EDUCATION AND MODERNIZATION
IN MEIJI JAPAN

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by

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Introduction

In 1868, Japan cast aside her traditional moorings and officially embarked on the laborious process of modernization along Western lines. By the early twentieth century, the task was essentially completed, and the nation became one of the great industrial powers -- a fact which even the West grudgingly acknowledged. Japan was the first, and is still by far the most successful, non-Western nation to come to grips with the challenge presented by Western economic and technological might. Moreover, not only did Japan substantially restructure her society and institutions to meet the challenge; she did so in a way that allowed her to maintain her identity and independence as a unique cultural entity.

The reasons for Japan's preeminent achievement have quite deservedly occupied the attention of an increasing number of scholars, and some important observations have been made. Undoubtedly, as has been suggested, developments within Japan prior to 1868 help account for the speed and success of her modernization. Japan had a long tradition of cultural borrowing and was therefore aware that other nations could be more advanced, and that she might learn profitably from them; thus she was more willing to adopt Western ideas and techniques than other nations similarly confronted. This same tradition, along with the fact that, in the two peaceful centuries before 1868, Japan enjoyed considerable economic and intellectual growth as a single entity, meant
that she had already developed a strong sense of identity as a nation, and could respond accordingly to the West. Also, beneath the dead weight of tradition and the fossilized political structure of the feudal Tokugawa regime, Japan had been undergoing social and economic changes which laid the basis for subsequent modernization. The collapse of the ancien régime in 1868 and the formation of the Meiji government resulted in the liberation of these social and economic forces, and the nation was thus able to respond enthusiastically to the Western challenge.¹

However useful such observations, they provide a far from adequate explanation of the dynamics of change in Japan after 1868. The new government's success in achieving modernization was by no means preordained, whatever factors initially worked in its favor. Certainly, some reasons for the success are immediately apparent -- among them, the exceptional dedication and flexibility of the Meiji leadership and the relative complacency with which the peasantry bore the burden of industrialization. But even these facts do not explain how and why Japan began to modernize in the first place; they only tell us why the process was carried out with efficiency and speed.

In an attempt to arrive at a more complete understanding of Japan's modernization, it may be helpful to consider, as Benjamin Schwartz has suggested, the Weberian concept of Zwechsrationalitat, or "the creation of the appropriate
means -- the appropriate technology -- for the achievement of certain ends." These ends, in Weber's analysis, are both material, directed toward industrial growth via the application of science and technology, and social, directed toward the creation of such things as a rational military and police organization and an efficient state bureaucracy. Such ends imply a commitment to a Weltanschauung grounded in a belief in progress and a sustained application of science and technology to attain it. In Japan's case, this outlook developed only as the result of the introduction of Western concepts which progressively corroded the traditional order and provided the justification for the changes undertaken by the Meiji regime. In this sense, the role of educational institutions was pivotal since, especially after 1868, they provided the structural framework for the accumulation of Western thought and for its subsequent application to society.

Japan was fortunate in that the Meiji leaders appreciated education's crucial position in the modernizing process and therefore allowed it sufficient latitude to realize its potential. This paper will examine the development of education as a modernizing force, first in the Tokugawa period and then in the decades after Meiji Restoration. Particular attention will be given to higher education since it was the institutions at this level, particularly the imperial universities, which had the most decisive impact on Japan's development.
Notes - Introduction

1 For further discussion, see John K. Fairbank, et al, "The Influence of Modern Western Science and Technology on Japan and China," Explorations in Entrepreneurial History VII, 4 (April, 1955): 189-204.

I. The Legacy of Tokugawa Education

Modernization, insofar as it involves the deliberate application of science and technology in the pursuit of articulated goals, did not become official policy in Japan until after the Meiji Restoration. Nonetheless, the speed and success with which Japanese leaders executed this policy suggest that the foundations for its development were laid during the Tokugawa period. On the surface, this would seem impossible, since Tokugawa policy was consistently directed at the maintainence, at all costs, of the social, economic, political and intellectual status quo. A rigid four-tiered social structure legitimized by Neo-Confucian orthodoxy; a system of alternate attendance at the capital required of the domain leaders; and a seclusion policy that effectively sealed Japan off from all but a few Dutch traders, were all devised by the Bakufu (military government) to perpetuate its rule. For a considerable period of time the Bakufu was eminently successful. It enjoyed unquestioned authority in Japan until the 1850s, and also provided the country with over two centuries of peace. Yet this same peace proved the Bakufu's undoing since it greatly facilitated economic and intellectual development, which meant that Tokugawa society over time became less and less what the official orthodoxy said it ought to be. In the absence of any direct challenge from within or without, the Bakufu either overlooked these deviations from the orthodox norm, or applied half-hearted
measures aimed at restoring the *status quo ante*; there seemed no need to do otherwise. Official lassitude meant the swift demise of the Tokugawa system after Perry's arrival in 1853, but it also meant that, conservative orthodoxy notwithstanding, both the traditional economy and the educational system, among other things, were able to develop in directions which greatly facilitated the official modernization of the Meiji period. In particular, alterations in the structure and content of Tokugawa education were crucial to the success of the Meiji years.

Structurally, the Tokugawa educational system mirrored the rigid social hierarchy imposed by the government. In the beginning, education was directed at higher samurai and "was not regarded as the function of the state except insofar as it was necessary for the training of a governing class."¹ The official *Bakufu* institution of higher learning, the *Shoheiko*, was the center of orthodox Neo-Confucianism and catered largely to the Tokugawa family and its immediate vassals. At the domain level, official schools offered education for high-ranking samurai, provided the *daimyo* (domain rulers) were willing and able to afford them. At the lower level, education was provided by *shijuku* (institutes of secondary education) and *terakoya* (private elementary schools.) For the first decades of the Tokugawa regime, samurai provided the bulk of the students in these institutions, especially at the higher level.
Government leaders and intellectuals in the early Tokugawa period were both inclined to view the function of education not as a means of acquiring learning for its own sake, but as an essential process in the development of moral character. That most Tokugawa scholars agreed on this point was due largely to the influence of Confucian attitudes toward education and to the relative stability of the early Tokugawa years. Confucianism had always held that the proper object of education was the cultivation of virtue and morality; and in the peaceful years of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries this seemed to be the best means by which privileged samurai might govern their country.\(^2\) After about 1750, however, certain internal developments served to modify this outlook. In content, purpose and availability, education in late Tokugawa times bore little relation to its earlier counterpart.

For one thing, as the commercial economy developed, money and financial power passed into the hands of urban merchants, and as a result, by the nineteenth century, the official social hierarchy did not correspond, as was intended, to financial realities. The system of alternate attendance steadily drained the daimyo of their resources, resulting in lower rice stipends for their attendant samurai, especially those of lower rank, or higher taxes for the already oppressed peasants.\(^3\) Partly as a result of this same system, and partly due to the upsurge of trade and commerce which inevitably accompanied prolonged peace, the income and living standard
of city merchants, artisans, and a few peasants rose considerably. Periodic attempts to redress the economic balance through increased agricultural taxes, sumptuary edicts and enforced austerity did little to alter the situation. The economy continued along lines in direct contradiction to official policy. This had important effects on the Tokugawa system of education. The most apparent result was a tremendous increase in the number of schools. Particularly after the middle 1700s, the Bakufu expanded its own educational facilities and encouraged the feudal domains to do likewise. The results were spectacular; whereas only 35 domain schools were established between 1710 and 1770, 55 were founded between 1780 and 1800.5 Fully 192 of the 227 domain institutes of higher learning ultimately established were founded after 1770.6 The government, typically, was motivated in this regard by a determination to preserve the status quo in the face of domestic and, after 1800, foreign challenges. Official education, however expanded, was still earmarked largely for high-ranking samurai and geared to the development of virtue and loyalty with which, it was hoped, this ruling elite could solve new problems. As we shall see, even the Bakufu's approach to education changed as threats to the system increased, although the maintainence of the status quo was always its intention.
Equally important was a dramatic increase in the number of schools for commoners. The children of merchants and rich peasants gradually dominated the terakoya and other private schools, and in the nineteenth century even began attending the official domain schools. Attendance at the terakoya increased fourfold between 1800 and 1868; the figures for shijuku and gogaku (officially sponsored schools for commoners) show a similar expansion.\(^7\) The increase consisted almost entirely of urban merchants, wealthy peasants and lower samurai. For these merchants and peasants education became not only more feasible as their financial position improved; it became more necessary as commerce and agriculture developed along more complex and sophisticated lines. For the lower samurai, education performed two functions: it facilitated the acquisition of new skills (in many instances Western skills) with which to alleviate their increasingly desperate financial situation; and it provided a means of employment, as teachers, for a class whose position in an era of peace was less and less secure. Government financial support for these schools was generally minimal\(^8\), but authorities did nothing to discourage either the educational aspirations of the commoners or the social leveling which inevitably took place when samurai and commoner attended the same school. Education in the terakoya and other such institutions was practically oriented and centered around the people's needs as the economy developed; the government
therefore viewed such training as one way to alleviate
the agricultural distress that plagued so many farmers and
wrought havoc on the official financial structure. In
any case, since the schools seemed to reinforce traditional
values and "tended always and everywhere to encourage
acceptance of the existing order," common literacy was
interpreted as a positive advantage. Likewise, education
for low-ranking samurai at this level was seen as a way to
ease their economic distress and mitigate their discontent.

The spread of education probably helped to keep the
Tokugawa social and political order intact for some time.
But the second major development of the era, the gradual
introduction of Western learning and methodology, coupled
with the Western military threat, substantially altered
the content of education as well as popular conceptions
concerning its purpose, and ultimately destroyed the
Confucian Weltanschauung which provided the foundation
for the Tokugawa order.

