

PART ONE

THE GENEAOLOGY
OF *MIYAKO*

Chapter 1

REVERSE ABSENCE VIEWPOINT

1. The Dilemma of Heterogeneity

Firstly, I would like to consider the methodological issues at stake in developing a general theory from interpretations grounded in the analysis of a localized subject, in this case Japan. Social scientific analysis in Japan inevitably falls into what may be called the “dilemma of heterogeneity.” This dilemma is encountered whenever attempts are made to analyze Japan strictly from within the intellectual environment that has defined Japanese social science research since the Meiji period.

The social sciences of course originated in Europe as a means of understanding the social and historical changes occurring as a result of modernity, itself a concept with a strongly European flavor. Thus when analytical approaches developed within this specific context are simply applied to Japan without allowing for local qualities, a slippage naturally occurs between theory and observable reality. If we choose to stand by the established theories, Japan will in many instances be viewed as an exceptional case. Conversely, if we distance ourselves from this social scientific tradition and apply theories meant exclusively for interpreting Japanese society, those theories will have no interpretive scope outside of Japan. Thus our dilemma is that irrespective of whether we choose to rely on orthodox social scientific theories having pretensions of universality while incorporating the social and historical characteristics

of the West, or whether we rely on theories grounded in the experience of Japan, both approaches result in interpretations of Japan which stress heterogeneity

Chalmers Johnson, an American political scientist, Japan specialist, and author of *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (Stanford University Press, 1982), points out that Western economic theories, whether neoclassical, Keynesian, or Marxian, are unable to successfully explain Japan's economic achievements. He notes that rather than attributing this failure to problems with the economic theories, the leaders in these fields prefer to declare Japan an exception, using "cultural uniqueness" as a means of avoiding the issue, or else they manipulate the data relating to Japan to conform to the theories.¹

Johnson's analysis is instructive. While existing Western economic theories should logically be modified when they cannot adequately explain Japan's economic performance, what in fact happens is that the data is manipulated, or emphasis is placed on Japan being an anomaly or marginal case that cannot be properly accommodated within the theories. Thus instead of enhancing the universality of the theories by subsuming actual case studies, Japan's experience is excluded in order to protect a presupposed universality.

The reason given for being unable to rationally explain Japan's economic performance within these theoretical frameworks is the anomalous behavior and values of the Japanese. In other words, by stressing the heterogeneity or "uniqueness" of Japanese culture, the crisis surrounding the universal applicability of the theories can be weathered. Or as has often been the case in Japanese social scientific analysis, social phenomena that are not present in the West have tended to be collectively explained in terms of Japan's backwardness or as remnants of

1. Johnson 1989, p. 55.

its feudal system.² Attempts are thus made to regulate the slippage between theory and reality by emphasizing that these social phenomena observable uniquely in Japan have survived in a particular form from ancient times.

Of course a theory derived through a one-sided emphasis of reality will, by its very nature, inevitably produce discrepancies in the analysis of any society. Nakane Chie 中根千枝 points out that while discrepancies between theoretical models and reality will naturally be evident in the case of both the West and Japan, it is the nature of these discrepancies that is important. In other words, the quality of a discrepancy will differ depending on whether it appears in an area removed from the core of a problem, or whether it appears in a critical area.³

In order to analyze Japan directly under an independent theoretical framework instead of relying on existing theories produced in the West, the social and historical particularities of Japan must be incorporated into the core of the theory. To do otherwise will likely result in the slippage between theory and reality occurring in a critical area rather than at the margins. While a slippage occurring at the margins allows for analysis with only certain qualifications to the theory, when the slippage occurs in a critical area, extensive modifications of the theory are likely to be required because of the clear limitations to the theory's applicability.

However, what we have actually been presented with are token explanations based on the argument that certain trends and attributes appearing as theoretical imperatives are lacking in the case of Japan. For example, if we assume a purely theoretical model—here I am thinking of civil society, individualism, political democracy, and the like—abstracted

2. Nakane 1967.

3. Nakane 1967, p.13.

from the historical experiences of France and Britain and premised on the complete disappearance of feudalism, there will naturally be little discrepancy with the reality of the West. Conversely, however, with a country such as Japan, whose social and historical particularities were not absorbed during the theory-building stage, discrepancies will occur in an area critical to the theory. The token concepts used to argue that contemporary Japanese society derives from feudalism have been devised to account for such discrepancies.

In any country there remain signs of previous institutions. No society experiences clear-cut social change and complete ruptures with the past. Despite this, Japan alone is viewed theoretically as showing enduring signs of feudalism for the simple reason that its social idiosyncrasies have not been absorbed into the core of the theory. The absence of trends and attributes assumed by an existing theory when crucial areas cannot be adequately explained by the theory is transformed into an explanatory principle that exemplifies the country in question. Here, the theory's inability to elucidate becomes an elucidation in itself.

During the long, hard struggle experienced by Japan over the last century to introduce various Western models, the reform of reality was inseparably intertwined with its analysis, and the shortcomings of the absence viewpoint methodology did not require serious consideration. The idea was to reform reality by introducing from the West what was lacking in Japan, and this perception in itself was often thought to constitute an analysis of reality. However, the fact is that as long as Japan fails to have its own social sciences, the social and historical idiosyncrasies of Japan will remain outside the core of the theories, and the social scientific elucidation of Japan will remain unrealized.

2. Limitations of Japanese Cultural Theory

The high growth of the postwar Japanese economy had a major impact on social scientific research in Japan, one of the products of this period

being *Nihon bunka ron*, or Japanese Cultural Theory. I tend to attribute the emergence of Japanese Cultural Theory to the challenge for Japan to develop its own theories in the social and human sciences, although to what extent the researchers themselves were motivated by this objective, I cannot say. Many of the “studies” referred to under this heading are merely journalistic collections of topical subject matter, and the “mass consumer” aspect of Japanese Cultural Theory criticized by Harumi Befu cannot be denied.⁴

Aoki Tamotsu's 青木保 claim that Japanese Cultural Theory emerged from Japan's pursuit of “culture and identity,” its self-confidence boosted by the success of the high economic growth, is almost certainly true.⁵ Certainly, Japanese Cultural Theory since the latter half of the 1960s has developed within a kind of nationalistic sentiment that seeks to portray Japan in a positive light. However, what is important at this juncture is not a criticism or analysis of this ideology. This sort of nationalistic motivation was necessary as a driving force to overcome the absence viewpoint and apply Japanese Cultural Theory to an analysis of Japanese “reality,” and arose from a natural desire.

Hereafter I will limit my arguments to methodological issues raised by studies in the field of Japanese Cultural Theory. I hope thus to find a means of overcoming the dilemma of heterogeneity that was raised at the beginning of this chapter. The orthodox approach of the Japanese social sciences, which involves the broad acceptance of the concept of Western social sciences and modifications within this framework to allow for analysis of the situation in Japan, was somewhat persuasive when the Japanese themselves had no confidence in Japanese society. As mentioned above, this was because the absence—referred to by Aoki as “negative peculiarity”—itself had practical and intellectual value.

4. Befu 1987.

5. Aoki 1990.

However, from the latter half of the 1960s, it became impossible to adequately explain the contemporary social climate according to this absence viewpoint, as certain sections of Japanese society awoke to the "positive peculiarity" of Japanese culture. Once seen in a fundamentally positive light, an understanding of Japan in terms of absences became both practically and intellectually untenable. How was it that a country as backward as Japan that clung to an ancient social constitution could achieve such remarkable and steady economic growth? While the absence viewpoint may have provided pseudo explanations for stagnation and social eccentricities, it was incapable of accounting for economic success.

Thus the affirmative Japanese Cultural Theory of the latter half of the 1960s had to develop theories that reflected the reality of contemporary Japan, rather than working within a borrowed theoretical framework, if it was to view Japan in a positive light. In *Tateshakai no ningen kankei* タテ社会の人間関係 (Human Relations in Vertical Societies), one of the representative works of the period that does not rely on Western theoretical borrowings, Nakane adopts a social anthropological approach in which she abstracts and theorizes principles considered fundamental to a target society, by interpreting and synthesizing data gathered through fieldwork based on a specific methodology.

Nakane's theorizing of vertical societies, conceived as a comparison of the societies of Japan and India, differs greatly from the existing social science tradition in that, methodologically, she abstracts directly from Japanese society. This I consider an example of quality Japanese Cultural Theory. However, Japanese Cultural Theory that limits itself to an interpretation of Japanese culture renders itself incapable of emerging from the dilemma of heterogeneity. Put another way, my dissatisfaction with Japanese Cultural Theory lies in its applicability being limited to the local culture. A theory truly worthy of being referred to as such is surely one that fully describes Japanese culture without confining itself

solely to Japan.

Theory written from the latter half of the 1960s, however, did not fall into this category. The main reason for this was the very existence of Japanese Cultural Theory, which acted to negate the “negative peculiarity” arising from the absence viewpoint. In other words, aspects of the Japanese Cultural Theory of this period that should have been open to criticism were instead evaluated in a positive light. This was revealed in the excessive stress placed on Japan’s uniqueness. Herein lies the shortcoming of Japanese Cultural Theory.

Analysis of Japan must have Japan as its basis. The reality of Japan can only be explained with reference to Japanese traits. If the absence viewpoint arose from the excessive universalization of Western theory, then we must similarly conclude that Japanese Cultural Theory is characterized by an excessive particularization of theory. Moreover, if “absence” was the definitive quality of theories that stressed the negative peculiarity of Japan, then “manifestation” is the definitive quality of Japanese Cultural Theory with its focus on Japan’s positive peculiarity. In other words Japan’s various strengths, as typified by its economic success, are taken as manifestations of attributes inherent in the Japanese.

Are the attributes of the Japanese really characteristic of Japan alone? If cultural attributes possessed by the Japanese can be identified in other countries, and moreover, in countries in which there are significant differences in terms of political, economic, and class structure, how do we explain this? What, after all, is implied by the term “culture” in Japanese Cultural Theory? I wish to approach these issues from two angles; firstly in terms of the international isolation in which Japan finds itself, and secondly in terms of when and under which procedures the concept of culture should be introduced into theoretical analysis of Japanese society.

In relation to the first issue, the fact that Western social science theories have up until now been able to claim universality is because of

the theories having been constructed from the experiences of a variety of Western countries rather than any one country. In contrast, Japan has not been able to identify other highly industrialized societies that have common social, historical, and cultural attributes. If a theory is constructed with Japan at its center, and an attempt is made to make the theory applicable beyond Japan, it is highly probable that any discrepancy that arises when the theory is applied outside of Japan will occur not at the periphery, but in a critical area. Japanese Cultural Theory, for me, symbolized Japan's international isolation. The tendency of the Japanese themselves to stress Japan's "positive peculiarity" and thereby further deepen the isolation is a dangerous predicament in which to find oneself.

There is, however, no alternative to making Japan one's starting point if one is to conduct a thorough theoretical analysis of Japan. The propositions concerning Japan's uniqueness will then need reexamining from a general outlook if one is to create a theory that fully describes Japan without confining itself to Japan. In other words, the problem comes down to whether phenomena observable in Japan are observable only in Japan. I believe that the various propositions advanced by Japanese Cultural Theory require more careful examination as to whether or not they are valid only in regard to Japan. If there is a country outside of Japan whose culture has much in common with Japanese culture, then it should be possible to theorize these common aspects as representing, not the uniqueness of Japanese culture, but one pattern of culture, human relations, and social order that transcends, to a certain extent, a specific locale, in this case Japan.

The change in the significance of Hamaguchi Eshun's contextualism is a valuable attempt to overcome Japanese Cultural Theory by one of its main proponents. Hamaguchi's contextual model was an empirical thesis that concerned the behavior patterns and relational outlook of the Japanese, and had as its central attribute a determination of the essences of interdependence, mutual trust, and

interpersonal relations. In short, it was a form of Japanese Cultural Theory.⁶ However, Hamaguchi's recent work shifts this contextual model to a meta-theoretical level, referred to as "methodological relatum-ism."⁷

There are two possible ways of preventing Japanese Cultural Theory from confining itself to an analysis of Japanese culture. Firstly, as an empirical thesis, one could confirm whether Japanese Cultural Theory does in fact hold true only for Japan. In relation to the contextual model, this would involve verifying whether or not Japanese Cultural Theory is effective, for example, in analyzing Chinese culture. Or one could generalize theories developed in the Japanese context to make them effective in analyzing other cultures, through devising modifications and subtypes of the contextual model.

Alternatively, one could perfect a meta-theory centered on interpersonal relations as a means of analyzing cultures. More precisely, this might involve raising a contextualist theoretical structure that is not premised on individual or group realism to the level of a methodology having universal application. Hamaguchi's current position clearly involves a shift in weight to establishing contextualism as a meta-theory.

These two positions are of course closely related. The applicable scope of contextualist theoretical structures will obviously be increased if the existence of contextualist cultures other than Japan can be demonstrated. Conversely, more contextualist societies and cultures will surely be discovered if methodological relatum-ism becomes established for use in conducting research and analysis on a large number of countries.

In contrast to Hamaguchi, I believe that focusing on the first

6. Hamaguchi 1988.

7. Hamaguchi 1990.

approach will prove more productive in emerging from the dilemma of heterogeneity. If the contextual model is taken as one's starting point, surely it would be more productive to concentrate on establishing the existence of contextualism in foreign cultures, examining its scope and intensity, and determining what subordinate analytical concepts can be abstracted, and then to pursue the arguments surrounding contextualism as a meta-theory once a certain amount of this empirical research has accrued. Hamaguchi himself was originally motivated by the idea of the "Oriental" as conforming to the contextual model (relation-centered) as opposed to the Western individual model (ego-centered), and thus his work was not initially a part of Japanese Cultural Theory.⁸

In *Tōnan Ajia no soshiki genri* 東南アジアの組織原理 (The Organizational Principles of Southeast Asia), Maeda (Tachimoto) Narifumi 前田(立本)成文 analyzes the organizational principles of Southeast Asia from an interpersonal viewpoint similar to Hamaguchi's contextual model. Maeda, a family sociologist with many years experience conducting fieldwork in Southeast Asia,⁹ portrays the organizational principles of Southeast Asia as involving an intensity of contextualism that makes Japanese society pale in comparison. Maeda's analysis of the social organization of Southeast Asian society raises the question of the extent to which the contextual model advanced by Hamaguchi is actually true of Japan. From here it is only a short step to positing that interpersonal contextualism in its pure form is paradoxically observable more in other cultures than in Japanese culture.

8. Hamaguchi 1988. It surprised me given his capacity for precise thinking that Hamaguchi would choose to divide the world up in such a broad and antiquated way. I was also surprised by his casual use of concepts of Western origin such as "the Orient," as he has been one of the strongest advocates for breaking out of "the Westerner's analytical framework."

9. Maeda 1989, p. 34.

3. A Place for Culture

Our one remaining problem relates to the positioning of culture. The focus of Japanese Cultural Theory is, whether the concept of culture is applied directly or not, on foundational principles, interpersonal relations, value systems and the like presumed to be common among Japanese. Nakane notes that, "These fundamental principles (in social anthropology) are always derived on the basis of relations between individuals or relations between groups formed by individuals ... Of the various elements constituting societies (or cultures), these relations are the most resistant to change."¹⁰

While Japanese Cultural Theory sought primarily to uncover these elements most resistant to change lying in the deepest strata of society and culture, consideration should then have been given to the descriptive power of what was uncovered in relation to reality. One of my regrets is that Japanese Cultural Theory neglected the important issue of when and under which procedures to introduce the concept of culture into theoretical analysis. As a result, everything related to Japan is explained by way of culture to an excessive extent.

Aside from the issue of whether to use culture, value systems, or basic structures as the basis of one's research, the fact remains that too much of Japanese reality is explained by referring directly to fundamental tendencies that Japanese are assumed to have. While advocating that we break away from "individual" reductionism, Hamaguchi himself falls into "contextual" reductionism in his analysis of Japan. Reality is, however, a mosaic of institutions, this being true of not only Japan but a majority of countries. Rather than being directed primarily from the depths of culture, people's actual behavior is to a large

10. Nakane 1967.

extent constrained by institutions that are otherwise peripheral to the actions of the individual. Also, individuals within an institutional framework often make concrete choices regarding behavior based on objective rational decision-making.

