That is to say, the equality that functionalistic egalitarianism brought about was the equality of the obligation to the nation state. This became, however, a starting point for the extension of the range of equality in Japan. In the final analysis, the decline of the samurai class enabled Japan to have the basic social elements which are necessary for the modern nation state: social equality and meritocracy.

(1) In the Tokugawa period all samurai did not have official posts. That is to say, holding an official post was not necessarily connected with the estate

system of the samurai class.

Table 3. The case of the Tokugawa Bakufu

status indicated by <i>koku</i>	number of families	number of official posts	percentage %
350,000~100,001	12	3	25
100,000~ 30,000	59	24	41
29,999~ 10,000	79	31	39
9,999~ 500	1,700	700	41
499~ 1	20,800	16,300	78
goyaku	2,750	2,750	100

(from: Totman, Conrad D. *Politics in the Tokugawa Bakufu 1600-1843*. Harvard University Press, 1967, p.295)

The status of the samurai stemmed from the status of the estate system, not from the official post the samurai held. The rank of the official post which was provided corresponded to the order of the estate system.

REFERENCES

Adams, Francis Ottiwell (1875): *The History of Japan*, Vol.2. H. S. King, London.

Alcock, Rutherford (1863): *The Capital of the Tycoon: A Narrative of A Three Years' Residence in Japan*. Vol. 2. Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, London.

Asō, Makoto (1982): *Kyōiku to Kindaika* (Education and Modernization). Daiichihōki-shuppan, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 麻生誠(1982): 『教育と近代化』 第一法規出版.

Barber, Bernard and Barber, Elinor (eds.) (1965): *European Social Class*. Greenwood Press, West Port, Connecticut.

Bendix, Reinhard and Lipset, Martin (eds.) (1966): *Class, Status and Power*. 2nd Edition, Free Press, New York.

Dajōkan (ed.) (1869): *Gian-roku* (Collected Bills of National Assembly). In, Yoshino, Sakuzo (ed.) (1928): *Meiji-Bunka Zensyū* (Collected Works of Meiji Culture). Vol.4, Nihonhyōron-sha, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 太政官編(1869): 『議案録』 吉野作造編 (1928): 『明治文化全集』 第4巻, 日本評論社.

Dajōkan (ed.) (1869): *Kogisyo Nisshi* (The Journal of National Assembly). In, Yoshino, Sakuzo (ed.) (1928): *Meiji Bunka Zenshū* (Collected Works of Meiji Culture), Vol. 4, Nihon Hyōron-sha, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 太政官編 (1869): 『公議所日誌』 吉野作造編 (1928): 『明治文化全集』 第4巻, 日本評論社.

Fujii, Jintarō (1925): *Sibun-kaikyū no Hōkai* (The Decline of Samurai Class). In, *Sin-kyū Jidai* (New and Old Ages), 1-2. (in Japanese). 藤井菫太郎 (1925): 士分階級の崩壊. 新旧時代, 1卷2号.

Fujitani, Shunchi (ed.) (1880): *Sakai-Ken Kyōin-Roku* (Directory of the Teacher in Sakai Prefecture). Hirokamo-sha, Osaka. (in Japanese). 藤谷春致 (1880): 『堺県教員録』弘鳴社.

Fukaya, Hiroharu (1973): *Kashizoku Chitsuroku Shobun no Kenkyū* (A Study of Disposing of Daimyos and their Retainers' Stipend). New Edition, Yoshikawa-kōbunkan, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 深谷博治 (1973): 『新訂華士族秩禄処分の研究』吉川弘文館.

Fukuzawa, Yukichi (1899): *Fukuou Jiden* (The Autobiography of Old Fukuzawa). Iwanami-bunko, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 福沢諭吉 (1899): 『福翁自伝』岩波文庫.

Fukuzawa, Yukichi (1880): *Kyu Han-Jyō* (The Samurai Society under Old Han). In, *Meiji Bungaku Zenshū* (Collected Works of Meiji Literature), Vol. 8, Chikuma-syobō, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 福沢諭吉 (1880): 『旧藩情』(明治文学全集 第8卷) 筑摩書房.