The Tokugawa seclusion policy had included a
prohibition against the importation and use only of those
Western books dealing with religion. Even in the days of
its most rigorous enforcement, the ban was not totally
effective, and in any case did not cover Western scientific
works. In fact, "Japanese scholars...made strenuous efforts
to acquire as much scientific and technical information
from Europe as possible during the country's two and a half
centuries of isolation." The Bakufu first officially encouraged such intellectual pursuits in 1720 under shogun Yoshimune; official sponsorship of what came to be called Rangaku (Dutch studies) began in 1740 when Yoshimune ordered two scholars to study science and language from the Dutch at Nagasaki. The Bakufu hoped to use Western techniques to improve agricultural productivity and thereby increase its finances; instead, scholarly activity centered in the biomedical field, for its practical potential, and to a lesser degree in astronomy. The importation of Western scientific works increased substantially after the publication, in 1774, of Sugita Gempaku's Kaitai Shinso, an anatomical text which distinctly demonstrated the superiority of Western medicine over its traditional Chinese counterpart. Subsequently, Western works became both more varied and more available; by the late eighteenth century, even commoners without any official backing could obtain access to such works, and it was relatively easy for non-government scholars to contact Dutch traders in Edo, the capital, or in Nagasaki. The result was that, according to R. P. Dore,

By the turn of the century interest in the West was no longer merely a matter of superficial exoticism and a love of Western gadgetry...but a serious pursuit of scientific knowledge acknowledged to be superior to that traditionally available from Chinese texts. Medicine continued to be the major concern, but soon there were translations of Western treatises on physics, chemistry, astronomy,
mathematics, geography, metallurgy, navigation, ballistics and military tactics. 17

So extensive and varied were Western scientific studies in this period that the essentials of the European scientific revolution were available to Japanese scholars by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Still, despite the proliferation of Western works, the knowledge Japanese scholars obtained of scientific subjects was fragmentary and often erroneous. Medical studies were an important exception, despite the fact that they encountered much institutional resistance from high-ranking samurai physicians who saw their status threatened by the introduction of the foreign techniques. While few Western scientists ever accompanied the Dutch traders to Japan, there were always one or two Dutch physicians at Nagasaki, who served as important conduits for Western medical knowledge. 18 Even here, though, transmission was fragmentary until the arrival in 1823 of Philipp Franz von Siebold, whose medical school set up outside Nagasaki provided Japanese physicians with an opportunity to practice Western medicine on a regular basis, and served as a point of diffusion for Western science and scientific methodology. 19 In general, scientific studies failed to develop as they had in the West. For one thing, science was not fully appreciated as science, but rather as a hobby or as "the rational classification of the results of translators"; in this sense "progress in science was
progress in language", and was not recognized for its otherwise practical utility. In addition, the fact that, over time, mathematics became the almost exclusive concern of the merchant class, while the study of physics and astronomy was dominated by samurai, meant that social antagonism prevented the requisite union of theory and observation without which a scientific breakthrough was impossible. Finally, Western scientific studies lacked sufficient support from the government until the end of the Tokugawa era; indeed, intellectual unorthodoxy was always frowned upon, and the Edo government maintained a limit on what scholars could do. As a result, "scientific activities tended to be confined to the practical area of techniques to avoid trouble with the government." 

Perry's arrival broke the back of official resistance to the penetration of Western studies. In an effort to shore up its declining authority, the Bakufu established a school for the study of Western works in 1855, and progressively expanded its scope to include most Western sciences; a vaccination institute was set up in Edo and the government established a full-scale Western-style medical school, under foreign direction, in Nagasaki in 1857. The Bakufu set up facilities for the production of Western armaments and, beginning in 1862, sent students abroad to acquire first-hand familiarity with Western science and technology. Various domains were equally
energetic in their response to the West's threat, especially since the end of seclusion had seriously undermined the authority of the central government and afforded them considerable freedom to act on their own. Efforts were also made at this level to produce Western-style weaponry, and students were secretly dispatched to Europe to study Western science and politics.26

The end of seclusion certainly accelerated the demise of the Tokugawa regime, but economic developments and the introduction of Western studies had already created an irresistible momentum for change. This was especially apparent in the field of education. It has already been observed that the development of trade and commerce resulted in a vastly increased number of schools as well as a sharp rise in attendance by commoners. The sense of crisis created by these economic developments and by the foreign threat (first perceived almost a half century before Perry's arrival) both contributed to the growth of educational facilities; commoner and samurai alike saw education as the first step in the solution to their problems. The same sense of crisis produced an important shift in popular conceptions of the purpose of education. Increasingly, the cultivation of morality was no longer seen as the only, or even the most proper, aim of learning. Certainly merchants and peasants viewed education rather pragmatically. Disaffected lower samurai, and even some Confucian scholars27,
interpreted the deterioration of the Tokugawa social order as an indication that the traditional stress on rank and on moral upbringing as the major determinants of the ability to rule was questionable at best. To be sure, they never fully abandoned the basic belief in the efficacy of a benevolent government administered by superior and talented men, but their definition of "superior and talented" ran more and more along practical lines. There was an increasing demand for the establishment of a true merit system within the government, and for the development and recognition of jitsugaku (practical studies). And over time, jitsugaku itself was interpreted more and more in terms of Western technological studies.²⁸ Many samurai thus began to devote themselves largely to these pursuits; in the domain schools, one-third of all courses offered were in Western scientific disciplines by 1850.²⁹ More important, substantial numbers of low-ranking samurai came to view the acquisition of Western knowledge as the solution to their economic and social problems. Bernard Silberman estimates that almost half of the lower samurai were involved in some sort of Western studies in the Bakumatsu period.³⁰ Increasingly alienated from a social structure which praised them in name but oppressed them in fact; contemptuous of superiors who paid lip service to the notion of merit as the basis for advancement; and aware of the technological superiority of the West, these samurai ultimately defined leadership in a non-traditional way -- and this was ultimately to
provide them with the justification for the overthrow of
the Tokugawa regime. It is of crucial importance in terms
of Japan's subsequent development both that education was
always seen as a socially prestigious means of bettering
one's life, and that Western learning became more and
more available to those samurai most inclined to view
orthodox studies with disdain and to accept novel approaches
to learning. It meant that a substantial proportion of the
ruling class was fully prepared by 1868 to reject the
traditional order, and had a sufficient appreciation for
Western learning to regard its cultivation and institution-
alization in Japan as crucial for her subsequent development.

Equally important was the corrosion of the Neo-Confucian
orthodoxy which resulted from the assimilation of Western
scientific thought and methodology. The ultimate moral
and ontological principle of Neo-Confucianism was ri,
and the proper object of education was held to be kakubutsu
kyuri (investigate things and penetrate the ri).\textsuperscript{31} Ultimate
principles were therefore derived from both the intuition
of the ethical essence of things and the active observation
of nature. Both were regarded as parts of an integral
whole, and Neo-Confucian theory was vague at best concerning
which part merited greater emphasis. Generally, it
subordinated the active elements to the passive, but since
no hard and fast rule was ever made, Western science could
be, and was, accepted as part of universal truth and as a
proper element of kyuri (the penetration of ri). Over time, however, the study of Western science forced a reinterpretation of ri to the point where its ethical components were all but ignored by some scholars in favor of the systematic observation of natural phenomena.\textsuperscript{31} Neo-Confucianism was thus divested of its all-important ethical and moral thrust, without which as a theory of knowledge it lost its relevance and uniqueness. For if the ethical elements of kyuri were discarded, Western science and methodology were manifestly far superior in their ability to deal with the principles of nature. By the late Tokugawa period, many scholars had reached this conclusion in one way or another; Fakuzawa Yukichi, for one, wrote that

\begin{quote}
Science (kyuri) is not the pursuit of a formless ri or the discussion of unreal matters. It is rather the pursuit of knowledge about the nature and functions of the universe....Science is the observation of phenomena and the explanation of their causes.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{quote}

Thus, by 1868 both the structure and content of education in Japan had evolved along lines which would facilitate the process of modernization undertaken by the new Meiji government. The widespread availability of education for merchants, wealthy peasants and lower samurai, coupled with the fact that by late Tokugawa times these groups were receiving instruction in the same institutions\textsuperscript{34}, meant that they shared many of the same values, the same aspirations and, particularly with regard
to the latter two groups, the same willingness to abandon the old order. Equally important, it meant that Japan at this time enjoyed a literacy rate comparable to nations of the West at a similar period of development. R. P. Dore estimates that forty percent of all Japanese males were literate by 1868. Virtually all those in a position to exercise leadership and power at all levels were able to read. This vastly facilitated popular acceptance of the revolutionary policies undertaken by the Meiji government, since a good proportion of the population could read and understand communications from the new government, and explain them to those who could not.

Widespread education also meant that millions of Japanese had already assimilated the routines which systematic education required into their way of life. Herbert Passin has observed that

The notion of spending several hours a day for part of the year away from home, associating with non-kin agemates, entering relations with a special kind of adult, and following a sequence of study, was already a familiar one to a good part of the population....large numbers of people were already familiar with the idea of education as sequence and growth, of starting with the rudiments and then advancing to higher levels in regular order.

This same diffusion of education ultimately destroyed the traditionally passive acceptance of the social status quo. The spread of Western studies, the increased emphasis on jitsugaku, and the inability of the old order to solve
new problems all conspired to induce many Japanese to view their status in a new light and to conclude that, by pursuing some sort of practical education, they might raise their status, or at least that of their children, while improving their lives materially. Marius Jansen has observed that in Tokugawa society, "There was a lot of ambition, a burning desire to bring honor to one's name, and a desire to excel." Thus, when the Meiji government offered new opportunities for education and self-improvement, many people were willing to pursue such endeavors. Furthermore, once the idea of individual self-improvement became widespread, the notion of national improvement, as proposed by the Meiji leaders, was more readily understood and accepted.

The effects of the introduction of Western learning have already been considered. It is important to note in addition that, however rudimentary popular appreciation of these studies may have been, the many Japanese who had acquired some familiarity with Western studies were willing to accept them as the proper basis for education. Indeed, after the Meiji Restoration education in Western disciplines was almost a prerequisite for upward mobility, especially within the government. Also, even though Western studies remained relatively unsophisticated until the Restoration, official attempts to expand their pursuit in the crisis-ridden years just prior to 1868 produced a substantial number of scholars well-informed in these areas. In this regard, the Bakufu's facilities for Western learning and its policy of
sending students abroad were especially important. Over half of those who went to Europe and the United States to study did so under the auspices of the central government. The Bakufu's policy produced a nucleus of intelligent men with a good knowledge of foreign languages and the ability to absorb Western scientific techniques, who would dominate the first generation of Meiji intellectuals.41

To be sure, most of the changes in the structure and content of Tokugawa education were attempts to accommodate new situations within the framework of the traditional order. But the order proved too unyielding, and the changes too fundamental. Under pressure from foreign sources, the Tokugawa system collapsed and new leaders came to the fore, equipped with new values and determined to reform Japan along Western lines, a process in which, unsurprisingly, education would necessarily play a significant role.
Notes - Chapter I


13 Ibid.


16 Numata, op. cit., p. 6.

17 Dore, Education in Tokugawa Japan, p. 160.


22 Tsuge, op. cit., p. 87-8.

23 For details, see Unesco, Role of Education, p. 334; and Sansom, op. cit., pp. 450-1.

24 Otori, op. cit., p. 38.

29 Ibid., pp. 258-60.

27 Ogyu Sorai, for one, while adhering to the orthodox assumption that the Chinese classics contained all one needed to know, saw the classics less as a means to develop one's virtue and more as a way to acquire an intellectual appreciation of the techniques of government. See Dore, Education in Tokugawa Japan, pp. 42-3.