While culture is certainly one of the influential elements in explaining behavior patterns, the starting point for analyzing reality must be the rational behavior of individuals grounded in institutions and institutional frameworks, rather than culture. The greatest defect of Japanese Cultural Theory is to effect an explanation in terms of culture as the starting point of any analysis of Japan. When culture is employed as an explanatory concept from the beginning, the whole of Japanese reality becomes explainable only in terms of culture, and as a result the heterogeneity of Japan is made all the more prominent. Our task now is surely to consider ways of qualifying the applicable scope of such distinguished examples of Japanese Cultural Theory as Nakane's work on vertical societies, Hamaguchi's contextualism, and the theorizing of the anatomy of dependence by Doi Takeo 土居健郎.

So-called localized theory pertaining to Japan is of course not limited to the field of Japanese Cultural Theory. A theory whose emphasis is more on institutional level analysis as opposed to cultural theory, which focuses on basic behavioral characteristics such as values and human relations, is certainly conceivable. Institutions are, in comparison to culture, more subject to change, and are consequently an important variable in a variety of social phenomena.¹¹ While societies comprising a mosaic of institutions may be heterogeneous at a cultural value level, homogeneous aspects may be coverable at an institutional level or in terms of objective rational behavior taking place within institutions. As mentioned above, we should be seeking ways to allow Japanese Cultural Theory, which arose from the negation of the negative

11. Johnson 1989, p. 61.

peculiarity underlying the absence viewpoint, to mature as a social and human science that transcends the analysis of localized subject matter.

Finally, in order to overcome the limitations of Japanese Cultural Theory and escape the dilemma of heterogeneity that contemporary Japan finds itself in, I propose, as a link in the efforts to descry in other societies phenomena similar to those in Japan, a reverse absence viewpoint that inverts the absence viewpoint hitherto informing Japan's intellectual tradition. In opposition to the absence viewpoint, which as discussed above assumes that what is in foreign countries does not exist in Japan, the reverse absence viewpoint is a method of observing foreign countries on the premise that what is in Japan should also exist outside of Japan. The idea that Japan lacks what other countries have, and is therefore unique, was countered in Japanese Cultural Theory with the idea that distinctly Japanese, and therefore unique, principles exist in Japan. The reverse absence viewpoint that I propose aims to place certain qualifications on this "uniqueness" aspect common to both the absence viewpoint and Japanese Cultural Theory.¹²

A blunder often committed by critics of Japanese Cultural Theory is to place far too much emphasis on the homogeneity of the world, arguing that since the world is constituted by mankind it must be homogenous. What is truly needed is to devise an analytical framework that gives insight into both the similarities and differences in culture and social structure between respective countries. The challenge for those who continue to make Japan the focus of their research, be they Japanese or otherwise, should be to explore the possibility of social and human sciences originating in Japan that place the experience of Japan at the core of their theory without at the same time limiting the scope of their

12. The problem of whether or not there are "Tokyo Universities" in other countries of the world is a concrete application of the reverse absence viewpoint. See Sonoda 1999, pp. 9-33.

applicability to Japan.

The purpose of the reverse absence viewpoint is not to make forced interpretations of foreign countries using theories for interpreting Japan. Rather, it is a heuristic device for observing foreign countries, and offers a cogitative framework for "rediscovering" Japan and developing new hypotheses. The reverse absence viewpoint is, moreover, a means of recognizing the characteristics of systems and behavior patterns that are either based in goal-orientated rationality or conditioned within institutional frameworks, as distinct from behavior patterns originating in cultural values. The premises and steps involved in the reverse absence viewpoint are outlined below.

Firstly, we assume that all Japanese behavior and institutions are goal-orientated and rational, and secondly, that phenomena existing in Japan have universality and should therefore be observable in foreign countries. Next, we analyze a country outside of Japan on the basis of these assumptions, using a theoretical framework for understanding Japanese society. Then, if phenomena similar to those in Japan cannot be located in the target country, we look into the particular conditions of the country that lacks these phenomena.

At this stage we return again to the starting point and reexamine the premise that behavior patterns and institutions observable in Japan are goal-orientated and rational. This involves a cultural theoretical interpretation in which we hypothesize that behavior patterns and institutions observable in Japan cannot be explained in terms of rationality, and develop expositions and hypotheses from the standpoint of culture. Finally, we conduct a subjective and careful examination of the length of time that these phenomena we now attribute to Japanese culture have endured, and whether their influence is mainly at the level of individual psychology and behavior or more deeply implicated in the structural qualities of institutions.

This brings us to the end of a somewhat long methodological

exposition. Based on the reverse absence viewpoint, my aim is to break down the phenomena and concepts viewed as typically "Japanese" into their various elements, and explicate their properties through combining a number of these elements. In this monograph I specifically focus on the concept of *miyako*, breaking it down into its composite elements, and explicating the nexus between these elements and the changes that have occurred in dominant elements over time. Here, I want to stress that these elements should preferably have a high degree of abstraction.

Since the reverse absence viewpoint has been systematically and deliberately formulated as a comparative studies methodology grounded in the experiences of Japan, the properties of phenomena derived from Japan should preferably be expressed as a combination of a number of elements. The reason for this being that, for the purposes of comparison, if the degree of abstraction is too low, differences in quality between elements may be too prominent, and obscure any commonality with other countries. The elements are, after all, merely yardsticks to facilitate a comparison with countries outside of Japan.

Chapter 2

THE TRANSITION OF *MIYAKO*

1. Situating the Problem

I would like to begin with a number of interesting passages from a book by the English linguist Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850-1935). A pioneer Japanologist who spent over thirty years in Japan from 1873 to 1911, Chamberlain undertook research on Japanese classics, published an English translation of the *Kojiki* 古事記 (Record of Ancient Matters), and, as the first Professor of Japanese and Philosophy at Tokyo Imperial University, trained many Japanologists. The following passages appear under the heading “Capital Cities” in *Things Japanese*, a compilation of Chamberlain’s extensive research on Japan that was originally published in 1890, and translated into Japanese by Takanashi Kenkichi 高梨健吉 as *Nihon jibutushi* 日本事物誌 (Heibonsha, 1969).¹ The transliterations in parentheses indicate the words or phrases used by the Japanese translator.

If the Japanese annals may be trusted, Japan has had no less than sixty capitals (*miyako* 都)². . . The provinces of Yamato,

1. The passages are quoted from the sixth edition of *Things Japanese*, which came out in 1939, this being the edition on which the Japanese translation was based. Chamberlain was in the habit of making slight revisions with each new edition.

2. Chamberlain 1939, p. 95.

Yamashiro, Kawachi, and Settsu, which were the home and centre of the early Japanese monarchy, are dotted with places, now mere villages, sometimes indeed empty names, but once holding the proud position of capitals of the Empire (*teikoku no shuto* 帝国の首都).³

... After further wanderings, the Court fixed itself at Kyōto in 794; and this city continued, with few interruptions, to be the residence of successive generations of Mikados till the year 1868, when it was abandoned in favour of Yedo (Tōkyō), which had been the capital of the Shōguns ever since the year 1590. Kyōto, however, still nominally retains the rank of a metropolis (*shuto* 首都), as is indicated by its new name of *Saikyō*, or “western capital,” in contradistinction to *Tōkyō*, the “eastern capital.” The new name, however, is little used.⁴

... Another of the old capitals, Kamakura, is distant only a few miles from Yokohama. It was never inhabited by the Mikados. It was the seat of the Shōguns from 1189 onwards, and of the so-called Regents of the Hōjō family during the troublous Middle Ages.⁵

At first glance these passages appear unproblematic. However, attempting to read the relationship between *miyako* and capital from

3. Chamberlain 1939, pp. 95-96.

4. Chamberlain 1939, p. 96. As Chamberlain notes, there is little evidence that the term *Saikyō* 西京 was widely used, and whether it was official is unclear. According to the Official Records of Statutes (*Hōrei zensho* 法令全書), there are only eight instances of Kyoto being called “*Saikyō*” in official documents, these occurring in the two-year period 1877 to 1878. For example, “The Empress recently made an imperial visit to *Saikyō*, and the cost for repair of rest houses and various other costs incurred along the way will be paid by the Imperial Household Ministry.” (Instruction No. 50, Interior Ministry).

5. Chamberlain 1939, pp. 96-97.

these passages will undoubtedly leave the Japanese reader perplexed. The reference to there being over sixty *miyako* in Japan that were the “capitals of the Empire” includes all the *kyūto* 宮都 of antiquity, notably Fujiwara-kyō, Asuka-kyō, Naniwa-kyō, and Ōtsu-kyō,⁶ giving an indication of the studiousness of the man who compiled an English translation of the *Kojiki*. Certainly, Chamberlain was not ignorant of Japanese history. Most puzzling to the Japanese reader is the relationship between Kyoto and Edo. It can be read from the above passages that at the time of the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the *miyako*, which had been in Kyoto from 794 until then, shifted to Edo.

At the same time, however, it is asserted that Edo “had been the capital of the Shōguns (*shōgun no shufu* 将軍の首府) ever since the year 1590.”⁷ What then is the relationship between *miyako* and *shufu*? These passages would seem to suggest that *miyako* is another name for “capitals of the Empire,” but where does this leave the relationship between the “capitals of the Empire” (*teikoku no shuto*) and the “capital of the Shōguns” (*shōgun no shufu*)? Also, Kamakura is referred to as “another of the old capitals” (*furui shuto* 古い首都), but then how did Chamberlain envisage the relationship between Kyoto, the *miyako* since 794, and the “capital” Kamakura? Does this confusion perhaps reflect the bounds of Chamberlain’s still rather limited understanding of Japan?

2. *Miyako, Shuto, Shufu*

Chamberlain does not in fact distinguish conceptually between “*miyako*” and “capital.” As the chapter heading “Capital Cities” suggests, it is the “capitals” of Japan that he is consistent in writing about. The

6. *Kyūto* were cities built by imperial command that provided the mikado’s residence or the location of palaces or courts, and were generally laid out in a square-shape with streets forming a grid pattern.

7. Chamberlain 1939, p. 96.

responsibility for this confusion does not actually rest with Chamberlain, but directly with the Japanese translation. In fact, in the Japanese translation Chamberlain's "capital" is rendered not only *miyako* and *shuto* 首都, but also once as *shufu* 首府, another term meaning capital, in "the capital of the Shōguns." The translator shifts between *miyako*, *shuto*, and *shufu* merely to make the particular context readily intelligible to Japanese readers, whereas it would have more faithful to the original to simply use *shuto* (capital), or perhaps *ōkyū* 王宮 (palace) in places. Also, while Chamberlain states that Kyoto "still nominally retains the rank of a metropolis" after Edo became the "eastern capital" from 1868 and Kyoto in contradistinction became the "western capital," in the Japanese translation Kyoto is said to nominally retain the rank of "a capital," with "(metropolis)" given in parentheses. I have no intention to argue the finer points of translation technique here. I merely want to note the confusion arising from the Japanese translator's varied use of *miyako*, *shuto*, and *shufu* as the translation for "capital" in *Things Japanese*. Why did the translator choose the word *miyako*? And once having made that choice, why did he then add *shuto* and *shufu* as translations for the same term in the original, a move that was logically only going to increase the confusion?

For Chamberlain, the history of Japanese "capitals" was intelligible without needing to introduce the concept of *miyako*. The "capitals of the Empire" as he refers to them were the locations of central governmental authority. Consequently, he sees the "capital" of Japan, which had shifted from place to place during antiquity, as having settled in Kyoto in 794, and as having subsequently transferred to Kamakura and Edo. Although "never inhabited by the Mikados," Kamakura and Edo were the "capital" in terms of being the seats of political power. Only the mikado's⁸ palace remained in Kyoto, although this too moved to Tokyo at the time of the Meiji Restoration. The above is Chamberlain's history of Japanese capital cities.

Following this line of thought, the capital of Japan for the three

hundred years from 1590⁹ until Meiji was Edo (Tokyo). This is certainly what one would call a lucid and coherent historical perspective on Japan's capital cities.

However, the Japanese understanding of a "capital city" is not so simple. The translator of *Things Japanese* includes certain interpretations in translating the English original in order to facilitate the intelligibility of the text for Japanese. As a result, the translation spoils the clarity of Chamberlain's argument, and turns the history of Japan's capital cities into something incomprehensible, although to gain a deep understanding of the history of Japan's capitals it is almost certainly necessary, as the translator of *Things Japanese* does, to touch on the concept of *miyako* (都). However, as I will now discuss in detail, this concept is complex and not easily dealt with. This explains the failure of Japanese to write a comprehensive history of Japan's capitals, although this failure can be attributed in part to having not properly defined concepts such as *miyako* and capital.

8. The word "emperor" is often employed as the English translation for the Japanese word *tennō* 天皇. This can lead to a misunderstanding, however, for it suggests that emperors were in power throughout Japanese history. In reality, *tennō* lost their political function, though they maintained cultural prestige. The word *tennō* is popularly used in Japan, but I prefer "mikado" because it was the term traditionally used up until modern times. My usage of the term mikado follows the trend of early Western visitors to Japan such as William Elliot Griffis (1843-1928), author of *The Mikado's Empire* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1883).

9. 1590 is the year in which Tokugawa Ieyasu 徳川家康 (1542-1616) moved the shogunate to the Kantō region, and determining this as the year in which Edo became the "capital" is extremely problematic, even if we choose to accept Chamberlain's presuppositions, although I do not intend to pursue this matter here.

3. The Cohesion Point of Power and Culture

Miyako, when defined as a city forming a political, economic, and cultural center, is not something peculiar to Japan. During antiquity there existed cities such as this throughout much of the civilized world, for the simple reason that the underdevelopment of communications technology for administering large areas necessitated the establishment of administrative bases. More precisely, core cities that made possible wide-ranging administrative control were essential. The Roman Empire without Rome would have been untenable. It was not a case of Rome being chosen as *miyako* of the Roman Empire. Rather, the scope of political control exerted by Rome was the Roman Empire.

In other words, prior to political control being exercised over a certain geographical region, it was absolutely essential to have a point that focused political, economic, and cultural cohesion. It is cities more than nations that have historically had substance. Chang'an, Baghdad, Alexandria, Rome; these *miyako* were the nuclei defining the empires encompassing them. Political, economic, cultural, and even military activity focused in *miyako* such as these, because it was *miyako* that provided the sole cohesion point of society. In this sense, the pure character of the city can be thought of as being embodied in *miyako*.

Lewis Mumford (1895-1990), early in *The Culture of Cities*, describes the characteristics of the city in terms that, if anything, express the essence of *miyako*.

The city, as one finds it in history, is the point of maximum concentration for the power and culture of a community. It is the place where the diffused rays of many separate beams of life fall into focus, with gains in both social effectiveness and significance. The city is the form and symbol of an integrated social relationship: it is the seat of the temple, the market, the hall of justice, the academy of learning. Here in the city the

goods of civilization are multiplied and manifolded; here is where human experience is transformed into viable signs, symbols, patterns of conduct, systems of order.¹⁰

Miyako thus existed in many civilizations during antiquity, the difference between the civilizations being in the way in which *miyako* was passed down through the ages. The narrative of this monograph seeks to clarify both the historical transfiguration of *miyako* in Japan and the way in which the notion of *miyako* arising from this transfiguration has shaped present-day Japan. This will involve using the concrete space of the city to ascertain the relationship between politics, economics, and culture in Japan.

4. *Miyako* as a Proper Noun

Population statistics for principal cities in the world are given in the 1838 edition of the *American Almanac*. For Japan, with respect to which information was scarce due to its isolationist policy at the time, is listed, together with Edo, Osaka, and Nara, a city called "Meaco."¹¹ Stated to have a population of five hundred thousand, Meaco is of course none other than Kyoto. For a certain period in Japan's history from the Heian period, *Miyako* was synonymous with Kyoto. Although originally a common noun, Kyoto's long monopolization of the position saw *miyako* become *Miyako*.