Fukuzawa, Yukichi (1881): *Jiji Syōgen* (Collected Short Essays on Current Topics). In, *Fukuzawa Zenshū* (Complete Works of Fukuzawa Yukichi), Vol. 4, Jijishinpō-sha, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 福沢諭吉 (1881): 『時事小言』(福沢全集 第4卷) 時事新報社.

Gotō, Yasushi (1968): *Shizoku Hanran no Kenkyū* (A Study of the Ex-Samurai's Rebellion). Sanichi-shobō, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 後藤靖 (1968): 『士族反乱の研究』三一書房.

Harries-Jenkins, Gwyu (1977): *The Army in Victorian Society*. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Hideshima, Naritada (ed.) (1917): *Saga-Han Kaigun-shi* (Naval History of Saga-Han). Chishinkai, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 秀島成忠編 (1917): 『佐賀藩海軍史』知新会.

Hideshima, Naritada (ed.) (1934): *Saga-Han Jyuhō Enkakushi* (A Historical Record of Armed Forces in Saga-Han). Hizen shidankai, Saga. (in Japanese). 秀島成忠編 (1934): 『佐賀藩銃砲沿革史』肥前史談会.

Horiuchi, Shin (ed.) (1910): *Nanki Tokugawa-shi* (A History of Kisyu Tokugawa Family). Vol.13, Nanki Tokugawashi Kankōkai, Wakayama. (in Japanese). 堀内新編 (1910): 『南紀徳川史』第13卷, 南紀徳川史刊行会.

Ichimura, Yasaburō (ed.) (1920): *Kōsō-ken* (The Autobiography of Maejima Hisoka). Privately published. (in Japanese). 市島弥三郎 (1920): 『鴻爪痕』私家版.

Imaizumi, Takujirō (1909): *Kawai Tsugunosuke Den* (The Life of Kawai Tugunosuke). Hakubunkan, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 今泉鐸次郎 (1909): 『河合継之助伝』博文館.

Inoue, Kiyoshi (1975): *Nihon no Gunkokushugi* (Militarism in Japan). Vol. 2, New edition. University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 井上清 (1975): 『日本の軍国主義』II, 東京大学出版会.

Ishida, Takeshi (1970): *Nihon no Seiji-bunka* (Political Culture in Japan). University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 石田雄 (1970): 『日本の政治文

化』東京大学出版会。

Ishii, Shirō (1986): *Nihon Kokuseisi Kenkyū* Vol.2. (*A Study of Japanese Political Fabric*), especially chpt.4, University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 石井紫郎 (1986): 『日本国制史研究』2, 東京大学出版会。

Ishitoya, Tetsuo (1985): *Nihon Kyōin-Shi no Kenkyū* (*A Historical Study of the Teacher in Japan*). Noma Kyōiku Kenkyūsho, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 石戸谷哲夫 (1958): 『日本教員史の研究』野間教育研究所。

Iwakura, Tomomi (1906): *Iwakura Kō Jikki* (*The Document of the Life of Duke Iwakura*). Tokyo Iwakurakō kyūseki hozonkai, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 『岩倉公実記』岩倉公旧蹟保存会。

Janowitz, Morris (1960): *The Professional Soldier*. The Free Press, New York.

Kawai Kiyomaru (ed.) (1911): *Tokuan Zensho* (*The Memorial of Torio Tokuan*). Torio Hikaru, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 河合清丸編 (1911): 『得庵全書』。

Kagoshima-Ken (ed.) (1941): *Kagoshima-Ken Shi* (*The History of Kagoshima Prefecture*). Vol.3, Kagoshima. (in Japanese). 鹿児島県編 (1941): 『鹿児島県史』第3巻, 鹿児島県。

Kaigun-Heigakkō (ed.) (1919): *Kaigun-Heigakkō Enkaku* (*The History of Japanese Naval Academy*). Kaigun Heigakkō, Hiroshima. (in Japanese). 海軍兵学校編 (1919): 『海軍兵学校沿革』海軍兵学校。