30 Watanabe, op. cit., p. 118.


33 Quoted in Ibid., p. 114.


35 Dore, Education in Tokugawa Japan, p. 254.

36 See Passin, Society and Education in Japan, p. 57 for details.


38 Passin, Society and Education in Japan, p. 54.


II. Ideological Conflict
and the
Development of Education Policy
1868-1890

Officially, the Tokugawa regime was deprived of its legitimacy and power was transferred to the throne on January 3, 1868. But leadership and authority remained in a state of flux for some time thereafter, and the new power structure was extremely unstable.¹ A contemporary observer, William E. Griffis, provides this glimpse of life in the capital, renamed Tokyo:

The mikado's government had been in operation in Tokio two years, but it was on anything but a stable foundation. Conspiracies and rumors we had for breakfast, dinner and supper. To-day, Satsuma was going to carry off the mikado. To-morrow, the 'tycoon' was to be restored. The next day, the foreigners were to be driven out of Tokio, and then out of Japan. The city was not only full of the turbulent troops of the jealous Daimios, but of hundreds of the Jo-i (or foreign-haters), the patriot assassins, who thought they were doing the gods service, and their country a good, in cleaving a foreigner in the street.²

Pro-Bakufu forces were finally eliminated in May, 1869, and control over the various domains, whose independent activity had, in fact, ensured the success of the Restoration, was substantially accomplished by 1871 with the creation of a prefectural system to replace the old feudal structure. But there remained the larger problem -- indeed, the most crucial one -- of determining what sort of policies the new government ought to initiate to solve the crises at hand.
Prior to the Restoration, the revolutionary forces had enlisted support on the strength of such slogans as *sonno-jo* (*revere the emperor, repel the barbarians*) and *fukko* (*restore antiquity*)\(^3\), implying antipathy both to the foreigners who threatened Japan and to the military government whose ineptitude, the rebels claimed, had allowed such a situation to develop. The rebels quickly discarded the anti-foreign thrust of their program since it was obvious that the Western powers could not be dealt with so peremptorily. But if only to maintain an aura of legitimacy, ancient political offices were reconstructed, the emperor was elevated to a new position of importance, and imperial edicts were again regarded as law.\(^4\) Still, power rested largely in the hands of those samurai committed to modernization along Western lines; if they acted hesitantly at first, their goal was nonetheless fixed. The direction in which they intended to steer Japan was publicly proclaimed as early as April, 1868, when they proclaimed in the Charter Oath that "evil customs of the past shall be broken off" and "knowledge shall be sought throughout the world so as to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule."\(^5\) By the early 1870s, it was apparent that Western-style innovation was imperative for the solution of Japan's foreign and domestic problems, and those leaders committed to innovation achieved complete control of the government. The old slogans were discarded and in their place *bunmei kaika* (*civilization
and enlightenment", defined almost exclusively in Western terms) and fukoku kyohei ("enrich the nation, strengthen its arms") became the guidelines for policy. The latter slogan ultimately dominated since it implied a more selective adoption of Western models. Indeed, the Meiji leaders were unanimous in their dedication to fukoku kyohei, and accepted controlled Westernization as the quickest way to achieve this goal. This dedication assured a certain degree of continuity in policies which otherwise required a good deal of flexibility and which were frequently formulated through a laborious process of trial and error.

Committed to industrial and commercial growth through the development of science and technology, the Meiji leaders faced the problems of selecting those Western models most appropriate to Japan, while retaining her unique identity as a nation; they did not always agree on the selection process. Disagreement was nowhere more apparent than in the field of education, since any policy here had obvious ideological implications, and since the creation of a systematic system of education was regarded, from the start, as crucial for the realization of fukoku kyohei.

Technical and higher education, to be discussed in subsequent chapters, evolved, after an initial period of conflict, along lines more or less consistent with Japan's economic development. Ideological and policy disputes occurred much more frequently with regard to elementary and
secondary education. The conflict between avid Westernizers and those more traditionally inclined was apparent from the beginning, but until about 1880 the Westernizers dominated educational policy as well as the Ministry of Education (created in 1871.) The promulgation of the Gakusei (Fundamental Code of Education) in 1872 represents their most notable triumph. The spirit underlining this document was unmistakably the kind of utilitarian and practical approach espoused by Fukuzawa Yukichi and other enthusiastic proponents of Western-style bunmei kaika. The preamble of the Gakusei states, among other things, that

The only way in which an individual can raise himself, manage his property and prosper in his business and so accomplish his career is by cultivating his morals, improving his intellect, and becoming proficient in the arts; the cultivation of morals, the improvement of intellect, and proficiency in the arts cannot be obtained except through learning.... Every man only after studying diligently, each according to his capacity, will be able to increase his property and prosper in his business. Hence, knowledge may be regarded as the capital for raising oneself....It is intended that henceforth universally (without any distinction of class or sex) in a village there shall be no home without learning and in a house no individual without learning.8

The emphasis here is on individual achievement and on education's fundamental contribution thereto. The framers of the Gakusei optimistically concluded that given popular enthusiasm and initiative, the nation could collectively discard the traditional aspects of education, embrace the pragmatic spirit of the West, and prosper accordingly.9
Aside from providing the philosophical rationale for the Gakusei, the Westernizers controlled its administration. Western influence was overwhelming in this area. The structure was based on the highly centralized French system, and provided for the creation of 8 university districts, subdivided into 32 middle school districts and further into 210 primary school districts. A total of 8 universities, 256 middle schools and 53,760 primary schools were envisioned. In the various provisions of the code, German, British and Dutch influences were apparent.\textsuperscript{10} American influence in the preparation of the curriculum was especially strong; Tanaka Fujimaro, who oversaw the implementation of the Gakusei, had spent considerable time observing educational systems in the United States and hired an American, David Murray, as an advisor. American texts and readers were translated into Japanese and issued by the Ministry of Education as standard works for elementary school instruction. Over forty percent of the instruction in the government schools dealt with mathematics and science -- frequently at a level too difficult for the students to understand.\textsuperscript{11} Even morals texts were translations of Western works; there was little concern at this point with the cultivation of a nationalistic ethos among students. "Civilization and enlightenment", those in charge believed, would propel Japan down the path to national wealth and power.
It was obvious by the late 1870s that the Westernizer's reach had far exceeded their grasp, and that the Gakusei was falling far short of its projected goals. The program was too optimistic and ambitious to begin with; it assumed the same general enthusiasm for Western learning among the peasant majority that the proponents of bunmei kaika enjoyed. Instead, the people reacted with suspicion and often hostility to the strange foreign texts used in the schools. In addition, since the central government chose to channel most of the limited funds it allocated for education into its institutions of higher learning, the financial burden of supporting the new system fell on a population largely unable to meet the costs involved. This weak financial base meant that school accommodations were chronically inadequate. Proper facilities and equipment were lacking; teaching materials and competent instructors were in short supply. Finally, the still unstable system of local administration was incapable of handling the situation; education was being overseen by officials who had little time and less expertise.

Whatever its flaws, the Gakusei undoubtedly encouraged the development of educational institutions but, ironically, most of these were private. As a result, while the rate of enrollment at primary schools increased by about fifty percent between 1872 and 1879, well over half of the students attended private institutions where their parents had more
control over the curriculum. Secondary schools, in the absence of any initiative on the part of the central government, developed along local or private lines; enrollment rates rose here too, but, as was the case with primary schools, students were mainly of merchant or samurai origin. Obviously, the Gakusei made little progress in the development of universal education, and by the late 1870s popular resentment against the burdens it imposed was widespread and vocal. In 1879, Education Minister Tanaka attempted to solve the problem with a revised, even more liberal code, the Kyoikurei, which abolished the Gakusei's administrative structure, reduced the period of compulsory education required of primary school students, and substantially increased the scope of local initiative by making popularly elected school boards in each town and village responsible for the establishment and direction of schools. This last provision, inspired by the decentralized American system, was based on the hope that local control would lead to curricula more relevant to local needs, and therefore to higher attendance rates. Instead, local leaders regarded the measure as an abdication of governmental responsibility. The Kyoikurei actually accelerated the drift of students to private schools; overall enrollment declined as well. As a result, Tanaka was discredited and the whole attempt to restructure education along Western liberal lines came to a halt.
The failure of the Gakusei and the Kyoikurei provided traditionalists with the opportunity for a counterattack. Even prior to the collapse of the Kyoikurei system, they launched their first challenge in an imperial rescript drafted by Motoda Eifu, the Emperor's Confucian tutor and leader of the traditionalists. In this Kyogaku Taishi ("The Great Principles of Education"), Motoda deplored what he saw as the decline of morals and patriotism, and put the blame squarely on "the indiscriminate emulation of Western ways." The danger, according to Motoda, was that "in the end, our people will forget the great principles governing the relations between ruler and subject, and father and son." Education, he asserted, should be based on Confucian precepts, and directed to "the clarification of benevolence, justice, loyalty, and filial piety." Only after this has been accomplished should the people "turn to the cultivation of the various subjects of learning in accordance with their ability."¹⁷

Political leaders were well aware of the deficiencies of the educational system but were determined to resist any traditional thrust which might hamper the realization of fukoku kyohei. Ito Hirobumi, by now preeminent among Meiji leaders, responded to Motoda's critique by acknowledging the decline of popular morality but attributing it to the intensity of change since 1868, rather than to flaws within the system of education per se.
The new system, he argued, simply had not been given enough
time to prove its worth; attempts to control education
through the imposition of a national or Confucian orthodoxy
would be beyond the proper purview of the government.18

Ideological differences aside, both Ito and Motoda
agreed on one fundamental principle: the supremacy of the
state. In this context, fukoku kyohei was mutually
acceptable as the raison d'être of the new regime. But the
conflict revolved around the means to achieve this goal.
Motoda accepted the need for a national restructuring to
enable Japan to deal with the West, but insisted that this
could best be done by the inculcation of Confucian values
stressing loyalty and obedience to the emperor; at one
point, he observed:

It is to be hoped that by clarifying the
sovereign's virtue, settling the people's
hearts, and expounding the principles of
government, we can come forth ahead of all the
nations."19

Motoda tended, then, to see Japan's problems in moral
terms, whereas Ito and most others viewed them as political
matters. Indeed, in his rebuttal to Motoda's Kyogaku Taishi,
Ito blamed the current unrest on the fact that students spent
a disproportionate amount of time studying Western political
theory, and concluded that, in the interests of fukoku
kyohei, their studies should be redirected toward science
and technology.20
Preoccupied with matters political, and lacking a systematic educational plan of his own, Ito allowed the traditionalists to gain the upper hand at the Education Ministry in the early 1880s. They promptly proceeded to reassert central control over education, to assign top priority to morals training in the curriculum, and to make textbooks subject to the scrutiny of the Ministry.  