While "*Miyako*" appears frequently in the journals of Westerners who spent time in Japan during the Edo period, the expression was merely being used as a proper noun to refer to Kyoto.

In Miako, we stayed at a much better inn than in Osaka, but as

10. Mumford 1981, p. 3.

11. *American Almanac*, 1838 ed., s.v. "population of cities," p. 269.

ever, we received visits from innumerable people. Amongst them were the secretaries of the *bugyō* (magistrates) of the respective towns, who had been sent to bring the customary greetings. Miako is also known as Kyoto (NB); it is the location of the imperial palace, and is said to be the leading city with a population of 600, 000.¹²

Although Fisscher uses "Miako" to refer to Kyoto, he is not saying anything about the special qualities of the place, but simply recording his observations about a city named Miako. In the Japanese translation,¹³ Miako in the original is translated using the kanji 都. However, rendering it in either hiragana みやこ or katakana ミヤコ would perhaps give a truer impression.¹⁴

The same can be said about the place name "Kyoto," which according to Murai Yasuhiko 村井康彦 came into common usage some three hundred years after the establishment of Heian-kyō.¹⁵ The term *kyōto* was also originally a common noun meaning *miyako*, and was not a proper noun indicating only a specific locality.¹⁶ Thus Kyoto is in fact a city without a proper noun for a name. Or more precisely, it is a city that, with the declining usage of Heian-kyō as a proper place name, ended up being called by terms such as *miyako* 都, *kyō* 京, *keishi* 京師, and *kyōto* 京都, which in the beginning were common nouns.¹⁷ In this sense, as long as the city maintains the place name "Kyoto," the

12. Fisscher 1978.

13. Translation by Shōji Mitsuo 庄司三男 and Numata Jirō 沼田次郎, *Nihon fūzoku bikō* (Heibonsha, 1978).

14. João Rodrigues, in *Historia da Igreja do Japão* (History of the Church of Japan), states clearly that, "The city is popularly called Miyaco 都, but its name is written as Kio 京 or Kioto 京都." Rodrigues 1967, p. 367.

15. Murai 1990, p. 8.

16. Murai 1990, p. 10.

17. Murai 1990, p. 11.

argument that it is *Miyako* no longer seems so unnatural.

The prospectus for the *Heian tento senhyakunen kinensai* 平安奠都千百年紀念祭, a festival held in 1895 to celebrate the 1100th anniversary of the establishment of Heian-kyō, states:

The politics of Japan has been thoroughly transformed by the Meiji Restoration and Edo castle has been designated as the seat of the mikado because of its convenient location in the center of Japan. Nevertheless, Edo has been named Tokyo because of its position as the capital in the east, while our Heian-kyō retains the name Kyoto and is still designated as the site of important national functions such as the coronation ceremony (*Tokyoku no gi* 登極ノ儀) and the great food offering ritual (*Daijō no ten* 大嘗ノ典).¹⁸ (Emphasis by the author)

This passage states that despite the seat of the mikado being in Tokyo, it is by name the eastern *miyako*, 東 (*tō*) meaning “east” and 京 (*kyō*) meaning “*miyako*,” whereas Kyoto is still the *miyako*, since it has been permitted to retain the denomination “*kyōto*,” which has the literal meaning of *miyako*. This passage makes rhetorically clever use of the common noun *kyōto* and the proper noun “Kyoto,” which developed from the common noun usage, the terms *miyako* and *kyōto* both having an ambiguity that permits this kind of free interpretation. Consequently, there is a need, before moving on to examine changes in the notions relating *miyako*, to clearly identify the overall framework of the concept of *miyako*.

5. The Location of the Mikado's Palace

According to the authoritative Japanese language dictionary, *Kōjien* 広辞

18. “Heian tento senhyakunen kinensai kaisai shuisho.” In *Kyōto shikai gijiroku*, 1895.

苑, *miyako* broadly has the following three meanings. Firstly, it is the location of the mikado's palace, or as I refer to below, the seat of the mikado. Secondly, it is a capital (*shufu* 首府, *shuto* 首都), which makes it the location of central government. Thirdly, it is, in contrast to country areas, a prosperous place having a large population density and forming a political, economic, and cultural center, or in other words, an urban center. This first definition of *miyako* as the seat of the mikado is clearly its original meaning. In both the *Iroha jiruishō* 伊呂波字類抄 and the *Nihon shakumyo* 日本釈名, *miyako* is defined as the location of the mikado's palace.¹⁹ In *Tōga* 東雅, a dictionary from the mid-Edo period, it is noted that *miya* means "palace" and *ko*, pronounced *ka* in antiquity, means "place," *miyako* 都 thus being defined as "the place where the *tennō* [emperor] resides." It is further mentioned that the kanji 京 *kyō* can be read as *miyako*.²⁰ The existence of the mikado's palace as a necessary condition for being a *miyako* is clearly demonstrated, for instance, by the fact that even those places in which a palace was temporarily located were referred to as *miyako*.²¹ In the *Daikanwa jiten* 大漢和辞典, a Chinese character dictionary, the kanji 都 in Chinese is defined as "a settlement in which the mikado has permanent residence," and the illustrative examples given are, "a country's castle is called the *miyako*; a place where the sovereign lives; an urbanized place."

Since the locality of the mikado's palace naturally forms a political center, one suspects that the seat of the mikado and the location of central government, two distinct aspects defining *miyako*, were originally one and the same. What is not expressed in this concept of *miyako* is that the mikado does not necessarily refer to the leader of the samurai class—the shogun. If the *miyako* is the seat of the person with political

19. *Kojiruien*, Chi-bu, Vol. 1, p. 126.

20. *Kojiruien*, Chi-bu, Vol. 1, p. 126.

21. "The provisional location of a palace may also be called a *miyako*." (*Wakun no shiori* 倭訓栞) In *Kojiruien*, Chi-bu, Vol. 1, p. 126.

control, then its characteristics of being the seat of the mikado and the location of the central government are one and the same, and there is no need to distinguish them conceptually. We can justifiably define Kamakura, Azuchi, Osaka, Fushimi, and Edo as *miyako* because they were the locations of the central government at different times.

The concept of the capital as a center of political power independent of the idea of *miyako* never developed in Japan, so a capital that is merely the location of governmental power does not qualify as *miyako*. Kyoto was recognized as the *miyako* for a thousand years, but what was the *miyako*? As seats of governmental power, there is no question that Kamakura and Edo could be referred to as capitals, but why were they not regarded as *miyako* instead of Kyoto?

This perplexing history of *miyako* as the seat of the mikado and the location of the central government has hitherto not been fully analyzed, perhaps because *miyako*'s characteristic as the seat of the mikado has been overemphasized, or else there has been no independent concept of the capital as distinct from *miyako*.

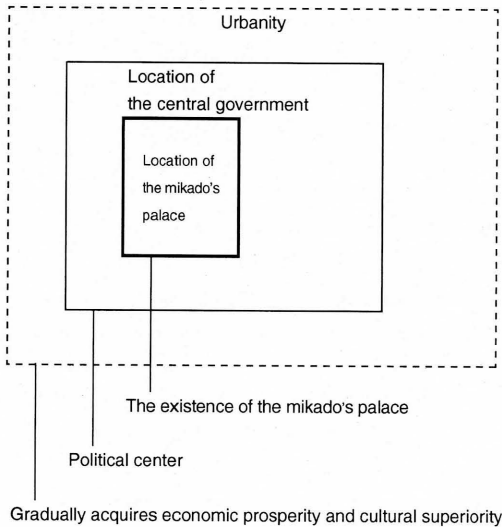
6. *Miyako* as a Thriving Urban City

The concept of *miyako* has one further aspect—its urbanity—which has a rather different relationship to *miyako* than the other two aspects, that is, the residence of the mikado and the location of the central government. The latter two aspects do not directly refer to the *miyako* or a city where the *miyako* is located. In an extreme example, a palace and all its officials in the middle of a grass plain is enough to make a *miyako*. However, the dictionary definition suggests that the *miyako* should be a prosperous center of politics as well as economics and culture. Just because a place has a palace, it does not necessarily mean it will become a thriving city, and if a place is the capital, it will not necessarily become a prosperous city. There are contemporary examples of countries where the capital is not a large city, or of small cities that possess a palace. It is

obviously an illogical jump to unconditionally stress *miyako*'s urbanity, yet it is not perceived as illogical by Japanese, whose conception of *miyako* is based on the historical circumstances of Kyoto.

Heian-kyō, a city created artificially for political reasons, gradually grew into a large, thriving city that was a center for politics, economics, and culture, becoming the perfect *miyako*. The inclusion of urbanity in the definition of *miyako* is a reflection of this, but also raises an important problem. *Miyako* not only embraces the "social" functions of politics and economics, but also includes the characteristic of being a cultural center. Not only did *miyako* maintain the political and economic functions of other cities, but it also had to have cultural superiority. For a city to be the *miyako*, it must be a sophisticated center of culture. In this monograph, I will omit the aspect of *miyako* as a center of politics when discussing urbanity, and concentrate on the idea that the *miyako* is a prosperous center of economics and culture.

The diagram to the right illustrates the conditions set forth in this discussion. The original concept of *miyako* was that it should be the seat of the mikado, which would have originally meant that it was the center of political power. It is perhaps logical to assume that a political center with a palace would become an economically prosperous large city with a resplendent culture. The "perfect" *miyako* would fulfill all three conditions, but it cannot be said that Kyoto fulfilled all three for the thousand or so years of its history. The meaning of *miyako* was subject to change as the combination of the three conditions varied with time and the emergence of rivals.

Figure 1: Heian-kyō, the “perfect” *miyako*

7. The Form of Heian-kyō

There is one motif or theme that Kyoto has maintained throughout the twelve hundred years or so of its history—an aversion for involvement in political affairs. Its rich character as a political city that it possessed at its inception was gradually lost, and over the years it became increasingly apolitical. Corresponding to its depoliticization, Kyoto gradually acquired substance as a city, and in contrast to the situation at the time Heian-kyō was founded, it became an independent metropolis detached from politics. It was this combination of elements—increasing prosperity and the fading of politics—that gave birth to the concept of *miyako*. *Miyako* is not just an abstract concept, but one that conforms closely to the actual situation of Kyoto. If Kyoto was the political center, then the concept of *miyako* must embody the same meaning. Similarly, if Kyoto did not have a political function, but had economic and cultural roles,

then these roles were faithfully reflected in the concept of *miyako*.

Thus the starting point for our consideration of the meaning of *miyako* is an examination of the actual conditions of Heian-kyō. The urban structure of Heian-kyō is important, especially for my thesis in Part Two of this monograph, so it is necessary to explain in detail. It is common knowledge that Heian-kyō was modeled on Chang'an of Tang dynasty China, although it was not an exact replica. Chang'an covered a wide area, while Heian-kyō was long and narrow in shape and only one-third of the area in scale. Chang'an had a wall more than five meters high around the circumference of the city to protect it from enemies, while Heian-kyō had a wall of less than two meters only on the east and west sides of the Rajōmon 羅城門 gate, which was located in the south. Documents record that the walls existed until the beginning of the tenth century. Many differences can be found in details relating to the two cities, but the basic structure is the same, with features such as a grid-like pattern of streets, a rectangular city layout, a palace positioned at the center north point of the city, and symmetry between the left and right.

Suzaku-ōji 朱雀大路 (the avenue of Suzaku), with a width of eighty-five meters, ran through Heian-kyō's north-south axis from Mt. Funaoka in the north, dividing the city into Sakyō 左京 in the east and Ukyō 右京 in the west. There is much speculation about the actual size of Heian-kyō; it was probably about 4.5 km from east to west, and about 5.3 km from north to south. Heian-kyō was bordered on the north by Kitakyōgoku-ōji 北京極大路, (also known as Ichijō ōji 一条大路), in the south by Minamikyōgoku-ōji 南京極大路 (also known as Kujō-ōji 九条大路), in the east by Higashikyōgoku-ōji 東京極大路, and in the west by Nishikyōgoku-ōji 西京極大路, forming four great avenues (*miyako ōji* 都大路). Between Higashikyōgoku-ōji and Nishikyōgoku-ōji, and running parallel with them from north to south, were Kitsuji 木辻, Dōso 道祖, Nishiōmiya 西大宮, Kōkamon 皇嘉門, Suzaku 朱雀, Mibu 壬生, Ōmiya 大宮, Nishi no tōin 西洞院, Higashi no tōin 東洞院, and between Kitakyōgoku-ōji and Minamikyōgoku-ōji and running parallel with them

from east to west were Tsuchimikado 土御門, Nakamikado 中御門, Nijō 二条, Sanjō 三条, Shijō 四条, Gojō 五条, Rokujō 六条, Shichijō 七条, and Hachijō 八条. Equally spaced between each of these avenues ran three smaller streets (*kōji* 小路). While this pattern of great avenues was gradually lost in Heian-kyō, it was revived in Kyoto a thousand years later.

Heian-kyō was physically divided by these avenues. Each block surrounded on four sides by avenues was called a *bō* 坊, while each *bō* was divided into sixteenths by small streets, and each of these smaller divisions was called a *chō* 町. Four *chō* together formed a district called a *ho* 保. This system of land division is known as *jōbōsei* 条坊制. This framework for the division of land in Heian-kyō, in spite of subsequent modifications, was basically maintained in the central area of Kyoto. It formed the basis for the Meiji period idea that the vestiges of Heian-kyō's original layout should be used to divide "the layout of the town into regular blocks" as "elements for the future redistricting of the city" (Kyoto City Council Measure no. 63, 1897). Thus, these lingering traces of old Heian-kyō exerted a great influence on the urbanization of Kyoto, even though it was no longer the *miyako*.

The first condition for a city to be a *miyako* is the existence of the mikado's palace. The Inner palace (*dairi* 内裏) where the mikado lived, and the Greater palace (*daidairi* 大内裏), which included the government offices of Heian-kyō, was situated north of the city's center, between Nijō-ōji and Kitakyōgoku-ōji to the south and north, and between Higashiōmiya-ōji 東大宮大路 and Nishiōmiya-ōji 西大宮大路 to the east and west, boasting a scale of about 1.4 km from north to south and 1.2 km from east to west. On the south side of the Greater palace was the Suzakumon gate, and directly south of that on Suzaku-ōji was the Rajōmon gate. The ministries and government offices of the Dajōkan 太政官 (Council of State), such as Nakatsukasashō 中務省 (Central Affairs Ministry), Shikibushō 式部省 (Ministry of Ceremonies), Jibushō 治部省 (Civil Affairs Ministry), Minbushō 民部省 (Popular Affairs Ministry),

Hyōbushō 兵部省 (War Ministry), Gyōbushō 刑部省 (Penal Ministry), Ōkurashō 大藏省 (Treasury Ministry), and Kūnaishō 宮内省 (Royal Household Ministry) were arranged around the Inner palace, supporting Heian-kyō's political function as the *miyako*. There were altogether fourteen gates connecting the Greater palace to the outside world.

On the circumference of the Greater palace were the residences of minor officials and laborers. Each area was named after a different government office, notably Jingikan-chō 神祇官町, Geki-chō 外記町, Kura-chō 内蔵町, Mokkō-chō 木工町, Daigakuryō-chō 大学寮町, and Oribe-chō 織部町. Scattered around Heian-kyō were the estates of nobles and court officials, the residential areas of farmers who had been living in the area before it was taken over as part of Heian-kyō, and official residents (*kyōko* 京戸) who had come from other areas to work in the construction of Heian-kyō and were thus entitled to some tax reductions.

8. The Circumstances of Newly Built Heian-kyō

The construction of Heian-kyō as described above started in 793 and the central facility of the Greater palace, the *daigokuden* 大極殿 (Great hall of state), where the mikado made political decisions, was completed the following year. The relocation of the government was carried out at the end of that year. This did not mean, of course, that Heian-kyō was completed. The construction continued for ten years. In 805, the Zōgū-shiki 造宮職, which was responsible for the management of the construction of Heian-kyō, was abolished. Its abolition relieved the burden on the peasants who were conscripted as laborers, according to *Nihon kōki* 日本後記. After that, the duties of the Zōgū-shiki were transferred to a lower-ranking agency, the Mokkō-ryō 木工寮. In practical terms, the basic construction of Heian-kyō was complete.