Katsū, Kaisyu (ed.) (1897): *Rikugun Rekishi* (*The History of the Army in the Tokugawa Shogunate*). In, *Katsu Kaishū Zensyu* (*Complete Works of Katsu Kaishū*), Kōdan-sha Edition Vol.11~14, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 勝海舟編 (1897): 『陸軍歴史』(勝海舟全集 第11~14巻) 講談社。

Katsu, Kaishū (ed.) (1898): *Kaigun Rekishi* (*The History of the Navy in the Tokugawa Shogunate*). In, *Katsu Kaishū Zenshū* (*Complete Works of Katsu Kaishū*), Kōdan-sha Edition Vol.8~10, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 勝海舟編 (1898): 『海軍歴史』(勝海舟全集 第8~10巻) 講談社。

Kawaji, Kandō (1902): *Kawaji Toshiakira no Syōgai* (*The Life of Kawaji Toshiakira*). Republished by Sekai-bunko, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 川路寛堂 (1902): 『川路聖謨之生涯』世界文庫。

Kelsall, R. K. (1955): *Higher Civil Servants in Britain*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Kikkawa, Shūzō (1935): *Shizoku-Jusan no Kenkyū* (*A Study of the Policy of Giving Employment to the Ex-Samurai*). Yūhikaku, Tokyo. (in Japanese.) 吉川秀造 (1935): 『士族授産の研究』有斐閣。

Kourvetaris, George A. and Dobratz, Betty A. (1977): *Social Recruitment and Political Orientations of the Officer Corps in a Comparative Perspective*. In, Kourvetaris, George A. and Dobratz, Betty A. (eds.), *World Perspectives in the Sociology of the Military*, Transaction Book, New Brunswick.

Kunaisyō (ed.) (1968): *Meiji Tennōki* (*The Chronicle of Meiji Tennō*). Vol. 2, Yoshikawa-kōbunkan, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 宮内省編 (1968): 『明治天皇紀』第2巻, 吉川弘文館。

Marshall, T. H. (1965): *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*. Doubleday, Garden City, N. J.

Ministry of Finance (ed.) (1876): 7-bu-ri-tsuki Gaikoku-Kōsai Hakkō Nikki

(Journal of Raising a 7% Interest-Bearing Bond). In, Ōuchi, H. *et al.* (eds.), *Meiji-Zenki Zaisei-Keizai-Shiryō Syūsei* (Collected Historical Records of Financial and Economic History in the Early Meiji Period). Vol. 8. Kaizo-sha, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 大蔵省編 (1876): 『7分利付外国公債発行日記』 (明治前期財政経済資料集成 第8巻) 改造社.

Naikaku-kanpō-kyoku (ed.) (1893): *Hōrei Zensho* (A Complete Collection of Laws and Regulations in Prewar Japan). Vol.1·3·5-1·9-2, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 内閣官報局編 (1893): 『法令全書』内閣官報局.

Naimu-shō (ed.) (1893): *Teikoku-Tōkei-Nenkan* (Statistical Yearbook in Imperial Japan). Vol.1, Naimu-shō, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 内務省編 (1893): 『帝國統計年鑑』第1巻, 内務省.

Ōkubo, Toshiaki (ed.) (1973): *Mori Arinori Zenshū* (All Works of Mori Arinori). Vol.2, Senbun-dō, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 大久保利謙編 (1973): 『森有礼全集』第2巻, 宣文堂.

Osatake, Takeshi (1942): *Meiji-Ishin (The Meiji Restoration)*. Vol.1. Hakuyō-sha, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 尾佐竹猛 (1942): 『明治維新』第1巻, 白揚社.

Otley, C. B. (1968): Militarism and the Social Affiliations of the British Army Elite. In, Jacob Van Doorn (ed.), *Armed Forces and Society*. Mouton, Paris.