The dispute between traditionalists and modernists was unresolved, however, and remained so until the late 1880s, after Minister of Education Mori Arinori had restructured the system in a way that partially satisfied both groups.

Prior to the 1880s, Mori had been an enthusiastic advocate of *bunmei kaika*. He supported the *Gakusei* and the *Kyoikurei*, particularly Tanaka's plan for local autonomy at the elementary level (a concept Mori himself never entirely rejected.)  

By 1882, however, his views regarding the purpose and political implications of education were sufficiently congruent with those of the more conservative Ito that the latter promised Mori the position of Minister of Education upon the establishment of a cabinet system in 1885.  

Shortly after taking this post, Mori issued a series of ordinances giving Japan's educational structure a nationalist, elitist caste which remained essentially unaltered until 1945. Mori was as committed as Ito to *fukoku kyohei*, and in the ordinances defined the purpose of education accordingly. Education was to be geared strictly to the needs of the state.
Within this context, Mori drew a distinction between *gakumon* (scholarship), which according to Mori was "for men of maturity, a matter in which one follows one's own inclinations, freely choosing a subject and performing research on it," and *kyoiku* (common learning), "that intellectual, moral and physical education which is imparted entirely by older persons to younger persons who have not yet achieved maturity and are still in a dependent status." 24

Structurally, this meant the creation of a dual system: an elementary sector, providing compulsory education for all, stressing both practical learning and the cultivation of loyalty and patriotism; and a higher sector enjoying sufficient freedom to allow for the development of highly-skilled bureaucrats, scientists and technicians. 25 Tokyo University was therefore enlarged, the scope of its operations was expanded (see next chapter); and, to underscore its position as the citadel of higher learning in Japan, it was designated an "imperial university". The number of middle schools was strictly limited in accordance with their new position as the first step in an elitist education. "Higher middle schools" were created as preparatory institutions for the university; completion of studies at this level became virtually a prerequisite for entry into the imperial university. 26 At the elementary level, compulsory attendance was set at four years (in the
absence, still, of substantial funding from the central government, attendance rates at this level actually declined during Mori's term) and government control over texts and curriculum was strengthened. To ensure an adequate supply of teachers of the kind he wanted, Mori restructured normal schools along paramilitary lines. He expected this to produce teachers who would transmit preordained values rather than stimulate independent and possibly unorthodox thought.27

Mori's system was an attempt to devise as rational and efficient an educational structure as possible, given the financial limitations under which the Ministry of Education operated at the time. The government had little money to spend for education, and most of the allocated funds went to the elite higher institutions, especially the imperial university. But Mori was also trying to create a disciplined and loyal citizenry and a small corps of creative and highly-skilled specialists -- the twin requirements of fukoku kyohei in the field of education. His structure undoubtedly satisfied Ito and the modernizers, but left the traditionalists unhappy. While Mori reaffirmed the necessity of moral education at the elementary level, he interpreted this type of training in strictly secular and nationalistic terms. Mori evaluated traditional concepts not in terms of any intrinsic merit they might have -- indeed, like Ito, he had little regard for them in this
respect -- but in terms of their functional utility for *fukoku kyohei*. Mori therefore disapproved of the study of the Confucian classics, observing at one point that "By luring its devotees into a life of unproductive study... Confucian scholarship has been the major source of effectiveness in today's world."^28^ Likewise, he appreciated the Japanese mythic tradition for its political potential, valuable only insofar as the state could use it to strengthen its base of support. ^29^ Moral instruction, as Mori envisioned it, had none of the quasi-religious and mystical trappings which would later be appended to it. Mori drastically reduced the time allotted for such teaching at the elementary level, prohibited the use of Confucian texts, quashed an attempt to issue a national morals code via imperial rescript, and authorized texts which emphasized "common-sense ethics" rather than moral injunctions. ^30^ 

However much it stressed the cultivation of loyalty and obedience, Mori's secular thrust did little to assuage the fears of the traditionalists. Still, Mori did provide a firm institutional basis for moral instruction, and, following his assassination in 1889, the traditionalists reasserted their views regarding the content of such courses. The Imperial Rescript on Education, issued in 1890, has commonly been viewed as the successful culmination of their efforts. To be sure, it unalterably reaffirmed the primacy of the morals courses. But the
document was the result of the collective efforts of Inoue Kowashi, Motoda Eifu and Yamagata Aritomo, among others, and in endeavoring to resolve their ideological and political differences, they produced a document general enough in tone to forestall criticism from any of the ideological protagonists. The traditionalists' victory was partial at best. The document enjoined the people to observe Confucian social principles and contained statements regarding the sanctity of the emperor and his ancestors. It also directed Japanese citizens to obey the laws of the state, respect the constitution and, in the event of a national emergency, to offer their services to their country. It was left unsaid which of these points was more important, and so it was up to later commentators to point out the specific applicability of the document. Official interpretations tended to vary with each successive Ministry, and although the rescript vigorously reasserted the validity of traditional values and beliefs, it did not thereby straightjacket education until well into the twentieth century.

The conflict, then, between modernists and traditionalists was not entirely solved; but with the promulgation of the rescript, each side was relatively satisfied that fukoku kyohei could be attained without sacrificing essential principles. Mori's structural compromise prevailed and educational institutions developed
fairly rapidly within the confines of this dual system. The most important additions to the structure during the Meiji era came during the tenure of Inoue Kowashi. Inoue, who was largely responsible for Ito's rebuttal to the Kyogaku Taishi, for some of Mori's ordinances, and for the Imperial Rescript on Education, encouraged education's nationalist orientation, but laid particular stress on the development of facilities for vocational and technical training. Inoue redefined the aims and curricula of existing industrial and technical schools, most of which were of poor quality, and increased government subsidies for these institutions (see Chapter IV). 

Thus, by the middle 1890s policy disputes over the structure and purpose of education in Japan were more or less settled. Schools at every level thereafter developed with remarkable rapidity. That they evolved within a decidedly nationalist framework emphasizing traditional values was due to several factors. First, although the changes that took place in Meiji Japan were indeed radical, most leaders do not seem to have viewed the past with the implacable hostility that characterizes most Western revolutionaries. The revolution was justified, after all, as a return to the noble traditions and values of a distant past. Even if Ito and others viewed tradition cynically, in terms of its usefulness for their policies, they were still not willing to reject it out of hand. Especially in
view of the political turmoil of the late 1870s, when even primary school teachers joined in the clamor for liberal democracy, Meiji leaders increasingly appreciated the need to create a disciplined, obedient citizenry if fukoku kyohei were to be attained. Bunmei kaika had proven inadequate and a more authoritarian approach seemed necessary. Traditional values, stressing as they did filial piety, loyalty and subservience, were obviously useful and had the additional benefit of being more comprehensible to the people than the imported Western ideas.

Second, given their determination to industrialize as quickly as possible, it is doubtful whether Meiji leaders had any choice but to emphasize nationalism based on traditional methods of social control. At least, this is how they perceived the situation. The stress on loyalty to emperor and nation helped maintain order during the transition to an industrial society, and served to minimize the disruptive effects of Westernization. Particularly in the early 1880s, when the stagnant economy required some sort of impetus, education was the ideal area in which to stress the necessary discipline, thrift and frugality. Standardization and state control of education were crucial in this regard both to the improvement of the level of instruction and the development of an economically motivated citizenry. Therefore, education was practically oriented and infused with nationalist sentiment; as John Whitney Hall has pointed out, "The country had little opportunity to
consider education as a means of developing the 'well-rounded man.'" Speed was of the essence in Meiji Japan, and this meant in consequence that liberal education was a luxury the nation could not afford.

Finally, it must be remembered that Japan undertook modernization in response to the threat of the West, and this fact inevitably reinforced nationalist tendencies. The enthusiasm with which Meiji leaders adopted Western models for their country should not obscure the fact that theirs was a defensive reaction; they were always well aware of Western might and arrogance. Indeed, most Japanese saw their country as one threatened by a multitude of Western nations, and their values were shaped accordingly. This nationalistic predilection was reinforced by the fact that "Japanese nationalism came to flower in an age dedicated to the concept of power through mass allegiance and possessed of the techniques to implement this theory." Japan was hardly alone in emphasizing nationalist education. Especially at the elementary and secondary levels, learning in most of the advanced Western countries was similarly oriented.

In any case, educational policy throughout this period was flexible, and Meiji leaders showed a remarkable willingness to experiment with Western models. At the elementary level, the results were impressive; in the twenty year period between 1890 and 1910, the rate of
attendance rose from 49 percent to 98 percent.\textsuperscript{39} During this same period, enrollment at national middle schools increased by 500 percent.\textsuperscript{40} Unquestionably, progress at these levels facilitated Japan's economic growth. Its influence should not be overestimated, however, since, especially before 1900, elementary and secondary education tended to expand in response to economic growth, as the need for trained and literate industrial manpower became more apparent. Of more importance in the initial stages of modernization was the role of public and private institutions of higher learning, particularly the imperial universities. Developments in these areas will be considered in the following chapters.
Notes - Chapter II


15Nishihira, op. cit., pp. 174-8; Passin, Society and Education in Japan, pp. 117-20.


17Quoted in Passin, Society and Education in Japan, p. 227.

18For a complete translation of Ito's remarks, see Ibid., pp. 229-33.


20See Passin, Society and Education in Japan, p. 233.


22Hall, Mori Arinori, pp. 336, 448.

23Ibid., pp. 359-60.

24Ibid., p. 411.
25Passin, Society and Education in Japan, p. 88.

26Aso and Amano, op. cit., pp. 21-2.


28Quoted in Hall, Mori Arinori, pp. 337-8.

29See Griffis, op. cit., p. 100n.

30Hall, Mori Arinori, pp. 438-40; Murthy, op. cit., pp. 249-50.


35Hall, Mori Arinori, pp. 346-7.


38 Gordon Wright, for example, points out that elementary school teachers in France before World War I were militantly patriotic and conveyed the same sentiments to the children under their tutelage. See Gordon Wright, France in Modern Times (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Company, 1974), p. 240.