We must examine the actual circumstances of Heian-kyō as a city, rather than as an institution, at this stage of putative completion of the construction. Maps of Heian-kyō seem to indicate that everything was

completed according to plan, and we may fall under the illusion that the whole of Heian-kyō, surrounded by the avenues Higashikyōgoku-ōji, Nishikyōgoku-ōji, Minamikyōgoku-ōji, and Kitakyōgoku-ōji, was gradually filled in by town areas. However, it is doubtful how much actually existed aside from the Greater palace, both sides of Suzaku-ōji, and the overall outline of Heian-kyō with its major avenues. An ordinance in 809 stated, "There is much vacant land within Heian-kyō. Labor should be imposed on the citizens to fully exploit the excellent geographical conditions." The same ordinance was handed down in 827 and 866. Murai Yasuhiko notes that theoretically there should have been 1216 *chō* in the area, but there were only 580 or so cited in *Nihon kōki*. In sum, it seems that many areas of Heian-kyō remained on the drawing board, and that the Heian-kyō illustrated in *Kyōchūzu* 京中図 (Pictures of Heian-kyō) probably only existed in the realm of fantasy.²²

Examination of demographic information may provide a more accurate picture. The population of Heian-kyō was estimated to be seventy to one hundred thousand people in the middle of the ninth century, according to *Kyōto no rekishi* 京都の歴史 (The History of Kyoto), compiled by the Kyōto-shi Shi Hensansho 京都市史編纂所 (Editorial Office of The History of Kyoto).²³ The population of Chang'an, the model for Heian-kyō, exceeded one million people in the same period, although the area was only three times the size of Heian-kyō. More accurate statistics in the Edo period show that Kyoto had a headcount of only about five hundred thousand at its most populous, though the area was only about one-third the size of Heian-kyō. The population finally exceeded one million in the early Shōwa period (1926-1988), when the size of the city covered roughly the same area as Heian-kyō. Heian-kyō with its central government offices, and Kyoto, the commercial and industrial city of the Edo to Shōwa periods, differed in character and so

22. Murai 1990, p. 58.

23. *Kyōto no rekishi* 1980, vol. 1, p. 247.

are not strictly comparable, but it is clearly impossible to form a substantial city on an area as large as Heian-kyō with a population of only one hundred thousand. A large part of Heian-kyō remained as farmland and marshes. Only twenty years after its establishment, farming was permitted on the vacant land inside the city.

Ultimately, while Heian-kyō was modeled upon Chang'an, it was not realized according to the original plan. Less than half a century after the establishment of Heian-kyō, the area of Ukyō, which was mainly everglades, went into a rapid decline, or more accurately, it was left unfinished. Public offices, temples, estates of nobles, commercial facilities, and private housing existed in abundance in the internal space of Heian-kyō, so there was no need to build in the unfavorable geographical conditions of Ukyō, and much of it remained undeveloped.

The political purpose expressed in the building of a city, however rational the plan, must compromise with the actual social conditions. At the end of the Heian period, the residential areas of Ukyō gradually became more deserted, while Sakyō flourished, especially north of Shijō. In his famous diary, *Chiteiki* 池亭記 (982), Yoshishige no Yasutane 慶滋保胤 (?-1002) wrote:

In the past twenty years or so, I have seen changes in the east and west of *Miyako*. Ukyō [western part of *Miyako*] was already sparsely populated, but now it is almost deserted. When people leave the area, they are not replaced by others. If buildings fall into disrepair, they are not rebuilt. There are many people of both high and low status in Sakyō [eastern part of *Miyako*, the same area as the center of present-day Kyoto], to the north of Shijō in both the east and west. Prosperous households compete with each other to build the largest gates, the houses are built in rows alongside each other, while the small houses are crammed together with their eaves touching.²⁴

24. Yoshishige 982, p. 38.

In contrast to deserted Ukyō, the area of Sakyō north of Shijō was bustling with people and houses, in addition to the nobility. Around the beginning of the Insei 院政 era, when Japan was governed by the Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa from 1086, construction had started on the temples and mansions in the area beyond the Kamo river outside Heian-kyō—the Ōtō 鴨東—as well as the Shirakawa 白河 region and the Toba 鳥羽 region of Rakunan, south of Heian-kyō.

The decline of Ukyō and the affluence of northern Sakyō, and the development of the Shirakawa and Toba areas show that, in reality, Heian-kyō's growth was uneven, and the initial plans for Heian-kyō were never fully realized. Heian-kyō was fittingly compact for a city of one hundred and fifty thousand people. However, despite Heian-kyō being incomplete compared to the vision expressed in the plans, it must surely have stood out as a sparkling gem in the rural Japanese countryside of the period.

9. The Sophistication of the *Hana no Miyako* 花の都

Heian-kyō was referred to as the *hana no miyako* or “flower *miyako*” in the *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語 (Tale of Genji):²⁵

咲きてとく散るはうけれどゆく春は花のみやこをたちかえりみよ
sakite toku / chiru wa ukeredo / yuku haru wa /
hana no miyako o / tachikaeri miyo

Quickly the blossoms fall.
 Though spring departs,
 you will come again,
 I know,
 to the flower *miyako*.

25. *Genji monogatari*, p. 28.

The elegance of Heian-kyō is also described in the following famous waka from the period in the *Kokinwakashū* 古今和歌集:²⁶

見わたせば柳桜をこきまぜて都ぞ春の錦なりける
miwataseba / yanagi sakura o / kokimazete /
miyako zo haru no / nishiki narikeru

Seen from a distance,
 willows and cherry blossoms
 all intermingled.
 The *miyako* is in truth
 a springtime brocade.

The explanatory introduction of the waka says, “*hanazakari ni miyako o miyarite yomeru*” 花ざかりに京を見やりてよめる (on looking out at the *miyako* when the cherry trees were in full bloom). The waka praises the beauty of Heian-kyō in bloom in the springtime, but in fact the object of praise is not its natural beauty, but the gorgeous elegance of the culture of the mikado’s family and the court officials who gather at the palace. When Heian-kyō was established, it was the *miyako* because it was the seat of the mikado and the location of the central government. As it developed as a city, its character as the *miyako* based on its urbanity became more pronounced. The elegance (*miyabi* 雅) of the court culture glittered in the *hana no miyako*, and Heian-kyō’s cultural superiority and ostentatious bustle came to be regarded as necessary conditions for a city to be a *miyako*. In addition to having a palace and being the political center, a *miyako* was also a culturally resplendent city.

The *Ise monogatari* 伊勢物語 (Tales of Ise) is said to be the first urban literature showing clearly the cultural superiority of the *miyako* in contrast to the provinciality or rusticity of the countryside (*hina* 鄙).²⁷

26. *Kokinwakashū*, p. 114.

27. Takinami 1991, pp. 313-317.

The portrayal shows that the elegance of the people living in the urban space of the *miyako* was the most important element in making the *miyako* what it was. *Miyako* is usually thought of as the opposite of countryside and helps to define provinciality; for example, the *Kōjien* dictionary defines countryside (*inaka* 田舎) as “the area outside a *miyako*.” This contrast is made possible by the conceptualization of cultural elegance as central to the idea of *miyako*. I will explore further the relationship of the idea of cultural superiority and the concept of provinciality in Part Two. In brief, the *miyako* that was Heian-kyō was a self-sufficient world with a palace, as well as being a political center and a culturally sophisticated, thriving city. The importance of the urban culture element in its status as a *miyako* gradually intensified over the four hundred years of Heian-kyō’s most prosperous period.

The harmonious form of the perfect *miyako*, Heian-kyō had a special existence among the cities of Japan. As already stated, Heian-kyō possessed the three conditions for a city to be considered as the *miyako*—the seat of the mikado, the location of the central government, and urbanity—but it was the pomp, prosperity, and sophistication of its urban culture that became the *miyako*’s most conspicuous trait. Japanese cities built subsequently were always consciously modeled on Heian-kyō. Kyoto, which survived as an extension of Heian-kyō for the following one thousand years, was destined to perpetuate the image of Heian-kyō as the perfect *miyako*. A typical Kyoto guidebook of the Edo period, *Kyō habutae* 京羽二重 (*Habutae* of Kyoto, 1685), states: “In Enryaku 13 (794), the mikado moved the *miyako* 都 to Heian-kyō, and it remained here for 891 years. Long live the Mikado! Banzai!”²⁸

28. *Kyō habutae*, p. 14.

10. Kamakura—the *Azuma no Miyako*

The *Hōjōki* 方丈記 (An Account of My Hut) describes how, at the time that the capital was forcefully relocated to Fukuhara in 1180, “already more than four hundred years had passed” since the establishment of Heian-kyō. In spite of a storm of complaints and dissatisfaction, “From the mikado to the ministers and nobles, the whole court relocated.”²⁹ As the *Hōjōki* was probably completed in 1212, the author, Kamo no Chōmei 鴨長明 (1155-1216) must have known that the Kamakura bakufu was established in 1192, so it is strange that he does not refer to it, despite making the following observation about the relocation to Fukuhara: “The *kokyō* 古京 [the old *miyako*, Heian-kyō] has already fallen into disrepair, but the *shinkyō* 新京 [the new *miyako*, Fukuhara] has not been completed yet.”³⁰ It is puzzling that Kamo no Chōmei ignores Kamakura, the center of political power, when he refers to Fukuhara as the *shinkyō*, which lasted only about six months.

A clue to as to his reasoning may be to look at Kamo no Chōmei’s analysis of the failed relocation to Fukuhara. In the confusion of the relocation, the people of Heian-kyō were forced to move, but “the manners of those in the *miyako* soon deteriorated, so that they were just like provincial samurai.”³¹ Then “day by day, life became more unsettled, public opinion about the relocation was unfavorable, and the concerns of the people could not be mollified. In the winter of the same year, they returned to Heian-kyō.”³² For four hundred years, the people of Heian-kyō were not merely associated with the palace and the political aspects of the *miyako*, but they were also citizens of Heian-kyō itself. Thus the *miyako* had to be an urban city. Previously, the locality of the palace

29. *Hōjōki*, p. 8.

30. *Hōjōki*, p. 8.

31. *Hōjōki*, p. 8.

32. *Hōjōki*, p. 8.

became the *miyako*, even if there was nothing else in the area, but during the four hundred year history of Heian-kyō, the importance of the urban character of a *miyako* grew in inverse relationship to the requirement that a *miyako* be the seat of the mikado or the location of the central government.

The new capital, Fukuvara, had a palace and housed the central government, but without the trappings of an established city, it was difficult to invest the place with a sense of being the *miyako*. The people of Heian-kyō felt alienated from Kamakura in the eastern provinces, whose regime was looked upon as consisting of "provincial samurai": "The people of the *miyako* requested territories in the west and south. *Shōen* 莊園 [landed estates] in the east and north were undesirable."³³

Regardless of the feelings of *miyako* residents, there is no doubt about the decline in Kyoto's political importance. In 1192, Minamoto no Yoritomo 源頼朝 (1147-1199) was appointed as the *seiitaishōgun* 征夷大將軍 (Great General Who Quells the Barbarians) to form the bakufu in Kamakura. This was the start of the samurai regime that continued for the next seven hundred years, and was the beginning of the separation in the concept of *miyako* as both the location of the palace and the location of the central government. The emergence of the samurai regime was the result of gradual but significant changes in the political control after the establishment of the *ritsuryō* legal code 律令制.

The *ritsuryō* legal code formed a rational means of wielding power based on an ideal bureaucratic system. This did not mean it formed a sound basis for extending absolute control over all the regions; historians have yet to provide a satisfactory explanation as to how this bureaucratic system would be able to exert control over the whole country, even if only in name. The growth of local power in the outlying provinces

33. *Hōjōki*, p. 8.

progressed during the Heian period, while the amount of wealth that should have flowed into Kyoto from taxation gradually tapered off. Kyoto's role as tax collector for the whole country was weakened when the principalities (*kōryō* 公領) were privatized by powerful aristocrats in accordance with the social order created by the *ritsuryō* legal code. The system known as the *shōen sei* 莊園制 brought about the rise to power of the tax collecting proxies, *zuryō* 受領. As an extension, the samurai class emerged as guardians of their own land-related privileges through military power.

11. The Decline of Heian-kyō

The decline of Heian-kyō was exacerbated by the appearance of a class of politically and economically powerful people outside the *ritsuryō* legal code, whose influence was complex. The *zuryō* who became dominant in the provinces accumulated vast wealth through the tax system. They were dispatched to Heian-kyō, where they created huge, flourishing estates, although their social influence was drawn from their status in the provinces, rather than from inside Heian-kyō.

While historical and political details relating to the internal military conflicts of Heian-kyō that began with the rebellions in the Hōgen 保元 and Heiji 平治 eras, the rise of the Heike clan, and the Genpei wars, need not be mentioned here, it should be noted that the rational order, which was only barely being upheld by the *ritsuryō* legal code, crumbled. With the collapse of these laws, the climate in Heian-kyō gradually became more anarchical, and political control slipped increasingly into the hands of those outside of Kyoto.

Kyoto, which had functioned as a political, economic, and cultural center, ceased to be the political center when the Kamakura bakufu was established. But although no longer the capital, Kyoto still had the potential to rival the political influence of the samurai regime in Kamakura. In reality, many of the court nobles and influential shrines

and temples that were the owners of *shōen* remained in Kyoto, and thus the land taxes they received from the provinces continued to accumulate in Kyoto. Although Kyoto no longer held political control, the Kamakura bakufu's authority and ability to rule the entire country was weak in comparison with the later Tokugawa bakufu, thus allowing Kyoto to compete politically with Kamakura as the official capital. In other words, the capital depended on the *miyako*, and only by utilizing the position of Kyoto as a political, economic, and cultural center, was Kamakura able to consolidate power throughout the country. In sum, Kamakura was too far east to be a focal point of political control for the entire country, and did not match Kyoto in terms of its urbanity.

Kamakura, known as the *azuma no miyako*, did however go on to develop as an urban center representing the Kantō region, and from its origins as a mere political center, gradually came to see itself as a *miyako*. The *Keichō kenbunshū* 慶長見聞集 (Collection of Memoirs from the Keichō Era) contains a passage that describes visiting the villages neighboring Kamakura as "going to the countryside."³⁴ Also, in the *Azuma kagami* 吾妻鏡 (Mirror of Azuma) it is stated that, "Notice must be sent to the whole countryside about the laws and prohibitions handed down by [the bakufu in] Kamakura."³⁵ These passages show that Kamakura was gradually developing an awareness of itself as a *miyako*, and that this recognition was already well on the way to being achieved with respect to the surrounding countryside. This process parallels that of Heian-kyō, which also developed from a political center to being a *miyako*.

鎌倉やかまくら山に鶴が岡柳の都諸越の里³⁶

Kamakura ya / Kamakurayama ni / Tsurugaoka /
yanagi no miyako / morokoshi no sato

34. *Keichō kenbunshū*, p. 497.

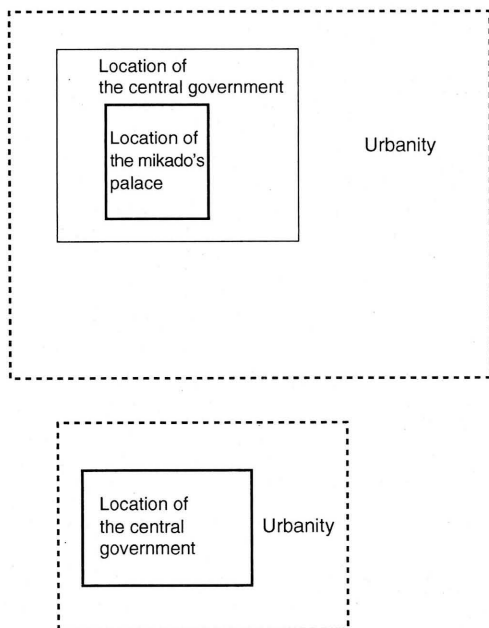
35. Murai 1990, p. 216.