Peterson, Jeanne (1978): *The Medical Profession in the Mid-Victorian London*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Razzell, P. E. (1968): Social Origins of Officers in the Indian and British Home Army 1758-1962. *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol.XIV, No.3.

Reader W. J. (1966): *Professional Men*. Basic Book, New York.

Sakata, Yoshio (1980): *Tennō Shinsei* (The Direct Imperial Rule of Tennō). Shibunkaku-shuppan, Kyōto. (in Japanese). 坂田吉雄 (1980): 『天皇新政』思文閣出版.

Smith, T. C. (1960): Japan's Aristocratic Revolution. In, Bendix, Reinhard and Lipset, Martin (ed.) (1966): *Class, Status and Power*. 2d. Edition. Free Press, New York.

Spaulding, Robert M. (1967): *Imperial Japan's Higher Civil Service Examination*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Tokutomi, Ichirō (ed.) (1933): *Kōshaku Yamagata Aritomo Den* (The Life of Duke Yamagata Aritomo). Vol.2, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 徳富猪一郎編 (1933): 『公爵山県有朋伝』第2巻. 公爵山県有朋公記念事業会.

Tokutomi, Ichirō (1962): *Kinsei Nihon Kokuminshi* (The Modern History of The Japanese People). Vol.58, Jijitsūshin-sha, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 徳富蘇峰 (1962): 『近世日本国民史』第58巻, 時事通信社.

Tokutomi, Sohō (1907): *Yoshida Shōin* (The Life of Yoshida Shōin). In, *Meiji Bungaku Zenshū* (Collected Works of Meiji Literature), Vol.74. Chikuma-shobō, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 徳富蘇峰 (1907): 『吉田松陰』 (明治文学全集 第74巻) 筑摩書房.

Tokyo Daigaku (ed.) (1969): *Ōkubo Toshimichi Kankei Monjo* (Collected Memorials of Okubo Toshimichi). University of Tokyo Press, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 東京大学編 (1969): 『大久保利通関係文書』東京大学出版会.

Tokyo-Daigaku Shiryō-Hensanjo (ed.) (1913): *Bakumatsu Gaikou-kankei Monjo* (Historical Documents of Foreign Affairs in the Late Tokugawa

Period). Vol.2, The Imperial University of Tokyo, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 東京大学資料編纂所編 (1913): 『幕末外交関係文書』第2巻, 東京大学出版会.

Tokyo Teikoku-Daigaku (ed.) (1932): *Tokyo Teikoku-Daigaku Gojūnen-shi* (Fifty Years of The Imperial University of Tokyo). The Imperial University of Tokyo, Tokyo. (in Japanese). 東京帝国大学編 (1932): 『東京帝国大学五十年史』東京帝国大学.

Trimberger, Ellen Kay (1978): *Revolution from Above*. Transaction Books, New Brunswick.

Wagatsuma, Tōsaku (1940): *Meiji Shakai-Seisaku-Shi* (History of the Social Policy in the Meiji Period). Mikasa-shobō, Tokyo. 我妻東策 (1940): 『明治社会政策史』三笠書房.

日本の武士身分の崩壊

園田英弘

要旨：明治維新は武士身分に支えられた政治体制の打倒を目的とした政治的改革でもなく、武士以外の社会階級によって起こされた社会革命でもないにもかかわらず、武士階級は明治維新以降に解体されてしまった。それは何故か？ 武士階級の解体の発端は、幕末の軍事改革にあった。武士はなによりもまず「戦争人」でなければならないという思想や武芸の奨励は、もともと支配身分としての誇りと使命観にもとづくものであった。ところが、身分的な誇りや使命観を幕末という政治的・軍事的状況の中で追求した結果生じたのは、それまで密接に結び付いていた身分制の体系と武士の職分の分離であった。この分離と共に、武士の身分制の体系は破壊されていくのである。そして、武士の社会を組織する新しい原理として機能主義的平等主義が登場する。武士身分の解体は、国民国家形成によって引き起こされた意図せざる歴史的帰結なのである。