39 Unesco, Role of Education, p. 64.

III. The Development of the Imperial University System

Meiji leaders certainly regarded the development of elementary and secondary education as an essential step in the modernization process to which they were committed. Instruction at these levels was geared to the creation of a people who could contribute and respond favorably to the industrialization initiated by the central government. But this was not enough. If fukoku kyohei were to be realized quickly, Japan needed an adequate supply of able, dedicated and highly educated professionals to direct and administer the process. Recognizing this, the central government earmarked most of its education funds for its institutions of higher learning. It was money well spent. These elite, government-sponsored schools, especially Tokyo Imperial University ("Todai"), occupied a critical position in the social, economic and political evolution of Meiji Japan. Todai graduates, for example, dominated the civil bureaucracy by the turn of the century and thus share a major responsibility for the relative efficiency with which policy directives from the new central government were executed. Their socio-economic contribution was even more important; one observer has noted "the very likely possibility that economic development could not have occurred at all had the higher education system not provided a supply of scientists and engineers capable of importing scientific
knowledge from the West and adding to it through research in Japan.¹

One reason for the success of Todai and other official schools was that, except for an initial period of conflict, they remained largely immune from the acrimonious debate that otherwise influenced educational policy. After the Restoration, an attempt was made to placate the proponents of the various disciplines -- Confucian studies, native Japanese studies and Western studies -- by creating an institute of higher learning devoted to all three fields. The attempt marked the beginning of a bitter struggle between the three groups for official sanction and favor, and for dominance in the newly-created school. The nativist scholars at first held the upper hand, but their bid for preeminence was doomed. Committed to modernization along Western lines, Meiji leaders ultimately rejected the claims to influence of the nativist and Confucian scholars. Western scholars, most of whom had been educated at the Bakufu's schools of Western learning, were not always inclined to view the Restoration favorably, but their skills were obviously needed if fukoku kyohei were to be achieved. As a result, the government shut down the school in 1871, dispersed the nativist and Confucian scholars to various unimportant posts, and reestablished Western studies in two separate entities: the Daigaku Nanko, devoted to law, natural science and engineering;
and the Daigaku Toko, devoted to medical studies.\textsuperscript{2}

Despite this reorganization, higher education remained in a state of structural disarray throughout the 1870s. The Daigaku Nanko, officially designated a middle school, was upgraded in 1873 with the addition of college-level courses\textsuperscript{3}; but schools set up within the various ministries offered more systematic and intensive instruction at the higher level. Structural problems aside, there remained the necessity to build up a corps of instructors capable of providing quality education in the Western disciplines. The government began by employing those trained in these areas by the Bakufu and the domains in the late Tokugawa period; but such personnel were limited in number and, in any case, very few had systematic, high-level training in science and technology.\textsuperscript{4} Determined to master Western techniques as quickly as possible and with a minimum of foreign interference, the Meiji government adopted a two-pronged policy: 1) the employment, on a temporary basis, of foreign experts to provide the requisite training; and 2) the dispatch of Japanese students to universities in the West to acquire the necessary skills and serve as instructors upon their return to Japan. In the formative years of Japan's modern system of education, the use of these techniques to acquire Western knowledge assumed top priority; by 1873, the government was spending almost one-third of its total national education budget on these programs.\textsuperscript{5}
The Meiji government went to great lengths to secure men of ability from the West, often seeking the advice (and, in some cases the employment) of important officials in Western governments. Nakamura Takeshi estimates that over 3,000 Europeans and Americans were invited to serve as advisors in Japan during this period, and that a total of 1,392 actually served in Japan in some capacity, official or otherwise. The Ministry of Industry, the pivotal institution which guided Japan's industrialization in the early years, employed 773 foreigners between 1870 and 1888; salaries for these advisors amounted to 42 percent of the Ministry's total expenditures during this time. Between 1873 and 1886, when the number of employed foreigners was at its peak, 182 Westerners served at the government's institutes of higher learning (the Daigaku Toko and the Daigaku Nanko, amalgamated in 1877 into Tokyo University, restructured as Tokyo Imperial University in 1886; see below), of whom 44 percent were German, 20 percent British, 19 percent American and 12 percent French. As these latter figures indicate, the Meiji government was highly selective in its employment policy and not bound to any one Western nation, although the level of German influence increased substantially over time. In general Germans enjoyed paramount influence in bio-medical studies, partly since the Japanese government adjudged them most qualified therein, and partly because, since the Dutch medical texts in use in Japan since the eighteenth century
were mostly translations of German works, continuity could thereby be maintained.\textsuperscript{10} British influence was especially strong in the humanities and engineering, while American influence was primarily in the humanities and the natural sciences.\textsuperscript{11}

Foreign assistance was crucial in the development of higher education, especially in the sciences; Edward Morse, Erwin Baelz, T. C. Mendenhall, John Milne and William Smith Clark, to name a few, systematized Western studies at Todai and elsewhere, performed important research in Japan, and, equally important, helped to develop Western appreciation of Japan as a modernizing nation.\textsuperscript{12} But the Japanese were acutely sensitive to the degree of direct foreign influence in their modernization and Meiji leaders deemed inappropriate any excessive reliance upon foreigners. For this reason, more stress was placed on sending students abroad; the costs involved were even more burdensome than the amount required to employ foreigners, yet in the Meiji era the government sent over seven hundred students to the West to pursue their studies.\textsuperscript{13} Prior to 1882, most students went to Great Britain, the United States, and France, usually to study law; thereafter the number of students studying in Germany increased markedly and legal studies were virtually abandoned in favor of engineering, medicine and the natural sciences.\textsuperscript{14} This change reflects the increasing tendency for Meiji leaders to adopt German models
for modernization as Bismarck's attempt to create a modern industrial state out of a previously divided polity were becoming obviously successful. And with regard to the studies pursued abroad, the government preferred that students choose the sciences all along. The Ministry of Education's instructions for students being sent to the West for study state unequivocally that "The reason for selecting students and recommending to the Government that they should be sent abroad is to enable them to acquire techniques that will promote the progress of industry." 15

Despite the high cost of sending students to the West, the fact that the Meiji government continued the program throughout the period testifies to its success. As these students returned from abroad, they replaced many of the foreign instructors in government institutes. Those dispatched by the Ministry of Education or by other government agencies were required to serve the government in some capacity and many of them made outstanding contributions in their field of specialization. 16 Many returned to teach at Todai, where training abroad was generally a prerequisite for appointment to a teaching post. 17

In tandem with these measures designed to accelerate the importation of Western knowledge, the Meiji government began restructuring its institutions of higher learning to create a modern university. Existing schools were merged in 1877 to form Tokyo University, and four faculties were
established in law, science, literature and medicine. In 1886, Mori Arinori added a graduate school and created a faculty of engineering by combining the technical school operated by the Ministry of Industry with engineering courses previously offered by the faculty of science. Mori's alterations, as embodied in the Imperial University Ordinance of 1886, essentially determined the nature and scope of the national university system until 1945. Mori added the "imperial" title to the university's name to underscore its preeminent position in the educational framework, and explicitly stated that "The purpose of the imperial university shall be to provide instruction in the arts and sciences and to inquire into the mysteries of learning in accordance with the needs of the state."18

Whatever symbolic importance one wishes to attach to this statement, in fact it simply reaffirmed prior government policy, since Meiji leaders had consistently viewed higher education in terms of its serviceability to the state. More important is the fact that, within this nationalistic orientation, Mori was willing to allow considerable freedom to those Todai faculties -- science, medicine and engineering -- whose contribution to Japan's industrialization were most direct. Less freedom was granted to the other faculties. Todai was geared to the production of scientists and technicians and secondarily to the production of competent civil bureaucrats who could carry out government policies smoothly and efficiently. University policy was formulated
according to these priorities.

Todai's role in the development of the civil bureaucracy was pivotal. Before the late 1880s, appointments to bureaucratic positions were made largely on an ad hoc basis; inherited status or wealth counted at least as much as educational experience. But with the introduction, in 1887, of a systematic examination procedure as the basis for civil service recruitment, Todai's law faculty assumed, in effect, the major role in the training of future bureaucrats. From the beginning, the system accorded Todai graduates a singular position either by providing exemptions from various examinations, or by virtue of the fact that many of the examiners were Todai faculty members. Over time, the system was rendered nominally more impartial with the abolition of certain Todai privileges, but this was more a reflection of the fact that the number of Todai law graduates exceeded the government's needs, than a response to public pressures for a more equitable system. Throughout the Meiji period, the government exhibited a consistent preference for Todai law graduates, who themselves generally preferred government service over private employment. Robert M. Spaulding notes that probably a majority of the top-level posts during this time were held by men appointed prior to 1887, or by technicians and scientists not subject to the examination system. But eventually Todai graduates almost completely monopolized the key positions within the ministries, and
did so by virtue of their success in the examinations and subsequent performance on the job. By the end of the Meiji era, most of the major prefectures were also headed by Todai alumni.22

This transformation of the civil service into a Todai-dominated structure was highly functional for the development of competence and uniformity in the bureaucracy. Todai graduates were, by and large, more competent than those of most other universities, and they did create a bureaucracy of talent. Todai was able to maintain its excellence because it enjoyed the most generous financial support of the central government and, increasingly, from private sources as well; and because the best students and professors consistently preferred it and its facilities to other institutions. Equally important for the bureaucracy was the fact that Todai's progressive dominance of the system meant that most top-level bureaucrats shared a sense of elitism and a state-oriented outlook carefully nurtured in their years at Todai. This uniformity of outlook was deemed essential by Meiji leaders23, and Mori and others thus offered considerably less freedom to Todai's law faculty than to other faculties. Legal studies at Todai were directed more towards the production of "social engineers" schooled in comparative political theory, economics and social thought, than towards the training of lawyers as such.24 The emphasis here was
undeniably nationalistic and elitist; fostered by the increased stress on the state-centered, positivist legal philosophy imported from Germany as well as by the authoritarian outlook of the Meiji leaders themselves, the system produced a breed of bureaucrats who believed that administration was properly and exclusively the concern of officials of the state, and who viewed the parliamentary process, institutionalized in 1890, with arrogant disdain.  

Todai, then, was largely responsible for the creation of a cohesive bureaucracy staffed and directed by highly trained men dedicated to the needs of the state as defined by those at the top. The system was undoubtedly beneficial in terms of Japan's long-range development as a modern state. Of more immediate concern to Meiji leaders, however, was the need to train scientists and technicians to guide Japan in the initial stages of industrialization. It is in this sense that the faculties of engineering, medicine and science, at Todai and at imperial universities subsequently established, assume an overriding importance. Meiji leaders always approached Westernization pragmatically, especially after the decline of bunmei kaika sentiment; therefore, they stressed the importation of Western science and technology, and viewed the introduction of Western political and social ideas with considerably less enthusiasm. This practical orientation was obvious in the pattern, observed above, of sending students abroad to study; in time, science
and technology virtually monopolized the areas investigated. Within the central government, the promotion of science and technology for their industrial and military potential (i.e., for fukoku kyohei) received top priority. In 1876, for example, the expenses for the Ministry of Industry amounted to almost twenty percent of all government expenditures, second only to the War and Naval Ministries. The transfer of the technology school operated by this ministry to Todai, and the creation of a faculty of engineering, the first of its kind at the university level, amounted to a recognition of Todai's crucial role in this area.