36. Old poem quoted in *Keichō kenbunshū*, p. 497.

Kamakura—

In the mountains of Kamakura is
Tsurugaoka [shrine],
the *miyako* of the shogun,
and the country homes of samurai.

Figure 2: Kyoto, the *miyako* (upper) and *azuma no miyako*, the eastern *miyako* (lower) in the medieval period



Kyoto regained its position as the locus of central government in 1338 with the establishment of the Muromachi bakufu. However, this recovery of political power based on the Muromachi bakufu, comparatively weaker than its predecessor in Kamakura, did not accelerate the process of Kyoto achieving “perfect” *miyako* status as

Heian-kyō had done. Rather, the conflicting political interests of the provinces became concentrated in Kyoto, completely destroying the special character inherited from Heian-kyō. The peak of this destruction was the Ōnin-Bunmei conflict that continued for eleven years from 1467. The eastern army, known as the Hosokawa faction, mobilized an army of 160,000 at the beginning of the civil war, which was matched by 90,000 for the western army, known as the Yamana faction, and battles took place in and around Kyoto. The devastation of Kyoto was extreme, and the bakufu lost its authority. Also, the *shōen* system was effectively dismantled during the process of these civil conflicts.

Kyoto's political status declined further with the dismantling of the *shōen* system. Although the *shōen* system had arisen from the privatization of the privilege to levy land tax and conscription tax under the *ritsuryō* legal code, the main beneficiaries had been the political elite living in Kyoto, notably the mikado's family and the court nobility. These people remained wealthy though politically powerless. The *shugo* 守護 (provincial constables) who were responsible for dismantling the *shōen* system, themselves adopted the lifestyles of the court nobility in Kyoto. At the same time, the power they held over their own provincial domains was usurped by the *shugodai* 守護代 and *kokujin* 国人, who had been entrusted with governing those domains, and thus the *shugo* were no longer able to receive wealth from the provinces. Thus emerged the daimyo of the Sengoku era or Warring States period (1467-1573).

There was a clear course from the dismantling of the *ritsuryō* legal code to the emergence of the daimyo of the Sengoku era. The *ritsuryō* legal code established political control that transcended the local area of the political center, but was not sensitive to local circumstances. It was a hierarchy with the central government in the *miyako* at the top and the provinces at the bottom. The loss of power eventually reached the internal base of the ruling class with the establishment of the Sengoku daimyo. In contrast to the court nobility and the Kamakura and Muromachi bakufu, these powerful daimyo intentionally disconnected

themselves from Kyoto, and thus brought about the decline in Kyoto's political status.

12. The Continuing Prosperity of Kyoto

While the power of Kyoto as a political center declined during the medieval period, the city did not lose its standing as a *miyako*. There are two reasons for this. The first reason is connected with the Kamakura period (1192-1333) when Kyoto was not the political center. How did the samurai regard Kamakura, the political center but not the *miyako*, and Kyoto, the *miyako* but not the political center, from their power base in the provinces? The elite of the samurai class were connoisseurs of urban culture throughout the three great eras of Kamakura, Muromachi, and Edo. Provinciality, with its association to the countryside, was the antithesis of *miyako*, with its connotations of urbanity and superiority. Whether or not a place was the *miyako* was determined by the existence of a sophisticated culture. Heian-kyō's urbanity, based on its sophisticated court culture, was inherited by Kyoto in the medieval period, and therefore Kyoto still lent its authority to the definition of the culture of the *miyako*. Samurai from the eastern provinces would come to Kyoto seeking official positions, and take on the lifestyle of the court nobility. In the Muromachi period (1333-1573), official stipends from the court were an important source of income for the samurai. Culture was a form of authority. Sophistication and scholarly achievement provided the background to this cultural authority, and exerted a strong influence on the people who arrived.

The following passage from a letter by the "female shogun," or "ama (nun) shogun" 尼將軍, Hōjō Masako 北条政子 (1157-1225), reveals a "*miyako* complex"—a kind of inferiority complex experienced by people in the provinces. "In the countryside, only one person in a thousand, no, in ten thousand, is sensible. . . The countryside is full of

37. *Heian tsūshi*, p. 336.

idiots. There must surely be people in Kyoto who laugh about it."³⁷ This kind of inferiority complex of the people in the provinces gave Kyoto legitimacy as the *miyako*, even when it lacked political power. In other words, if Kyoto's culture were to decline, it would be a damaging blow to Kyoto's position as the *miyako*.

Though Kamakura was the political center, it never became the *miyako*. This was due to the weakness of its legitimacy, as well as the provincial-urban sensibility possessed by the samurai elite. Kamakura simply could not rival Kyoto as a city. Kyoto, on the other hand, although it was not the capital, still had pretensions of being the *miyako* because it was the only site giving birth to urban culture.

In addition, Kyoto developed as a city of commerce and industry independent of politics, which supported and enhanced Kyoto's urbanity. While the political functions of Kyoto were centered in the area that had been the north part of Sakyō in Heian-kyō, its commercial areas and the centers of handicraft production were based in the town areas located in the south part of Sakyō. In the early Kamakura period, part of Suzaka-ōji, which was once the central axis of Heian-kyō, had become farmland, while the area between Sanjō and Shichijō, westwards from Higashi no tōin and east from Ōmiya, had become a bustling commercial area. Kyoto had become a dual city, where the upper city was concerned with politics and the lower city was the business district. This division of the lower and upper city at Nijō continued until urban reforms took place in the Meiji period, when the south part of the upper city and the lower part of the upper city were united to form Nakagyō. Although connected by several roads running north and south through the area that had reverted to farmland around Nijō, the two urban areas did not yet form a coherent city.

After it was burned during the civil wars and the great fires that swept the city, the Greater palace in the west of the upper city was gradually scaled down, moved eastwards, and merged with the upper

city, until finally only the Inner palace was left. The Inner palace had a political function when it was part of the Greater palace, but the isolated Inner palace itself was nothing more than the private estate of the mikado. In the fourteenth century, the mikado had a private residence near the site of the present-day palace, the Gosho 御所. When the Muromachi bakufu established the Hana no Gosho 花の御所 (Palace of Flowers) in the north, the whole upper city became active as a political center, a role which it did not, however, maintain over a long period. The lower city was repeatedly devastated by fires and civil war, yet it managed to establish itself as a center of handicraft production and distribution. The changing urban landscape of Kyoto eloquently reflects the decline of the *miyako* as the seat of the mikado and as the location of central government, and its rise as an urban center.

Raw materials and semi-finished products such as iron, copper, bamboo, cloth, and paper were brought to Kyoto and processed into textiles, pottery, fans, weaponry, and handicraft objects. Kyoto functioned as a distribution center for the entire country, and it still had a large population of aristocratic consumers. Until a competitor in commerce and handicrafts emerged, Kyoto was the frontrunner. Thus even though Kyoto became weaker politically, its function as a general urban center was unsurpassable, guaranteeing its position as the *miyako*.

13. Kyoto in the Edo Period

Before looking at Kyoto as the *miyako*, we should consider the overall character of Kyoto as a city in the Edo period, which witnessed a decline in the areas of politics, economics, and culture. Actually Kyoto itself was not declining, only its relative position in comparison to the whole of Japan. Immediately before the Ōnin War (1467-1478), the population of Kyoto was approximately one hundred thousand. By the end of the fifteenth century, it was just under two hundred thousand, and it exceeded two hundred thousand at the beginning of the seventeenth century. By the middle of the seventeenth century, when relatively

accurate population figures can be gleaned from the *Shūmon aratamechō* 宗門改帳, the population of craftspeople and merchants (*machikata* 町方) was 350, 000. The following table shows the population of Kyoto in the mid-Edo period according to the *Heian tsūshi* 平安通志 compiled by the Kyoto-shi Sanjikai. (City Council of Kyoto)

Table 1: The population of Kyoto in the Edo period (Unit: thousand)

Kan'ei 11 (1634)	410
Kanbun 5 (1665)	350
Enpō 9 (1681)	410
Genroku 9 (1696)	510
Kyōhō 1 (1716)	350
Kyōhō 17 (1732)	530

Note: The figures have been rounded off to the nearest thousand.

In the populous Genroku 元禄 era (1688-1703), Kyoto supported a citizenry of five hundred thousand, and afterward there was no precipitous population decline. However, there was a great fire in 1788, and “most of Kyoto was reduced to ashes.” Then, in 1830, Kyoto was damaged in an earthquake and “many houses were destroyed in the town areas.” After that, according to *Heian tsūshi*, “it was impossible to rebuild the original number.”³⁸ Except for the period when it was briefly the political center in the last days of the Tokugawa shogunate, the headcount of Kyoto shows a gradual decline throughout the nineteenth century, falling as low as 240,000 in 1873.

The scale of Kyoto does not seem to have declined in terms of population up to the mid-Edo period. However, though it was once a city without peers, strong rivals had appeared. For example, in the latter half of the seventeenth century, Osaka's population was the same as

38. Kobayashi 1959, p. 71.

Kyoto, while the number of townspeople in Edo reached five hundred thousand—almost one million if the samurai residents were included. In comparison to the dramatic growth of Edo and Osaka, Kyoto's position certainly seems to have “declined.” Moreover, the political role of Edo and the economic strength of Osaka deprived Kyoto of the important civic functions that had maintained Kyoto's position in earlier ages, and dealt a fatal blow to its urbanity.

In the Edo period, *gokaichō* 御開帳 or special exhibitions of sacred images ordinarily not on public view, were an important means for temples and shrines to gather donations. Zenkōji temple in Nagano prefecture was famous for the scale of its *gokaichō*, and figures are available for the amount of donations that were received from each city in the first half of the Edo period (see Table 2).

Table 2: The revenue from *degaichō* 出開帳 (traveling exhibitions) of Zenkōji temple in Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka (Unit: *ryō*)

Period	Revenue		
City	Edo	Kyoto	Osaka
Genroku 5-7 (1692-1694)	10,210	8,030	9,924
Genbun 5-Kanpō 1 (1740-1741)	11,725	1,424	2,062
An'ei 7-9 (1778-1780)	8,987	747*	2,414

From Kobayashi Keiichiro 小林計一郎, “Zenkōji degaichō to santo no keizai-ryoku” 善光寺出開帳と三都の経済力, *Nihon rekishi* 日本歴史 133.

Note: The periods of exhibition are roughly two months except * for one month.

These figures, however, do not directly reflect the respective economic power of Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka, because Zenkōji was closer to the Kantō district and rather far from Kansai. Fluctuations in the popularity of Zenkōji itself also affect these figures. Nevertheless, in the one hundred years from the Genroku era, donations from Edo tended to fall slightly and level off, but donations from Kyoto fell to one-tenth of

what they were. Thus it is clear that Kyoto's economic power in the An'ei 安永 era (1772-1780) dropped to below that of the Genroku era.

In the Momoyama and early Edo periods, the amount of farmland dramatically increased, and the growing productivity of the land fundamentally changed Japan's cities. Small towns forming a base for the production of goods congregated in the area around Kyoto known as Kinai 畿内. Industries such as weaving, metal processing, and sake brewing were concentrated in Sakai in southern Osaka. Sakai endeavored to surpass the Nishijin district in Kyoto, which had been the primary weaving area until the middle of the sixteenth century. Many small towns, such as Nishinomiya, Itami, Hirakata, Tennōji, and Hirano also became active as centers for the production and distribution of goods. By the Muromachi period, the towns of the Kinai had formed a market for Kyoto's goods and thereby supported Kyoto's position as the economic center of Japan.

After the construction of Osaka castle in 1583, the policies of the regime of Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1536-1598) stipulated that the urban functions which had been scattered throughout the towns in the Kinai area were to be concentrated in Osaka to strengthen the economic role of the new political center. The short life of the Toyotomi regime, however, meant that the plan to make Osaka the political center ended in failure before being fully realized. Nevertheless, the design which made Osaka the central hub of the Kinai area market was perpetuated by the Tokugawa bakufu, and soon Osaka rapidly developed into the economic center of the whole country, not only the Kinai district. Land-bound Kyoto was inconvenient compared to Osaka, which had access to river and sea transport. The westbound sea route, which ran to Osaka via Shimonoseki and the Seto inland sea was established in 1672, bypassing Kyoto. It took the place of the conventional transportation routes to the Kinki area from the Hokuriku and Tōhoku areas that had originally run via Tsuruga, Ōtsu, and Kyoto. Canals were planned between the Sea of Japan and Lake Biwa, and Lake Biwa and Fushimi during the Edo period in order to overcome Kyoto's geographical limitations, but these

were never realized. The canal of Takasegawa was built connecting Kyoto to Osaka via Fushimi, but this merely served to increase Kyoto's dependence on Osaka.

At the same time, Kyoto's subordinate relationship with Edo became more distinct. Edo, constructed as a political city, which then evolved into a great urban center, was the first city in Japanese history to truly rival Kyoto's position as the *miyako*. Kyoto's gradual decline as an urban city reached its nadir with the emergence of Edo. When Kamakura was the location of the central government, it had depended on Kyoto as a political and economic center in order to maintain its legitimacy as the capital. However, Edo depended on Osaka's economic functions, and was not dependent on the political and economic functions of Kyoto. In fact, Tokugawa bakufu policies thoroughly erased Kyoto's role in politics. The mikado was prohibited from undertaking any political activities under the *Kinchū narabi ni kuge shohatto* 禁中並公家諸法度, laws governing the court and nobility, and was ordered instead to strive to master arts and further his learning. The activities of the mikado's family and court nobles were closely regulated and those who defied the restrictions were punished. Daimyo could not go near Kyoto without the permission of the bakufu, which had serious consequences for Kyoto's political position. In sum, Kyoto was kept under surveillance and controlled by Edo.

This situation was reflected in the urban structure of Edo period Kyoto. The foundations were established under the urban reform carried out by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who wanted to make Kyoto into a castle town. Initially, he built his Jurakudai 聚楽第 castle in the central area of Kyoto where the Greater palace had existed. The Jurakudai was "a castle with defensive walls built from huge stones."³⁹ The temples that had once been scattered throughout Kyoto were arranged in a long narrow strip running from north to south along the former course of

39. Rodrigues 1967, pp. 386-387.

Higashikyōgoku-ōji, and the estates of the nobles were concentrated into an area with the mikado's palace at its center, an area which is still the site of the Kyoto Gyoen 御苑 Park. An earthen rampart (*odoi* 御土居) of more than three meters in height and 22.5 km in length was built to surround the whole of Kyoto, extending to Kamo river in the east, Takagamine in the north, Kamiya river in the west, and Kujō in the south. This type of wall had not been realized since the establishment of Heian-kyō.

The Jurakudai was short-lived, and Kyoto did not last long as a city enclosed by an *odoi*. Rather than the Jurakudai, the government offices of the Kyoto deputy of the bakufu (*Kyōto shoshidai* 京都所司代) and the city magistrates (*machi bugyōsho* 町奉行所), which were housed in Nijō castle further to the south, served as a new center of political rule for Kyoto in the Edo period. Kyoto never truly became a castle town, but the environs of Nijō castle were built in a castle town style.

Kyoto's inner city was quite different from that of the medieval period, because of the development of the Nishijin area in the west part of the upper city from the sixteenth century onwards. The situation of Nishijin as a center for high quality textiles eloquently tells the tale of Kyoto's position in the Edo period. Textile manufacturing in Nishijin had its origins in the Heian period, and was kept alive in antiquity and during the medieval period when its clients (court, nobles, shrines and temples, and samurai) were the traditional holders of political power, although naturally, the scale was very limited.

With the stability of the Tokugawa regime, the bakufu encouraged the revival of classic protocol as a means of reconciliation with the court, nobility, and shrines and temples. As a result, the demand increased for high quality handicrafts such as luxury garments and accessories. Because of the policy of national isolation, the distribution of quality goods from outside the country was extremely limited. Thus the demand for handicrafts made in Kyoto, which had always been valued highly,

increased as never before. Kyoto had lost its function as the economic center to Osaka, and its function as the political center to Edo, but because of its production of fine handicraft goods, the population increased during the first half of the Edo period.