Financially and otherwise, the government stressed scientific and technical studies above all else. It is noteworthy in this respect that, of the imperial universities subsequently established in the Meiji era -- Kyoto, Tohoku and Kyushu -- only one, Kyoto, had a faculty of law. At Todai as well as at these other universities, substantially more funds were allocated for the sciences than for the humanities. The chair system, adopted in 1893 from the relatively flexible French model in order to reduce Todai's dependency on foreign professors and utilize more effectively the native Japanese staff, is a case in point. In 1896, sixty-seven percent of the chairs at Todai were in the scientific disciplines; this despite their higher cost. The figures vary only slightly
throughout the Meiji period, for the other imperial universities as well as Todai. Between 1876 and 1912, over fifty-three percent of the imperial university graduates received degrees in the sciences (mainly engineering and medicine); about thirty-four percent received law degrees, and only about twelve percent came from the faculties of letters. 29

Although the sciences clearly dominated priorities at the imperial universities, the Meiji leaders' essentially practical outlook and their intense desire to "catch up" with the West meant that even the scientific disciplines were subject to the limitations set by the goal of fukoku kyohei. In restructuring the university system, Mori Arinori had drawn a distinction between pure science and applied science and concluded that, given Japan's needs, far more emphasis had to be placed on the latter. 30 This approach to science continued well beyond the Meiji period, and meant that the universities produced a good number of physicians, agricultural specialists and engineers, but devoted relatively little of their time and resources to the development of pure scientific theory. The faculties of science themselves accounted for less than six percent of the graduates of the imperial universities in the Meiji era. 31 There was little support for research in the pure sciences, since most of those in power felt that Japan first had to assimilate what the West had already
achieved, and only thereafter could she afford to adopt a more theoretical approach to scientific studies. There were a few exceptions to this; the government established research institutes in some of the ministries, provided research funds for the Institute of Infectious Diseases and, after 1911, recognized distinguished achievements in science by awarding prizes through the Imperial Academy of Science. But by and large its support for basic research was minimal, especially before 1918, and scientists frequently lamented the chronic lack of funds in this area. One Todai professor commented that:

There was no provision in the university budget for research. All we had was a fund to cover expenses for classroom experiments, more or less proportional to the number of students in each class, and some of this money could be used for research purposes.....Because of these circumstances the most capable professors and associate professors were rarely able to accomplish anything and unavoidably wasted most of their time. Not an insubstantial number of young scientists who entered graduate school hoping to carry on research were forced to change their career plans and leave academic life.32

Such scholarly dissatisfaction is understandable in light of the government's manifest priorities; but the fact is that the system ultimately allowed for at least some research, and substantial achievements were made in both applied and theoretical science. With regard to the former, at Todai alone some 2,613 basly-needed physicians were produced between 1876 and 1916.33 Twenty-three percent of all Todai graduates in the Meiji era came from
the faculty of engineering and made vital contributions to government-sponsored projects and, especially after 1895, to the burgeoning private industry. This Todai faculty was popular, since its graduates had virtually no trouble finding employment, and its teaching methods were highly innovative; a contemporary British observer noted that it "in some respects proved itself in advance of the rest of the world, and many of its methods have since been adopted by other countries."  

Despite the inadequacy of government funding, achievements in the theoretical sciences were similarly noteworthy. By the turn of the century, Japanese scientists were making significant theoretical contributions to chemistry, astronomy, biomedicine and physics and their efforts were being reported in scientific journals published by the imperial universities, in Western scholarly journals, and at international scientific conferences. These Japanese initiatives have led one observer to conclude that, at least in some areas of science, research in Japan by the early 1900s was on a par with work being done in Europe and the United States.

It seems obvious, then, that the imperial university system contributed significantly to the speed and relative harmony with which Japan industrialized. The expansion of the system, in fact, seems to owe much to popular appreciation of this fact. Kyoto Imperial University was founded partly in response to the demands of the Diet; Kyushu
Imperial University was created at the request of private industry; and Tohoku Imperial University was established entirely through private funding. Indeed, as the number of imperial university graduates steadily increased, more and more of them entered the private sector rather than accept government employment, a circumstance which encouraged private businessmen to donate funds to the prestigious, well-equipped national universities rather than to other schools.

At any rate, the success with which the university system achieved its prescribed goals and its immense contribution to the realization of fukoku kyohei seems largely due to the policies and support of the Meiji leaders. From the start they appreciated the need to develop higher education if modernization were to be achieved and sustained. Therefore, they isolated the system from any ideological tinkering and, while insisting that it serve the needs of the state, provided it with as much freedom and financial support as they thought they could possibly afford. Their emphasis was clearly on quality education, so much so that in the early years of the new regime, Meiji leaders were willing to disregard such criteria as wealth, status or even political ties -- all of which counted for a great deal elsewhere -- in their support for scholars trained in Western disciplines, thereby harnessing the talents of this vital intellectual
elite, regardless of their opinion of the Restoration, and effectively binding them to the state. And, as Byron Marshall has shown in his discussion of the 1905 Tomizu affair, the government keenly appreciated the scarcity value of the scholars produced by the university system, so that even when demands for academic freedom seemed to conflict with established national policy, political leaders were willing to make strategic concessions to the academicians. In fact, as Marshall demonstrates, however state-oriented the imperial universities may have been, they nurtured a group of scholars themselves well aware of their crucial role in Meiji society, and determined to secure for the university as large a degree of autonomy as possible.\textsuperscript{42} It seems to have been this combination of administrative vision and flexibility and academic initiative and independence that guaranteed and preserved the pivotal position of the imperial universities, especially Todai, in the process of modernization.
Notes - Chapter III


2For details, see Marshall, "Todai Academic," pp. 5-13.

3Schwantes, op. cit., p. 157.

4Unesco, Role of Education, p. 129.

5Nagai, op. cit., p. 55.


7Ibid., pp. 298-303.


9Computed from figures provided in Aso and Amano, op. cit., p. 10.


11Schwantes, op. cit., p. 157; Tsuge, op. cit., pp. 100-1.


14Ibid., p. 272.

15Quoted in Ibid., pp. 272.
16 Ibid., pp. 267-71


18 Quoted in Nagai, op. cit., p. 21.

19 In the Japanese context, and for the purposes of this study, "bureaucracy" refers not just to the mass of functionaries in the various ministries and agencies, but also to officials of the top rank, including cabinet members, prefectural governors and others. See Scalapino, op. cit., p. 149n.


21 Ibid., pp. 123-4.


23 In terms of efficiency, the Meiji leaders' approach was certainly correct. Robert K. Merton has aptly described the need for bureaucratic conformity as follows:

If the bureaucracy is to operate successfully, it must attain a high degree of reliability of behavior, an unusual degree of conformity with prescribed patterns of action. Hence, the fundamental importance of discipline which may be as highly developed in a religious or economic bureaucracy as in the army. Discipline can be effective only if the ideal patterns are buttressed by strong sentiments which entail devotion to one's duties, a keen sense of the limitation of one's authority and competence, and methodical performance of routine activities. The efficacy of social structure depends ultimately upon infusing group participants with appropriate attitudes and sentiments.


24 The term "social engineers" is Nagai Michio's. See Nagai, op. cit., p. 30; and Marshall, "Todai Academic," p. 17.


30 Hall, Mori Arinori, p. 411.


36 For details, see Tsuge, op. cit., pp. 106-19.

37 For details, see Mitsumoto Yuasa, "The Scientific Revolution and the Age of Technology," Cahiers d'histoire mondiale IX No. 2 (1965): 202-3; Tsuge, op. cit., p. 107; and Inazo Nitobe, et al., Western Influences in Modern


40 Ikuo Amano, "Higher Education in Modern Japan," (unpublished manuscript), p. 35.


42 For details, see Ibid., pp. 35-45. Marshall qualifies his remarks on academicians' independence by noting (p. 42) that

most frequently...the defense of the university asserted as its primary premise the instrumental value of academic freedom: that is, the argument that scholarship was an essential means to the goal of national progress both in the material and cultural spheres.
IV. Private and Technical Higher Education

By 1895, the Ministry of Education could justifiably claim that it had created a university in Japan well on its way to becoming the equal of first-rate institutions of higher learning in the West. Todai was producing highly qualified engineers, physicians, scientists and bureaucrats who in turn were beginning to make substantial contributions to Japan's growth. But in twenty years only 2,465 students completed their studies at the university and regardless of the excellence of their training, their numbers were increasingly less able to meet the demands of the industrializing society. Especially after 1895, Japan's economy enjoyed sustained growth; within ten years the number of private companies increased threefold; the number of factories with more than ten employees doubled, as did the length of railroad lines in the country. Ship tonnage expanded a full six hundred percent; most spectacularly, foreign trade by 1903 was thirty-five times what it had been a decade earlier. This economic growth, first in the light industries (especially textiles) and subsequently in the heavy industries, owed much to educational progress achieved since the Restoration, but created a demand for skilled managers and technicians which Todai could not possibly meet. The government, as noted before, reluctantly established additional imperial universities partly to satisfy these manpower requirements;
but it was already investing an exorbitant percentage of its education budget in the university system, and as yet lacked the necessary funds to expand much further. Its solution to the dilemma posed by economic growth was twofold: first, the government upgraded and increased the number of higher technical schools under its auspices; and second, it progressively increased the privileges granted to private schools until, in 1918, it granted many of them a status equal, at least in theory, to that of the imperial universities. This latter strategy in particular helped to meet popular demands for the expansion of higher education facilities. But it should be noted that, here as elsewhere, policy was dominated by the goal of fukoku kyohei; the government accorded recognition to private schools only when it had ascertained that they could also play a significant role in the achievement of prescribed goals.

Until the 1890s, initiative for the development of technical education was noticeably lacking in the Ministry of Education. Preoccupied with establishing a suitable elementary school system for the general population and with training an elite to guide the process of modernization, the government neglected this area of instruction, especially at the elementary and secondary level. The Gakusei did call for the establishment of apprentice schools and technical supplementary schools as adjuncts to the primary structure, and allowed for the introduction of
technical courses at the secondary level; but local communities, which viewed the system as an unwarranted financial imposition anyway, were hardly inclined to establish courses for which they perceived no useful purpose. Some vocational schools were set up at the secondary level, especially in agriculture since the introduction of new farming techniques was obviously beneficial. Otherwise, systematic technical training at this level languished, not only for lack of public enthusiasm but also because the light industries which dominated the early Meiji economy usually did not need workers with specialized skills, and those which did require skilled labor continued to rely on the traditional apprenticeship system.

Prior to Mori's reorganization of Todai in 1886, even higher level technical education lacked central direction, as training institutes were dispersed throughout the various ministries. Especially with the creation of faculties of engineering and agriculture (1890), the university gradually absorbed most of these institutes, thereby asserting the Ministry of Education's control in the area of technical education. But beyond Todai, such training under national auspices continued to suffer from a lack of initiative and guidance. Attempting to succeed where the Gakusei had failed, Mori in 1886 provided that "ordinary secondary schools may set up specialized courses in agriculture and commerce" and that "higher secondary
schools may open separate professional courses." Moris no more successful than his predecessors, partly for financial reasons but more importantly because the issue of whether to pursue industrial education within the structural confines of the regular education system had not yet been settled. Whatever Moris intentions, the structural alterations he made, including a drastic reduction in the number of middle schools and the creation of higher middle schools as preparatory institutes for the university, certainly seemed to preclude the introduction of technical courses into the regular framework. Indeed, attempts to transform the higher middle schools into college-level professional institutions failed due to financial problems and to resistance from Todai, which was anxious to preserve the schools as the training ground for its students.

In 1893, Inoue Kowashi became Minister of Education and began the process of institutionalizing technical education as a separate track within the educational system. More specifically than any earlier minister, Inoue appreciated the need for technical training if fukoku kyohei were to be realized. Inoue insisted that such training formed the "bulwark for maintaining the independence of the nation" along with the development of the army and navy, and observed that

The national strength and wealth of all countries in the world are growing larger year after year. This is simply because, in these countries,
scientific study is encouraged, new inventions are applied to practical purposes and the production is greatly increased by their insistent effort in improving technical schools. Japan has not become fully civilized yet and scientific knowledge and the ability of the nation has not improved. Education and labor have no influence upon each other. ... Under these circumstances, it is earnestly desired that for national prosperity we should establish the scientific and technical education which is most necessary for the industrial development of Japan.  

Inoue's tenure at the Ministry of Education was less than two years, but in that time he established the Institute for the Training of Technical School Teachers (to receive annual subsidies from the central government), issued regulations for lower-level vocational and technical schools and, in so doing, provided the momentum for subsequent development in these areas.  

Subsequent Ministers of Education progressively standardized education in this area, a process which culminated in a series of decrees issued in 1899 relating to vocational schools, technical secondary schools and commercial schools.  

Thereafter, technical education at the elementary and secondary level developed rapidly; by 1904 there were 730 technical elementary schools and 132 technical secondary schools. Most of these were established at the local level with a minimum of financial support from the central government. At the elementary level, the schools almost always emphasized agricultural training, understandable, given local preferences; and necessary, given the fact that the farmers contributed the bulk of the tax
tax revenues with which the government financed industrialization. Secondary schools placed more stress on technical and commercial courses, thereby producing lower-level commercial experts for business, and engineers for factories.¹²

At the same time, to satisfy demands for top-quality professionals the Ministry of Education encouraged the development of national semmongakko (higher technical schools). Prior to the 1890s, the government operated only two higher technical schools: Tokyo Commercial College, originally founded as a private institution by Mori Arinori and put under official auspices in 1884, and the Tokyo Higher Technical School, established by the government in 1881. The schools provided college-level training but were generally regarded as inferior to the imperial universities. But as industry expanded and career opportunities in the private sector increased, the number of applicants to these schools grew far in excess of their capacity. In 1901, for example, Tokyo Commercial College could admit only fifteen percent of those who applied.¹³ As a result, the government established additional semmongakko -- a far less expensive venture than founding new universities but equally as functional in terms of meeting manpower requirements. By 1903, the government set up two additional technical (i.e., engineering) schools in Kyoto and Osaka, two agriculture schools, and another commercial school. By 1906, nine
technical schools, four commercial schools and two agriculture schools were being operated by the Ministry of Education. Also under national auspices were five medical schools, and separate schools of music, fine arts and foreign languages.\textsuperscript{14} To provide these schools with a legal and institutional basis for expansion, the government in 1903 issued the Semmongakko Ordinance, thereby organizing these schools into a unified system and establishing controls on their quality by defining the requirements for designation as a higher technical school.\textsuperscript{15}

Of equal importance, the 1903 ordinance constituted a belated recognition of the role which private institutions had played in the development of higher education, and an attempt to incorporate them within the framework of the national system. Since the early 1880s, numerous private organizations and individuals had begun to set up institutions of higher education for those unable, for one reason or another, to advance through the narrowly elitist national university system. The schools specialized in one or two Western disciplines, hired mostly Japanese teachers, and offered curricula less time-consuming and less expensive than the imperial universities.\textsuperscript{16} In the absence of any official support, the schools had to rely exclusively on private donations, which were minimal at best, and tuition fees; most were therefore chronically underfinanced.\textsuperscript{17} Still, as of 1902,
forty-six of these schools considered themselves semmongakko, and the following year twenty-eight were accorded legal recognition as such.\textsuperscript{18} By and large, the quality of their education was considerably lower than that offered at the imperial universities; but a few of these institutions, notably Keio and Waseda, offered instruction whose quality compared favorably with the national schools, even if, given their lack of resources, the curricula were more restricted in scope. In many respects Keio and Waseda played a significant role in the development of Meiji Japan, and they certainly dominated private higher education.

Keio was founded in 1858 by Fukuzawa Yukichi for the expressed purpose of providing practical instruction in Western disciplines for young Japanese. From the beginning, the school was dominated by the utilitarian, individualistic philosophy of its founder. Scorning Confucian traditionalists as "rice-consuming dictionaries of no use to their country but only a hindrance to its economy,"\textsuperscript{19} Fukuzawa developed a curriculum emphasizing Western politics, law and, especially, economics. If he tended to view the importation of Western thought with considerably less skepticism than government leaders, Fukuzawa nonetheless accepted the goal of fukoku kyohei. Still, he continually stressed the development of the individual as the sine qua non for national growth -- a position Meiji leaders had clearly rejected by the 1880s.
For Fukuzawa an independent-minded, intellectually sophisticated citizenry was the only proper basis for a modern state:

Those who lack an independent spirit cannot care deeply about their country.... If the entire population is dependent, then there will be no one to take on its care; it is like a parade of the blind without a guide.... In facing foreign countries, for our own protection, we must develop a free and independent spirit throughout the entire country. Without regard for status, the entire populace must take on themselves the cares of the nation.20

Fukuzawa stubbornly refused to abandon this liberal approach even after the failure of the Gakusei and the Kyoikurei discredited it in the opinion of many others, and Meiji leaders did not regard his position favorably. In 1880, his attempts to secure a government loan for his debt-ridden institution were frustrated by Ito, who by this time saw no use in supporting schools which did not conform to the orthodox approach to education.21 Yet Fukuzawa cautiously eschewed political involvement; even in the tumultuous days of 1868, he avoided taking sides and simply continued to operate his school, assuring his students that as long as Keio continued the pursuit of knowledge, scholarship in Japan would survive regardless of political developments.22 Determined to preserve Keio's autonomy whatever its financial situation, Fukuzawa maintained the school's apolitical posture, and encouraged his students to enter business or the teaching profession rather than government service. Most Keio
students did, in fact, eventually enter these encouraged fields, and the school's business orientation was strengthened by much-needed financial support from the Mitsubishi company. But Fukuzawa's economic and political views meant that he enjoyed considerable influence and prestige in liberal circles, despite his studious abstention from overt political activity. Most Keio students, whatever their career, were similarly inclined, and as a result Keio and Fukuzawa continued to remain suspect in the eyes of Meiji leaders.

In its early years, Waseda encountered considerably more direct hostility from official circles. The school itself was the by-product of political discord. Ideological disputes over the nature of the proposed Meiji constitution had resulted in a conservative triumph, and Okuma Shigenobu and other liberals were expelled from the government in 1881. The vanquished Okuma, now a popular hero, responded in 1882 by establishing Waseda's predecessor, the Tokyo Semmongakko. According to its founder, the school was directed to upholding the independence of learning, promoting the practical and scientific application of knowledge, and investing young Japanese with the essentials of good citizenship and intelligent leadership. Okuma was as concerned as Fukuzawa with the cultivation of individual talents as the precondition for a healthy state, and therefore stressed freedom of inquiry and the
independent pursuit of learning. In Okuma's case, "independence" meant not only freedom from government interference, but also from excessive foreign influence. Thus, while only Western studies were pursued at Okuma's school, the courses were taught entirely in Japanese, and few foreigners were employed. Ironically, Okuma, having fallen from grace because of his Western liberal predilections, created the first institution of higher learning to assert its independence of Westerners as well as of the government.²⁷

However noble Okuma's rhetoric and sentiments, he could not disguise the fact that his school was created as a basis for political opposition to established policy. His role in the creation of the Kaishinto (Constitutional Progressive Party) in 1882 certainly made this clear. The curriculum at the Tokyo Semmongakko consisted of courses in politics, economics and law, and most early graduates went into politics or journalism -- precisely those areas which would engender the greatest suspicion from the government.²⁸ R. P. Dore has noted that "a Waseda education, then journalism, then politics... was a common career pattern for party politicians."²⁹ Under these circumstances, the school quite naturally encountered the autocratic government's hostility. The government, in fact, enlisted spies among the school's students³⁰ and "saw to it that none of those upon whom its influence was supposed to bear should send their sons to the institution."³¹ On
the school's twentieth anniversary, when its name was
officially changed to Waseda, Okuma used the occasion to
complain that

the government regarded this school as a
training center for conspirators and constantly
sent its agents to shadow us.... Large numbers
of agents infiltrated the campus, and,
disregarding the sanctity of classroom
and dormitory, they waited for an opportunity
to create a disturbance and to plot the
destruction of the school from within.32

Ultimately, professors and administrators at Waseda
decided that close association with Okuma was doing more
harm than good; euphemistically explaining that the best
way to honor him would be to place the school on a self-
supporting basis, they gradually eased Okuma out of his
position of power until, in time, his role was purely
honorary.33

Waseda and Keio took the brunt of political antagonism
in these early years; only one other institution, the School
of English Law (later Chuo University) directly opposed
established policy.34 Yet it lacked the prestige and
notoriety of Waseda and Keio and so never encountered
substantial hostility from the government. In general,
the government ignored most private schools, and did not
appreciate their potential utility until after 1886. Upon
the establishment of the civil service recruitment system,
the government offered certain schools exemptions from
lower-level examinations35 as well as the privilege of
postponing military service for their students. In so
doing, the government was trying to staff the bottom ranks of its civil service with suitably qualified men, while reserving upper-level positions for imperial university graduates. In addition, privileges were granted only if the schools met standards prescribed by the Ministry of Education. Control, in other words, accompanied concession.