Once Kyoto was deprived of its functions as Japan's political and economic center, its fate was decided by the *machishū* 町衆 (townspeople) inhabiting the conglomeration of towns (*machi*) that had taken root in the lower city after the establishment of Heian-kyō and had not been subdivided, even during the turbulence of the middle ages. The concept of *miyako* reflects the dramatic changes in the *miyako*, Kyoto, during the Edo period, namely the creation of concept of a *miyako* based on urbanity rather than on the location of the mikado's palace and the central government.

Chapter 3

MIYAKO AND CAPITAL

1. Two Miyakos, Two Centers of Power

In Edo period Japan, Kyoto, the *miyako*, was not the capital, and Edo, the capital, was not the *miyako*. The relationship between both of these concepts has not been given much consideration to date, there being two possible reasons. Firstly, Japan since the Meiji period has been preoccupied with an emperor-centered nationalistic view of history, which has carried on into the postwar years. Many books refer to the removal of the capital to Tokyo in the Meiji period, an explanation that seems rational if we base our ideas on the premise of the absolutism of the *tennō*. However, I have serious doubts about the validity of this interpretation of Japanese history.

If the location of the palace is emphasized as the defining factor, *miyako* can be interpreted as being intimately connected to the mikado rather than to political power itself. Regardless of whether the mikado truly holds power, the actual location of the palace is defined as the *miyako*, and there are no other qualifications. Even when the *seiitaishōgun* had a mandate to rule, the mikado was the ultimate holder of political power. As the location of the palace, Kyoto was the *miyako* as a matter of course. The *miyako* was essentially the capital, and so Kyoto was synonymous with the capital, since it had been the *miyako* for close to a thousand years from the founding of Heian-kyō.

The second reason is rather complex, relating to the fact that the concept of a capital did not exist in Edo period Japan. The Western definition of "capital" is indisputably clear, as we can see from *The American Heritage Dictionary*: "The town or city that is the seat of government in a political entity."¹ Here a capital is defined, not by the size of a city or its history, but only by whether it is the location of governmental power.

Western observers of Japan in the Edo period confused the existence of Kyoto with Edo, resulting in some rather original interpretations. Rutherford Alcock (1809-1897), in *The Capital of the Tycoon*, distinguishes the ruler in name, the Mikado, from the ruler having effective power, the Tycoon (*taikun* 大君), referring to the place where each resides as a capital. He states: "There is an arrangement in this country already alluded to, by which certain high roads, the great arteries of the empire, leading to and from Miaco and Yeddo, are made imperial property. These may both be considered capitals, since the Mikado, the titular Emperor, resides at the one, and the Tycoon, the virtual Sovereign, at the other."² This interpretation of Japan as having two capitals was typical of Western observers from the time of Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716) in the Genroku era (1688-1703), and was usually based on a religious versus secular division of governmental power: "Japan presents the singular feature of having *two* Emperors at the same time, the one secular, the other ecclesiastical."³

Dividing sovereign power in this way is certainly plausible. Two capitals are needed to house the two forms of authority: the religious form in the *miyako* and the secular form in Edo. The conversion of *miyako* into a proper noun supports this interpretation. The earliest use

1. *The American Heritage Dictionary*, 1st ed., s.v. "capital."

2. Alcock 1863, vol. 1, p. 455.

3. Hawks 1856, p. 11.

of *miyako* as a common noun appears in James Curtis Hepburn's *A Japanese-English and English-Japanese Dictionary*, published in 1886. The term "*miyako*" is defined as "The place in which the Mikado resides, the imperial city," and after that, "capital."⁴ The *miyako* would clearly be Tokyo according to this definition. The location of both secular and religious sovereignty became one and the same when the mikado relocated to Tokyo, sweeping away the pre-Edo period complexity of the concept of *miyako* in conventional Western debate about Japan.

In the English-Japanese section of the dictionary, however, Hepburn gives "*miyako*" and "*keishi*" (京師) as translations for "capital," despite these being terms conventionally associated with Kyoto.⁵ Thus, from Japanese to English, the capital (*shuto*) is clearly Tokyo, but from English to Japanese, Kyoto may well be identified as the capital (*miyako*, *keishi*). This confusion cannot be blamed on Hepburn, since no Japanese would have been able to clarify the relationship between *miyako* and capital either. Alcock, unaware of the common noun usage of *miyako*, did not even think to question the location of the *miyako*. Avoiding the existence of Edo is impossible as long as Japan is observed in terms of "capital cities."

2. Location of the *Miyako*

It was not only Westerners who thought in this way. Miura Jōshin 三浦浄心 (1565-1644) in his *Keichō kenbunshū* (慶長見聞集, Observations in the Keichō [Era]) explains the logic of people in the early days of the Tokugawa bakufu, who decry the fact that "Edo is customarily referred to as *Miyako*." Such people claim that, "Just as there is only one sun in the sky, there is only one sovereign in Japan. A palace for the mikado to live in has not been built [in Edo]. It is a mistake to call Edo the *miyako*,

4. *A Japanese-English and English-Japanese Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (1886), s.v. "*miyako*."

5. *A Japanese-English and English-Japanese Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (1886), s.v. "capital."

when it has no ceremonial functions of the court. Since there is only one sovereign, there can be only one *miyako*.”⁶ For such people, the capital is defined by whether or not court ceremonies take place there, a viewpoint that focuses on the *miyako*’s characteristic as the location of the mikado’s palace. The sovereign referred to here is not the holder of secular power, but the historical, ceremonial sovereign and leader of court ceremonies—the mikado.

Miura, on the other hand, places weight on the actual location of central government, rather than the location of the mikado’s palace. After saying that “it is reasonable to call Edo the *miyako*,” he also states, “why should we not call the home of the shogun, who is the protector of our country, the *miyako*.”⁷ He places emphasis on the *miyako* as being the place of residence of the effective holder of power over the whole of Japan—the shogun. If we extrapolate from Miura’s contention, we come close to the modern idea of the capital in defining *miyako*. Although the mikado’s palace was not in Edo, the shogun lived there, making it the seat of governmental power. Thus, two aspects of *miyako*—the location of the mikado’s palace and the location of the central government—were in the process of being dissociated. The *Keichō kenbunshū* emphasizes that the location of the central government is the most important factor in defining *miyako*, and that Edo was the *miyako* as well as the capital.

Miura also utilized common phrases assigning the status of *miyako* to both Edo and Kamakura. One of them was Kamakura’s characterization as *yanagi no miyako* 柳の都, meaning the home of the shogun. Here, the site of actual governmental power, rather than the location of the mikado’s palace, is used to define *miyako*. “In the provinces, the place where the ruler lives is designated as the *miyako* of the countryside. . . . People from various provinces go up to Edo castle,

6. Miura 1969, p. 497.

7. Miura 1969, p. 497.

foremost among them the people of Kyoto, so surely Edo is the *miyako*.⁸ These examples from the *Keichō kenbunshū* show that the concept was developing as an extension of the location of the central government and moving away from a definition based on the location of the mikado's palace. This view of the concept was not yet fully formed, however, and so in reality, Kyoto in the Edo period coexisted as the *miyako* with Edo, the actual seat of government power.

Given this situation, a Western-style, dualistic interpretation of *miyako* seems more coherent than a theory asserting that Kyoto was the capital of Japan until the Meiji period. But this leaves several questions still to be answered. How could Kyoto in the Edo period be considered special when it had no political power? Why was it not possible for Edo to openly refer to itself as the *miyako*, despite its political position? Is it possible to provide an interpretation other than an imperialist view of history?

3. Birth of the City as an Urbane Space

In *Nanreishi* 南嶺子, Tada Yoshitoshi 多田義俊, a poet and scholar of ancient court practices who was active in the Kyōhō 享保 era (1716-1735), provides an interpretation of why Heian-kyō lacked a regional dialect as a counter-argument to the common idea at the time that "pronunciation is determined by the water." "People came to the *miyako* from all the sixty-six provinces and both the islands. In *Miyako*, their pronunciation blended with that of the people they met, and of course fell somewhere in the middle."⁹ His argument that the accents of people who came to Kyoto from all parts of the country were neutralized in Kyoto is still persuasive today. Tada also asserts that the superiority of Kyoto is in terms of culture, rather than being preordained by fate or

8. Miura 1969.

9. Tada 1976, p. 361.

topography.

“For more than one thousand years, since the reign of Emperor Kanmu 桓武天皇, Kyoto has been an urbane city where people from many provinces gather together.”¹⁰ In the original Japanese text, Kyoto is referred to as “Heian-jō” 平安城 with the kana reading “*miyako*” added, although this is merely indicative of the fact that it was already being used as a proper noun. I would like to draw attention to the phrase “thousand year urbane city” 千年の都会. The reason given for the lack of an accent in Kyoto is not its venerable history of one thousand years as the *miyako* (千年の都), but rather one thousand years as an urbane city (千年の都会). In other words, the cultural superiority of Kyoto is due to its long history as an urbane center. If cultural superiority is an absolute condition for a city to become the *miyako*, then differences in status, in this case suggested by the various regional accents, can only be resolved when a city becomes an urbane city (*tokai* 都会). To extrapolate, if Kyoto’s cultural superiority comes solely from its long history as an urbane city, then it is merely the cultural refinement that any city with a history of three hundred years may attain. Here Kyoto, as the *miyako*, is no longer treated as a unique city, but a city like any other, albeit with distinguishing characteristics.

In *Nanreishi hyō* 南嶺子評 (Criticism of *Nanreishi*), Ise Sadatake 伊勢貞丈 (1717-1784) argues against the opinions given in *Nanreishi*. “The number of people in Edo is ten times larger than Kyoto, yet even if the mikado were to move there, the accents of the people would not improve at all.”¹¹ It is not necessary to take sides here, but just to recognize that for both men urbanity was a key concept.

At the same time, usage of the term *miyako* was becoming

10. Tada 1976, p. 361.

11. Ise 1976, p. 402.

polarized. Despite the growing usage of the term as a proper noun, *miyako* was also being increasingly applied as a common noun associated with urbanity, especially cultural refinement and sophistication. In *Nishigorinoya zuihitsu* 織錦舎随筆, Murata Harumi 村田春海 (1746-1811) states that, "Scholars have been using the characters *tōto* [東都, eastern *miyako*] to refer to Edo for two hundred years, based on the meaning of the character *miyako* 都, as in *tokai* [都会] and *toyū* [都邑]."¹² In the mid-Edo period, Edo was referred to as *tōto* 東都 to express its character as a populous place, while *miyako*, written with the characters 平安城, simply meant one of the urbane cities in Japan.

An "urbane city" (*tokai* 都会) may be defined as a place having a high population density, and as being a sophisticated center of politics, economics, and culture, as differentiated from the countryside. I will give this definition closer consideration in a later section, although suffice to say here that it evokes too strongly the image of the "mikado's *miyako*" Tokyo of the Meiji period. The Edo period sense of urbanity was based more on the ideal of a culturally refined, flourishing city, and it mattered little whether a city formed a political or economic center. No longer a center of political power and declining economically, the only justification for considering Kyoto an urbane city was its role as a cultural center. For a *miyako* to thrive, of course, there needed to be some degree of economic prosperity. However, it was only when a city combined economic prosperity with cultural refinement that it could be viewed as flourishing. The Edo period notion of an urbane city should not be viewed too stringently in terms of economic prosperity from the contemporary standpoint of industrialized society.

This "culture-centered" urban viewpoint in the Edo period clearly derived from the opinion that the *miyako* reflected the current conditions of Kyoto. While Kyoto had been the perfect *miyako* in terms

12. Murata 1975, vol. 5, p. 231.

of being the capital, the site of the mikado's palace, and the epitome of a culturally refined city, it did not maintain its superiority in the areas of politics, economics, and culture for a thousand years. As Kyoto ceased to be the location of the central government and its economic power waned, the concept of *miyako* also evolved to reflect these changes. Although Kyoto is generally considered to have been the *miyako* for more than a thousand years, by the Edo period the definition of what constituted a *miyako* had gradually moved in the direction of a city with a refined culture.

João Rodrigues (1558-1633), who observed Kyoto from the time of the Toyotomi to the Tokugawa Ieyasu regimes, gives the following picture of urban life in his *História da Igreja do Japão* (The History of the Church in Japan).

The people of Miyaco have very gentle characters, they are exceedingly well mannered and they love entertaining. They are beautifully dressed, they like to have fun, and constantly indulge in relaxation, amusements, and recreation. For example, they hold drinking parties in the fields and enjoy the flowers and gardens, they join in one another's merrymaking, they watch comedies and dramas, with kyōgen farces in the intermission. Then they enjoy popular songs. They are very pious, and often make pilgrimages to temples. The men and women frequently go to temples to pray and listen to religious discourses, just like the Holy Year at home. Their way of speaking is the most wonderful and refined in the country, because the language of the court and nobles is used by the ordinary people.¹³

Kyoto's urbanity was a product of the cultural refinement that made

13. Rodrigues 1967, pp. 386-387 (trans.).

the people "well mannered," "beautifully dressed," and "well spoken." While Edo was the political center and surpassed Kyoto in size and economic power, it could not easily compete with Kyoto's cultural superiority, since it developed much later as an urbane city. In order to become a *miyako*, Edo first had to imitate the culture of Kyoto.

Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1828), who stayed in Kyoto for four days in 1818, noted the following about oxcarts he saw: "This day, I saw several carts driving along the road, which were the first I had seen, and indeed, were the only wheel-carriages used in and about the town of Miaco, there being otherwise none in the country... Nearer the town, and in it, these carts were larger and clumsier, sometimes with two wheels only, and drawn by an ox."¹⁴ Forty years later, Takada Tomokiyo 高田与清 (1783-1847) said, "In the old days, oxcart transportation was permitted only for operators in Yodo and Toba, who made a circuit around Kyoto, but it is now permitted in Edo, the *azuma no miyako*. The animals seem to proceed according to their own whims, on whatever dirt road or flimsy wooden bridge."¹⁵

4. The Fragmentation of the Concept of *Miyako*

As we have already seen, urbanity has been an important part of the concept of *miyako* since the Heian period. This is due to the fact that Heian-kyō, which developed into a perfect *miyako*, had been the seat of the mikado as well as the location of the central government, its urbanity being derived from these two characteristics. In the Edo period, very different types of cities began to emerge: Edo was the capital but lacked a palace, and Osaka, the "kitchen of Japan," was neither the capital nor the seat of the government, but a large urbane center where great quantities of commodities were stored and traded. In light of these

14. Thunberg 1928, p. 186.

15. Takada 1843, p. 172.

changes the concept of *miyako* began to fragment. Specifically, urbanity gradually became distinct from the other two elements—the seat of the mikado and the location of the central government—in the composite notion of what constituted a *miyako*.

Eventually, only the quality of urbanity was necessary for a sense of *miyako* to develop, this being a reversal of the original view. It became possible to be the *miyako* just by being a great urbane center possessing a refined culture, without housing the court or being the capital. Moreover, cultural refinement exercised great coercive power in a cultural climate that emphasized its importance. The author of *Keichō kenbunshū* shifted his focus to the location of the central government in emphasizing that Edo was the *miyako*. Yet many Japanese at that time preferred a cultural interpretation, and the slow decline of Kyoto led to a new concept of *miyako* based on urbanity. While its absolute superiority in terms of cultural refinement was still vaunted, Kyoto faced a crisis of how to maintain its identity as the *miyako* once this ascendancy could no longer be maintained.

5. *Santoron* 三都論 (Debates on Three Great Urbane Cities)

Santoron was a debate on urban culture that began in the mid-Edo period, comparing the manners, customs, styles, fashions, pastimes, and people of Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto. It embodies the main points of contention for considering Kyoto's sense of *miyako*. Moriya Takeshi 守屋 毅 (1943-1991) pointed out in *Santo* 三都 (The Three Great Urbane Cities) (Yanagihara Shoten, 1981) that *santoron* was "actually nothing more than a debate about Kyoto." According to Moriya, when the absolute transcendence of Kyoto as the *hana no miyako* (*miyako* in full bloom) began to waver, it became possible to compare Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo on an equal footing. Once Kyoto could be considered on the same level as the other two cities, *santoron* could ultimately be considered as criticism of Kyoto.¹⁶ In other words, the comparative study

16. Moriya 1981, p. 36.

of urban culture in *santoron* was a product of the challenge to Kyoto as the *miyako* by the developing urbane centers of Edo and Osaka.

Kyoto, which had already lost its political and economic absoluteness, was also losing its cultural superiority. If the comparisons made in *santoron* had been of a more modern type of topographically based urban theory, comparing the size and functions of the cities, the output of agricultural and industrial commodities, and the amount of goods distributed, rather than respective degrees of urbanity, then the *santoron* would not have appeared critical of Kyoto. Politically and economically, Kyoto was already irrelevant, and thus there was little to be gained from criticism in these areas. However, shaped by the relative decline of Kyoto as the *miyako*, the urbane view of the Edo period centered on the urbanity that guaranteed Kyoto's status as the *miyako*. This view of urbanity was crystallized through the comparison of the three cities in the *santoron*.

The challenge to Kyoto from Edo and Osaka became conspicuous during Kyoto's relative decline to become merely a large urbane center, while Edo and Osaka developed into political and economic centers, confident in their cultural refinement and sophistication. This was the final stage of Kyoto's decline, and the challenge to Kyoto's urbanity was an important step on Edo's path towards becoming not just the political center, but the *miyako*. In the Japanese interpretation of urbanity resulting from the dismantling of Kyoto's status as the *miyako*, a city develops into an urbane center and then eventually evolves to become a *miyako*.

Honda Toshiaki 本多利明 (1743-1820), one of the few social scientists in the Edo period, gives the following interesting explanation of the stages of development in *Chōkiron* 長器論, published in 1801. "A place where there is a sufficient supply of food, clothing, and shelter is called a city. A place where there is a lack of these is called the provinces, and when the lack is extreme the place is called *ezo*."¹⁷ Depending on the

17. *Ezo* 蝦夷 originally referred to the northern frontier of Japan, now called Hokkaido.

level of subsistence, a place will be a city, the provinces, or *ezo*. . . . When *ezo* achieves a certain level of subsistence, it may become the provinces, and eventually a city.”¹⁸ In Honda’s theory, the standard for this process of development is material prosperity, namely food, clothing, and shelter.

If we consider rice, just one of the products necessary for a large city like Edo, then perhaps ninety thousand *koku* are necessary every day. If one ship can carry a thousand *koku*, then it will be necessary for ninety ships to go in and out of port every day, so cities usually have ports. Goods can be transported and exchanged very easily. There are many people from all walks of life, and everything the people need is available. Goods that are unavailable at a particular time are unlikely to remain so for very long.¹⁹

The apogee of material prosperity, the large urbane city must face the problem of cultural refinement if it is to become anything more. Edo was beginning to feel confident in its own urbanity, eventually arriving at a point where it became conscious of itself as the *miyako*.

6. The Conflict of Urban Cultures

Santoron was not so much a theoretical debate about the three *miyako* as it was a discussion comparing the special characteristics of each of the three cities. For example, “Kyoto has 808 temples, Osaka has 808 bridges, and Edo has 808 towns,” or “The people of Kyoto dress themselves well regardless of their circumstances, while the people of Osaka eat themselves out of house and home.” In *Kyūkeisōdō zuihitsu* 九桂草堂隨筆, Hirose Kyokusō 廣瀬旭莊 (1807-1863) remarks:

18. Honda 1801, p. 108.

19. Honda 1801, p. 42.

The people of Kyoto are fussy, the people of Osaka are vulgar, and the people of Edo are boastful. The people of Kyoto are conceited, the people of Osaka are tense, and the people of Edo are fiery. The people of Kyoto are very proud of their city, thinking it the best place to live, and believe that Osaka and Edo are both provincial. The people of Osaka are careful about money, as they believe there is nothing so precious in the world as wealth. They believe that although the court nobility seem to have large incomes, they are in fact poor, and will come begging to the merchants of Osaka for loans. The people of Edo believe that official rank is important, and that poverty is nothing to be ashamed of, since most daimyo suffer financial hardship. They believe that if a person has talent, they can rise up in the world. These are the ways in which the dispositions of the people of the three *miyako* are said to differ.²⁰

On the surface, these comparisons seem to be lining up the characters of the three cities side by side, innocently relating contemporary opinions. However, closer reading shows that each city considered itself the standard by which to unfavorably judge the others. According to Hirose, economic strength was important for Osaka, since high social position was nothing without wealth. On the other hand, high social rank was important for the people of Edo. Poverty was nothing to fear, and wealth, such as that possessed by the people of Osaka, meant nothing without social position. However, it is more difficult to understand the boasts of the people of Kyoto. They simply believed that Osaka and Edo are provincial, and that Kyoto is the best place to live. Kyoto is the *miyako* and therefore superior, while Edo and Osaka are not the *miyako* and are therefore provincial. Kyoto's position is rather tenuous, having no particular grounds for asserting itself, except for its increasingly shaky status as the *miyako*. This uncomfortable

20. Hirose 1986, p. 132.

position is reflected in Hirose's writing.

Hirose Kyokusō was born and brought up in Hita 日田, Kyushu. He wrote that he hated life in the provinces, "but absolutely adored the bustle of the city." He was finally able to go to Osaka and Edo when he was thirty years old, and "lived there for twenty years, being slandered and praised by people, failing and succeeding." Hirose wrote neutrally about the three cities, but many other participants in the *santoron* tended to disparage the other cities from the point of view of the superiority of the city in which they lived. Much of the *santoron* was written by Edo literary figures in the second half of the eighteenth century, just at the time when Edo residents were beginning to proudly see themselves as *Edokko* 江戸っ子. Travel became popular, and *Edokko* would go sightseeing in Kyoto. Afterwards, Edo literary figures would write essays that were openly disparaging of the manners and customs of Kyoto, a departure from the time when Edoites had sought to learn from the culture of Kyoto. "Although two hundred years ago, Kyoto used to be considered the *hana no miyako* (*miyako* in full bloom), now it is part of the countryside, becoming the '*inaka* in full bloom'."²¹ "Sake made in Kyoto is like water. However much you drink, you don't become inebriated."²² These comments suggest that Kyoto's self-satisfaction with its own cultural authority was no longer tenable, and that Edo's consciousness of itself as the *miyako* was nurtured through being critical of Kyoto.

A particular characteristic of *santoron* was the conceptual separation of the city of Kyoto from *miyako*. "There is *inaka* in Kyoto. Perhaps there are also people in the countryside who have the disposition of people from the *miyako*." (Noh chant, *Kokawadera* 粉川寺.) "There is *inaka* in Kyoto and *miyako* in the countryside." "夏きくや京に田舎の秋の色

21. Shikitei 1927, p. 712.

22. Matsue 1943, p. 20.

natsukikuya / kyō ni inaka no / aki no iro (The summer chrysanthemum in the *miyako* hints at the autumn colors of the *inaka*.)” These phrases describing the *miyako* are not referring to Kyoto the city but to an abstract sense of *miyako*. Until this time, the concept of *miyako* had depended for its definition on the circumstances of Kyoto. The concept of *miyako* now became estranged from the reality of Kyoto and conversely became an ideological standpoint from which to criticize Kyoto.

Once the strong connection between *miyako* and Kyoto had been severed, it was a simple matter to make a reconnection between the sense of *miyako* and large urbane cities other than Kyoto. If Kyoto is the absolute *miyako*, then there should be no “*inaka* in Kyoto.” Conversely, if Kyoto’s position as the *miyako* is not absolute, then a more abstract concept of the *miyako* becomes possible, based on cultural refinement and urbane sophistication, which can also be linked to Edo and Osaka. The concept of *miyako* thus diversified with the decline of Kyoto.

7. The Birth of the Ancient *Miyako*

Asai Ryōi 浅井了意 (1612-1691) wrote about the prosperity of Kyoto in the 1665 edition of *Kyō suzume* 京雀 (Sparrow of Kyoto), a typical guidebook of the Edo period:

The scenery is beautiful in Kyoto, the Heian *miyako*. It is flourishing because the mikados have reigned here for eight hundred years or so. There are rows upon rows of houses, and if you wander around the many towns, you can encounter people from all walks of life. Everywhere is like a market.²³

Kyoto in the mid-seventeenth century was described as being “like a

23. Asai, p. 176.

market” because of its prosperity. Its position as the *miyako* was still unshaken fifty years later in the Genroku era, when Kaempfer wrote: “The arts of Kyoto are famous throughout the land. If a product, even one of inferior quality, is known to be made in Kyoto, it will be much preferred to other products.”²⁴ This implies that the name of Kyoto alone—its cultural authority as the *miyako*—was highly valued by Japanese, although a mere one hundred years later, criticism of Kyoto as the *miyako* was gradually becoming harsher. The *hana no miyako* was typically being called the *hana no inaka*, as in the *Mita Kyō monogatari* 見た京物語 (Travel in Kyoto).²⁵

Kanzawa Tokō 神沢杜口, a police officer (*yoriki* 与力) for the Kyoto city magistrate, compared the changes in Kyoto with Osaka in *Okinagusa* 翁草. He wrote: “If we think about Osaka sixty years ago, leaving aside Edo, there were many wastrels, and generally speaking manners were vulgar. It was rare to see a person wearing a *haori* coat. . . . The women would wear Osaka caps, and it was considered exceptionally refined to wear silk or pongee, since people mostly wore cotton.” “If you asked for directions in Osaka, you would not be told. If by chance the person gave some help, it would be by rudely indicating with the nose.” In contrast to the vulgarity of Osaka, Kyoto was evaluated highly. “In Kyoto, as befitting the *miyako*, the attitude was friendly. If you asked something of the people on the streets, they would kindly help you. Even people living in hovels liked to politely exchange greetings with those living around them. Women of low social status would wear beautiful clothes, and all the products for sale were elegant and tasteful.”²⁶

The two hundred volumes of *Okinagusa* were finally completed in

24. Kaempfer 1977, p. 38.

25. Kimuro 1977, p. 232.

26. Kanzawa 1978, p. 38.

1791 when Kanzawa was eighty-two years old. Sixty years prior to that time would have been the Kyōhō era (1716-1734) in the early eighteenth century. Kaempfer, in the preceding Genroku era, also vouched for the cultural superiority of Kyoto in comparison with Osaka and Edo, so its position as the *miyako* was apparently without question. However, even then Kyoto was not the center of fashion, and its decline as the *miyako* had already begun. "It seems that the fashions change rapidly in Edo, but not in Kyoto. On visiting Kyoto for the first time in ten years, I find that the *obi* sash is still worn narrow and the people still use long combs. Fashions in Kyoto remain as they were long ago in Edo."²⁷

The people of Kyoto were very conscious of the fact that 1794 was the thousand-year anniversary of the founding of Heian-kyō. In Akisato Ritō's 秋里籬島 *Shūi miyako meisho zue* 拾遺都名所図会 (Collected Places of Interest in Kyoto), which was published in 1780, the author boasted that the *miyako* had been established in 794, and that "There is no other example, even in China, of a capital that has remained the seat of the mikado for one thousand years without relocation."²⁸ However, Kyoto's pretensions of one thousand years of prosperity as the *miyako* were punctured by the great fire of Tenmei in 1788. The *Okinagusa* described how most of the central part of Kyoto was destroyed and that the rebuilding was like the creation of a new *miyako*. "This time, the *miyako* did not move, but it was completely burnt to the ground and the prosperous *miyako* had become a wasteland. It had to be completely rebuilt, which is the same as if it had moved."²⁹ Thus the fire seems to have accelerated Kyoto's gradual decline.

27. Tegara 1977, pp. 285-286.

28. Akisato 1780, p. 17.

29. Kanzawa 1978, p. 175.

8. The Lost Sense of *Miyako*

Kyoto's decline was rather complex. As described earlier, the population of Kyoto in the Edo period did not decrease, rather it tended to increase after the fire, and the town areas expanded. Kanzawa Tokō, the author of *Okinagusa*, was aware that this revitalization was superficial, and was aggrieved about the fact. "The town areas expanded and the city appeared to prosper, but that was merely an illusion, an afterglow of the richly woven brocade of history."³⁰ In sum, Kyoto in the mid-Edo period was quickly becoming the city that *had been the miyako*, rather than being the city that *was the miyako*.

The *Tanshū yokusenki* 但州浴泉記 (Account of Bathing in Tajima), which was reportedly written by a samurai of the Owari domain (present-day Aichi and Gifu prefectures), describes the conditions of Kyoto after the Tenmei fire. The author had arrived and found lodgings, but as the day was still young, he decided to look around the neighborhood, and walked east along Shijō street. "Needless to say, Kyoto was thriving beyond description." On reaching Yasaka shrine in the Gion district, which had escaped the fire, he writes, "The shrine was even bigger than I had heard tell, with people incessantly coming and going to pay homage." When he went to Chion'in temple, nearby Yasaka shrine, he said, "There could be nothing in the countryside to rival the great entrance gate, and the grounds inside were expansive." While Shijō street had been devastated in the great fire of Tenmei, it had, a mere twelve years later, evidently recovered sufficiently to impress a samurai from Owari.³¹

The revitalized Kyoto was not all the author saw, and he paints a gloomy picture of the parts of the city where the rebuilding had not

30. Kanzawa 1978, p. 175.

31. *Tanshū yokusenki*, p. 396.

gone well. "It was pitiful to see the foundations that were all that remained" of the line of temples in Teramachi. In the Shinsen'en garden, "the shrine buildings had not been rebuilt, and there was merely a small temporary shrine. It was a forlorn sight." Moreover, "in innumerable places inside the *miyako*, the temples and shrines had not been rebuilt and there remained only a desolate plain."³² Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796-1866), a Dutch doctor and natural historian, visited Kyoto in 1826, thirty-eight years after the fire. His account reads:

We arrived on the outskirts of Kyoto and crossed the Sanjō-ōhashi and Sanjō-kobashi bridges. We were made aware of our arrival in Kyoto by the friend who had come to welcome us. It was shabby compared to Edo and Osaka, and we could hardly tell from the appearance of our surroundings that we had arrived. All we could see were a few small shops and many people of humble aspect.³³

The decline of the city of Kyoto brought about the ruin of the urbane culture of Kyoto as the *miyako*. Cruel proof of this change was presented by the author of *Okinagusa*, who lived in Kyoto for many years.

The behavior of people in Kyoto and Osaka seems to have interchanged. The people in Osaka now are mellow, the women are more beautifully dressed than those in Kyoto, and all the goods for sale are tastefully made. If you ask for directions from people along the way, they will put down their work and explain kindly. Everything in Kyoto is copied from Osaka—fashions, women's hairstyles, clothes designs, popular songs, stalls, and actors' make-up and costumes. All the

32. *Tanshū yokusenki*, p. 397.

33. Siebold 1983, p. 198.

fashions and customs start in Osaka and are copied by Kyoto. Nothing in Kyoto is ever copied by Osaka, only the other way around.³⁴

All the houses that have been built in the *miyako* since the fire resemble those in the countryside. Fine houses are rare.³⁵

The appearance of the men and women of Kyoto is gradually becoming sloppier. Since about the Enkyō [1744-1748] or Kan'en [1748-1751] eras they have stopped wearing their hair in a *tsuto* (chignon), and simply tie it into a bundle on the tops of their heads, where they keep it in place with a long hairpin. It is the fashion in both Kyoto and Osaka to wear their *tōkanmuri* hats at an angle like the Great King [Yama or Enma].³⁶

The scenery of Kyoto was apparently taking on a rustic quality and the customs were becoming more and more vulgar. It was the worst possible scenario for Kyoto. Not only clothing and appearances, but also food and manners had lost the sophistication characteristic of the *miyako*.