Keio and Waseda, as the only multi-faculty private schools, clearly led the field among their competitors; but virtually all suffered from a number of basic weaknesses. The consolidation of the imperial university system put the standards of national institutions far beyond the reach of most private schools. All were dependent almost exclusively on student fees and private donations, and none could afford to set up and maintain science faculties. To reduce expenditures, many schools resorted to an enlargement of courses in law and the humanities, and a corresponding decline in quality; few were able to employ any full-time instructors. Still, some of the schools were able by the turn of the century to upgrade their standards and restructure their curricula in accordance with the pattern set by the imperial universities. Keio took the lead in 1889 with the creation of a "university division", but did so quietly without demanding any change in legal status. In 1892, Okuma expanded Waseda by creating a new preparatory course (designed as a less
demanding alternative to the official higher schools) and a university division, and actively sought official recognition as a university on a par with the national schools. Other private institutions followed suit, although the new "university divisions" generally accounted for a small percentage of their enrollment, and varied widely in quality. The Semmongakko Ordinance of 1903 amounted to official recognition of these qualitative improvements, but also represented an attempt at quality control since strict standards had to be maintained if schools wished to retain their newly- accorded status. In addition, the government compromised with those schools demanding university status by allowing those with preparatory courses to use the title, but admitting no legal advantages or privileges such as accrued to the imperial universities. Keio, Waseda and six other schools subsequently adopted the university designation.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, then, Japan's system of higher education consisted of two sectors, national and private, each of which in turn included universities and higher technical schools. In terms of Japan's needs as a newly industrialized state, the system was highly functional; the national sector produced professional and bureaucratic elites at the university level and trained practical technical experts at the semmongakko level; the private sector produced white
collar workers and business managers in the universities and met popular demands for general higher education in the semmongakko. Official recognition of technical and private educational institutions was granted largely because Meiji leaders, by 1900, appreciated the need for such schools as well as their potential contribution to national goals. The system was restructured without in any way sacrificing the quality or the domination of the imperial universities -- probably an essential prerequisite in the eyes of the government.

In addition, recognition was granted to private schools because they had evolved along lines largely complementary to official preferences. They fulfilled the manpower demands of an industrial society, demands national institutions could not meet except by undertaking a prohibitively expensive expansion of facilities. Private schools, especially after they received official status, functioned as alternative routes to success for those unable to enter the higher echelons of the national school system. Moreover, since many of these schools increasingly relied on Todai professors as part-time lecturers, the quality of their curricula was, by the time the government accorded them recognition, not disproportionately lower than that of the imperial universities. By granting legal and titular status to private schools -- a process culminating in the University Ordinance of 1918, which gave qualified private schools
de jure recognition as universities -- the government satisfied their aspirations and achieved a certain amount of control over them, without incurring any financial obligation whatsoever.

Governmental recognition of these schools also came at a time when, politically as well as economically, it was no longer functional to treat them with hostility or indifference. Keio and Waseda in their early years very probably helped to diffuse the highly-charged political atmosphere by providing institutionalized outlets for the expression of political sentiments at variance with those espoused by the oligarchic government. Especially before 1890, these schools offered about the only opportunity for those in disagreement with the government to air their views before appreciative audiences. In light of its manifest hostility, the government does not seem to have recognized the utility of these schools. But in any case, by 1900 much of the sting had gone out of the political debate as oligarchs and political parties set about the more mundane task of reaching some sort of modus vivendi with each other. Both sides were inclined to approach the other with some magnanimity now. Ito Hirobumi, of all people, typified this new approach when in 1902 he praised Okuma's management of Waseda, declaring that
from the beginning Count Okuma knew the difference between politics and education. It can be clearly seen that he put the work of school education outside politics, and resolutely refrained from misusing an educational institute as a tool for the aggrandizement of political party influence.42

Ito's new-found beneficence expressed itself financially as well; when Waseda solicited funds in 1903 to help establish a faculty of engineering, Ito contributed, as did the imperial family, Prince Saionji, and others in the government.43 This new attitude constituted less a strategic about-face than a realistic adjustment to changing political and economic circumstances. Priorities were dominated, as always, by fukoku kyohei, and the government adjusted its policies accordingly.
Notes – Chapter IV

3Aso and Amano, op. cit., pp. 29-30.
4Unesco, Role of Education, p. 111.
5Quoted in Ibid., p. 142.
7Quoted in Aso and Amano, op. cit., p. 24.
8Quoted in Pittau, Political Thought, pp. 277-8.


11Sharp, op. cit., p. 218.


16Amano, op. cit., p. 7.
17Ibid., p. 8.
18Ibid., p. 8.
19Quoted in Sansom, op. cit., p. 454.
23Fraser, op. cit., p. 227.
24Scalapino, op. cit., p. 73n.
27Murthy, op. cit., pp. 288-9; Waseda University, op. cit., pp. 1-2. Translated Western materials were still relatively limited at this point, and Okuma therefore had to add an English department, staffed by foreign instructors, in 1888. Otherwise, few foreigners were employed. See also Schwantes, op. cit., p. 166.
28Yanaga, op. cit., p. 23.
30Ibid., p. 182.
31Waseda University, op. cit., p. 3.
33 Waseda University, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

34 Dore, "Education: Japan," p. 182.

35 Spaulding, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

36 Several attempts were made to establish science departments. Keio set up a faculty of medicine in 1873, but shut it down three years later for lack of funds. Waseda established a science faculty in 1882 but it, too, was forced to close for financial reasons. See Nakayama, "The Role Played by Universities," pp. 346-7.


40 Amano, *op. cit.*, p. 36.


43 Waseda University, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
Conclusion

The Meiji era drew to a close with the death of the emperor in July, 1912. By this time, most of the leaders who had guided Japan in the critical years since 1868 had either died or retired from power. Largely due to their leadership, **fukoku kyohei** had been achieved. Japan was now one of the major industrial nations, and could boast as well of two unprecedented military victories over China and Russia. The West was no longer a threat; in fact, by the end of the decade, it was willing to accord Japan recognition as one of the great powers. Finally, Japan had emerged unquestionably as the dominant power in East Asia, a role traditionally maintained by China.

The educational machinery developed in the Meiji era bears a major responsibility for these achievements, as it was remarkably successful in carrying out its appointed tasks. It produced a literacy rate on a par with the most advanced nations of the West, a loyal citizenry eager for knowledge with which to prosper, innovative businessmen able to compete in the world market, and an intellectual elite which efficiently administered the state and made increasing contributions to world science and literature. The achievement is all the more remarkable in light of the fact that the central government in this period spent less on education than most Western nations.¹ Success was due not to the absolute
amount of expenditures for education, but to their strategic allocation. Financially and otherwise, the national government consistently directed the bulk of its support to the imperial universities. Ultimately, then, it was these schools, especially Todai, which made the most substantial contribution to Japan's modernization. If, as suggested before, modernization involves the use of rational means in the pursuit of specific rational ends, Todai's role was particularly crucial since, prior to 1900, it functioned as the center of diffusion for the Western disciplines with which the official goal, fukoku kyohei, was to be realized. As we have seen, Western studies and methodology crept into Japan long before 1868 and in fact provided the philosophical basis for the modernization to which Japan committed herself. It was at Todai and its predecessor institutions that these studies were first pursued systematically, to the exclusion of traditional scholarship. Todai not only produced scientists, engineers and bureaucrats who administered Japan's transformation; its academic elite articulated the new Western values to the public at large and provided a justification for the abandonment of so much tradition and the adoption of foreign models.

Todai's dominance continued well beyond the Meiji period but, as we have seen, higher educational facilities were progressively expanded in response to popular demand and economic necessity. The result was still a rather
narrow structure, but one with a certain degree of flexibility. The imperial universities were the capstone of a highly elitist system; but it was increasingly an elite of talent, not wealth. It was possible for ambitious and intelligent youths to pursue education beyond the primary level and finally advance, if not to the imperial universities, then to other quality institutions of higher learning. To be sure, the pursuit of higher education involved a considerable financial outlay which most could not afford, but still the emphasis was on talent and ability as the prerequisites for advancement up the educational ladder. The system thereby allowed for some social mobility; at the same time, since status was determined according to one's educational experience, it reinforced the hierarchical social structure and helped produce a significant degree of harmony in an era dominated by change.

One reason for education's stabilizing effect, aside from the degree of mobility it allowed, was that it did tend to reinforce certain traditional values. As has been noted, the Meiji leaders were well aware of the utility of the traditional emphasis on loyalty and obedience, and ultimately consented to their inculcation at the lower levels of the school system. This approach undoubtedly helped produce patriotic citizens, but did not result in the kind of mindless uniformity some would attribute to
it. Certainly it had little effect on the quality and content of higher education. In fact it was the state's own imperial universities which in time became the centers for resistance to official policies; Todai, for example played an important role in the development of Marxism in Japan. Education was directed to the needs of the state and traditional values were used to produce the proper nationalist sentiment. But it was not therefore narrow and sterile. Whatever direction this type of approach took in the years prior to World War II, it should be remembered that Meiji leaders stressed these values only because they appeared to facilitate the changes they had undertaken -- changes designed to make Japan a modern, Western-style nation.

In any case, the achievements of the educational system suggest that, for Japan, tradition and modernization need not be viewed as uncompromisingly antagonistic. Japan adopted wholesale the Western science and technology which she adjudged essential to the realization of fukoku kyohei, and did so with alacrity. But by retaining at least some traditional values, she was able to digest these changes with a relatively high degree of equilibrium, and retain her identity. In this, as in other respects, Japan was unique among the nations outside the West. Part of Japan's singular success can be attributed to certain fortuitous circumstances; among them, the remarkable fact that the
decay of the traditional order actually hastened the importation of knowledge from the West, so that by 1868 the country already had a running start in modernization; and the fact that the Western nations, preoccupied elsewhere, did not interfere in Japan as they had done, or would later do, in less fortunate societies, so that she was relatively free to modernize on her own terms. Most important, however, is the fact that Japan had at this time a citizenry eager to learn and advance, an intelligentsia willing and able to absorb Western knowledge and apply it to their society, and a political leadership of education's role in modernization. The result was a milieu which allowed for the introduction and rapid assimilation of Western knowledge and techniques, and Japan was thereby able to modernize quickly and efficiently.
Notes - Conclusion

1Amano, op. cit., p. 32.
Bibliography