The goods for sale in Kyoto are shabbily made. The tofu in Kyoto used to be the best there was, but now it is inferior to the tofu made in Osaka, which has a very soft, smooth texture. If asked about something in Kyoto, the people are unpleasant when they answer, if they answer at all. There must be no people so cold-hearted in all of Japan as the people of Kyoto. In the past, it could be said that the people at least maintained the

34. Kanzawa 1978, p. 38.

35. Kanzawa 1978, p. 124.

36. Kanzawa 1978, p. 38.

appearance of politeness, but that is no longer true. Given the situation, it is difficult to call Kyoto the *miyako*.³⁷

The people of the *hana no miyako* have become very impolite because of the effects of the great fire, and Kyoto has fallen into decline as a result. Kyoto should behave more like a *miyako*.³⁸

Unfortunately, no effort was being made in Kyoto to overcome this cultural disaster.

The author of *Okinagusa* compared the recovery of Kyoto with that of Osaka after the great fire in 1724, "which was comparable to the fire in Kyoto, although not quite so bad." Upon visiting Osaka about six years after the fire, he wrote: "Everything has been newly reconstructed after the fire, and the houses are especially fine. There are no temporary buildings, and you would hardly believe that there had been a fire. Although only six years have passed since the fire, everything has returned to what it was." By comparison, in Kyoto three years after the fire, "There are many temporary buildings or vacant plots of land in prosperous areas in the center of Kyoto. There are no wooden gates to the houses in any of the towns and there are fields in many places."³⁹ Looking at the business practices of Kyoto, he commented, "I doubt that Kyoto will ever be restored to the *miyako* that I knew, no matter how many years pass. How sad!" Remarks like these hinted at the fate of Kyoto.

The decline of Kyoto's urbanity was also observed in Tamiya Nakanobu's 田宮仲宣 (1753?-1815) *Guzasso* 愚雜俎.

37. Kanzawa 1978, p. 39.

38. Kanzawa 1978, p. 39.

39. Kanzawa 1978, p. 39.

After traveling for some thirty years, I came back to my hometown, Kyoto. I have journeyed to many places, but nowhere can beat the eastern *miyako* for convenience of travel. For the agglomeration of sundry goods, clothes, and food, nowhere can beat Osaka. The water and the land are unspoiled, and there is nowhere better than Kyoto for going back in time. I eat in Osaka, but I want to sleep in Kyoto.⁴⁰

Kyoto, no longer the active *miyako*, was on its way to becoming the ancient *miyako*, “where the water and land are clean, and there is nowhere better for going back in time.” According to these statements, there was no longer an absolute difference between the prosperity of Kyoto, or the refinement and sophistication of its urban culture, and that of Edo and Osaka. In sum, the decline of the relative superiority of the urbanity of Kyoto in comparison to Edo and Osaka was already apparent from the latter half of the eighteenth century.

On the other hand, *Tsukushi kikō* 筑紫紀行, which was written by the Owari merchant Hishiya Heihachi 菱屋平八 in the same period as *Tanshū yokusenki*, describes how four or five people from Nagoya staying in Kyoto “remarked over and over about the beauty of the *miyako*, with its bustling activity and spectacular scenery.”⁴¹ Viewed from the countryside, Kyoto was still a large urbane center, but it could no longer be praised when compared to other cities.

Nevertheless, Kyoto maintained its position as the thousand-year-old *miyako* based on its past history. Since Kyoto had long been the center for refined products and fashions, guidebooks listed the souvenirs, historical sites, and fashionable customs that would be of interest to visitors from the countryside. In *Kyō suzume atooi* 京雀跡追, published in

40. Tamiya 1992, p. 58.

41. Hishiya 1991, p. 438.

1678, the narrator says, "I came to Kyoto from quite a way off in the countryside. My master told me to go up to Kyoto and buy something . . . but I don't know where to find the things I should buy. I don't even know where to find the merchants. What shall I do? People say you can find what you want in Kyoto. Well, I'd better be going."⁴² One of the reasons for "going up" to Kyoto in that period was to shop at the long-established merchants, as well as to have a look at the fashionable items and customs.

As Kyoto declined, however, guidebooks gradually came to focus instead on famous sights and places of historical interest. The emphasis when visiting Kyoto was on experiencing the glory of the court, and visiting the historical sites associated with art, literature, and religion. The *Shūi miyako meisho zue* 拾遺都名所図会 (1787) is filled with details from old records about the temples and shrines around Kyoto. As Kyoto gradually lost its role as the actual *miyako*, the ancient shrines and temples appeared as a "new" feature. As a consequence of the reverence for antiquities in the ancient *miyako*'s view of itself, historical sites and places of interest such as Kinkakuji, Ginkakuji, and Kiyomizudera temples, as well as Kitano and Shimogamo shrines rose to prominence, and have remained popular ever since. Emphasizing Kyoto's venerable past was probably a clever strategy to ensure its survival, since neither Edo nor Osaka could claim a history of one thousand years.

Kyoto is generally considered to have become the "ancient *miyako*" when the political center moved to Tokyo following the Meiji Restoration, a process that the people of Kyoto refer to as the "*Naraka* 奈良化 (Nara-fication)" of Kyoto. As a result of the relocation of the mikado eastwards in 1869, Kyoto was no longer the seat of the court, and so became the "ancient *miyako*." "Since the mikado moved east, the whole of Kyoto has become desolate, like the old *miyako*. There was a

42. *Kyō suzume atooi*, p. 271.

terrible air of depression among the citizens.” However, a passage of a 1892 proposition from the *Kyōto shikai gijiroku* 京都市会議事録 (Minutes of the Kyoto City Council) states:

Since the seat of the mikado moved east, Kyoto’s vigor and prosperity seems to have moved with him. But even after that, the esteem for Kyoto has been maintained, and people living inside and outside Kyoto still enjoy sightseeing. They are attracted to not only the natural scenery of Kyoto, but also the solemn atmosphere of its beautiful shrines and temples.

As we have already seen, the decline of Kyoto expressed in the phrase “the whole of Kyoto has been desolate,” had begun at least one hundred years before the Meiji Restoration. The thousand-year *miyako* faced a crisis in the mid-Edo period. It had lost its position as the seat of the central government, as well as its absolute cultural superiority, retaining only its position as the location of the court. No one could have predicted that one hundred years later, a nation state would be founded with the mikado as its political symbol. The mikado’s move to the east was the *coup de grâce* in Kyoto’s slow decline. The relocation was not the cause of Kyoto’s decline, but merely the closing stage of a long process.

When discussing the concept of *miyako*, it is necessary to jettison a mikado-centered view of history that focuses on the location of the mikado’s palace. The palace was not an important part of the concept of *miyako* for people living in the mid-Edo period, and it was not a decisive factor in maintaining Kyoto’s position as the *miyako*. The palace was merely one of the most prestigious among many celebrated places of scenic and historical interest in Edo period Kyoto. It once guaranteed Kyoto’s cultural superiority, but now it was just a symbol of the gravity of one thousand years of history. The following passage from Takizawa Bakin’s 滝沢馬琴 (1767-1848) *Kiryō manroku* 羈旅漫録 (A Traveler’s Record) eloquently describes how people regarded the mikado’s palace at

that time:

On the fifteenth day of the seventh month [of 1802], I went to view the lanterns in the mikado's palace. Anyone could enter freely that day. There was a row of lanterns under the eaves of the Seiryōden palace, with guards in front and behind, and I could look at them from a distance of one or two *ken*. The south gate of the Shishinden was also open to the public. A guard explained that one of the gates had been burnt and not rebuilt. Everybody looked around inside and some threw monetary offerings.⁴³

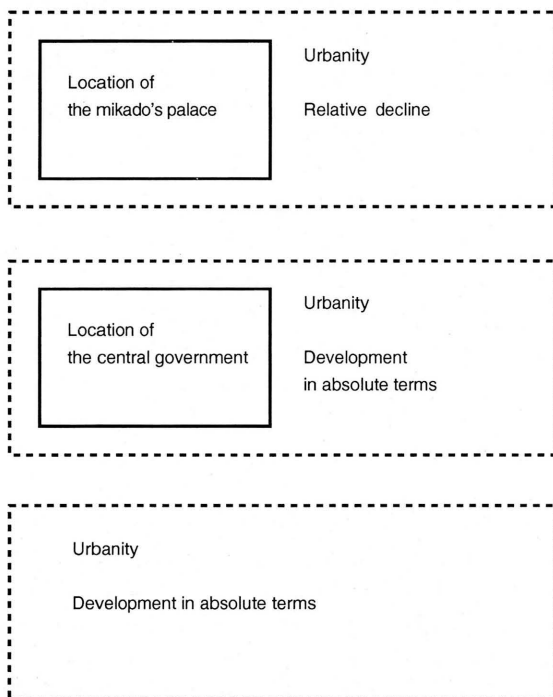
My argument is set forth in the diagram below. One of the elements structuring the sense of *miyako* in relation to Kyoto was the escalation of the relative importance of Kyoto's urbanity during the Edo period. When Edo was established as "the guardian of Japan," Kyoto lost its position as the location of the central government, but its position as the *miyako* was ensured by the superiority of its urbanity. The palace was no longer Kyoto's trump card, because the mikado did not become a political symbol again until the end of the Tokugawa shogunate.

Edo clearly became the location of the central government at the beginning of the Edo period, but it had to wait until the late seventeenth century before it could rival Kyoto in terms of urbanity. While the concept of a capital independent from that of the *miyako* had been established, the notion of Edo as a city with a special existence had to be abandoned in the early Edo period. However, at a certain point in the seventeenth century, Edo became able to compete with the cultural superiority of Kyoto. Edo's urbanity, combined with the fact that it was the location of the central government, made it possible for it to be considered as a *miyako*. Although Osaka housed neither the mikado's

43. Takizawa 1991, p. 425.

palace nor the central government, it was quickly able to acquire urbanity through its economic prosperity, and existed as Kyoto's other rival in urbanity from the end of the seventeenth century.

Figure 3: Conceptual diagrams of Kyoto (upper), Edo (middle), and Osaka (lower)



Chapter 4

THE SPACE OF THE *AZUMA MIYAKO*

1. The Emergence of *Tōto*

Not only was Edo developing into a metropolis, but by the middle of the Edo period it had also embarked on the gradual process of acquiring *miyako* status. An understanding of this process can be gained by examining the instances of Edo being referred to as *tōto* 東都, or literally, the “eastern *miyako*.” Today there exists a wealth of research documenting the use of *tōto* to indicate Edo. However, as Murata Harumi points out in *Nishigorinoya zuihitsu* 織錦舎随筆, usage of the term can be traced back at least two hundred years, which predates any association of Edo with *miyako*, and thus effectively rules out the possibility of tying the emergence of “*tōto*” directly to the *miyako* consciousness of Edo.

Takada Tomokiyo's 高田与清 (1783-1847) “*Tōto shōkoben*” 東都称呼弁 (The Story Concerning the Name *Tōto*), which is included in a collection of his works entitled *Matsunoya toryōshū* 松屋棟梁集, gives examples of Kamakura being referred to as the eastern *miyako* (東都), and also documents quite a few cases of Edo being called *azuma no miyako* あずまの都. *Azuma* was used historically to distinguish the Kantō region from the Kansai region in which Kyoto is situated.

The meaning and usage of the terms *azuma no miyako* and *tōto* seem to fluctuate with the transformations experienced by Kyoto as the *miyako*. For instance, *tōto* was used to indicate the repository of political power in Azuma province during the period in which Heian-kyō was considered the undisputed political focal point of the country as a whole. The distinction between Kyoto and the existence of *miyako* in other regions is clearly evident in the following passages. "The seat of government in the various provinces is held by the provincial equivalent of the *miyako*, and these should properly be referred to as provincial *miyako*." Again, "Provincial *miyako* hold the seat of government in each province, and function as the *miyako* of those rural areas. The provincial *miyako* is where the governor of the province resides."¹ In sum, if the concept of *miyako* is defined as the political center of the entire country, then the political centers in the provinces become "provincial *miyako* (田舎の都)." Following this line of reasoning, the political center of Tōgoku 東国 (Eastern Provinces) would be referred to as *azuma no miyako* or *tōto*.

There exists a clear difference between the understanding of *miyako* as a political center and the urbane *miyako* discussed in Chapter 3. The *tōto*, or eastern *miyako*, that we will examine in this chapter is not a rural *miyako* serving as the political center of the eastern provinces, but rather refers to the metropolis of the east as the center of Japan's urban culture.

In the *Kokusho sōmoku roku* 国書総目録, a comprehensive catalogue of Japanese books written from ancient times until 1867, there are 139 titles containing the word "*tōto*," the most well known of which is perhaps Saitō Gekkin's 斎藤月岑 (1804-1878) *Tōto saijiki* 東都歳事記 (All about Things in the Eastern *Miyako*). Of these 139 publications, 53 can be accurately dated. The following table shows the chronological distribution of these 53 titles from the first half of the seventeenth century to the latter half of the nineteenth century. The table has been

1. Takada 1843, p. 174.

organized arbitrarily into twenty-five year periods, with the final period from 1850 to 1867 being seventeen years.

Table 3: Instances of *tōto* 東都 in the *Kokusho sōmokuoku* (Comprehensive Catalogue of Japanese Books)

1700-1724	4
1725-1749	3
1750-1774	4
1775-1799	7
1800-1824	16
1825-1849	9
1850-1867	10

Of interest here is not the individual figures, but the overall trend revealed in the table. Literary works with *tōto* in their title first appeared in the eighteenth century, the earliest being the *Tōto meibutsudai* 東都名物題 (Attractions of the Eastern *Miyako*) published in 1709. There are also instances in which the kana for “*miyako*” appear alongside the kanji for *tōto*, for example the *Tōto kenbutsu zaemon* 東都見物左衛門. The table shows that usage of *tōto* peaked during the Bunka (1804-1817) and Bunsei (1818-1830) eras in the early nineteenth century. During the twelve years of the Bunsei era alone there are twelve titles containing “*tōto*.” Usage of the term after this period remained constant until the end of the Edo period. Unfortunately, the figures in this table do not give us any indication of the changes the term underwent during the nineteenth century. To answer that question we need to consult other sources.

Iwata Toyoki's 岩田豊樹 *Edo zu sōmokuoku* 江戸図総目録 (Comprehensive Catalogue of Maps of Edo) provides another means of determining the frequency with which *tōto* was used during this period.²

2. Iwata 1980.

The *Edo zu sōmokuroku* contains the names of maps as well as publication details. References to *tōto* can be found in map titles, publishing addresses, and in the names of cartographers and book dealers. There are eight instances of *tōto* appearing in map titles, the earliest of these being the *Tōto chōhō nendaiki* 東都重宝年代記 printed in 1839, while the other seven maps date from the 1850s onward. The only examples found of book dealers having *tōto* in their name were the Tōto Shoshi 東都書肆 (The Tōto Bookstore) and the Tōto Shorin 東都書林 (Tōto Books). Publishing addresses appearing in the *Edo zu sōmokuroku* include Tōto Asakusa Kaya-chō ni-chōme 東都浅草茅町二丁目 and Tōto Nihonbashi-dōri yon-chōme 東都日本橋通四丁目, in which “Tōto” replaces “Edo” in the address. The earliest case of *tōto* being used in this way is Tōto Ningyōcho-dōri Gakuya-shindō kado 東都人形町通楽屋新道角, which appears as the publisher’s address for a map printed in 1846. Although the overwhelming majority of publisher’s addresses during this period use Edo rather than *tōto*, it is safe to conclude that usage of *tōto* became more widespread from the early nineteenth century onward, until the end of the bakufu. Cartographers using *tōto* in their name include the Tōto-shiin Kitagawa Sōchō zu 東都市隠喜多川草鳥図.

A simple calculation of the number of times *tōto* appears in the *Edo zu sōmokuroku* gives a total of eighty-nine examples, the chronological distribution of which is shown in the table at the right. As with the *Kokusho sōmokuroku*, it is not the individual figures so much as the overall trends that are of value to us here. The usage of *tōto* in the *Edo zu sōmokuroku* increases from the first half to the latter half of the eighteenth century, and then witnesses another increase from the first half to the latter half of the nineteenth century. Of particular note is the dramatic increase to fifty-eight cases in the seventeen-year period prior to the end of the bakufu.

Table 4: Instances of *tōto* 東都 in the *Edo zu sōmokuroku*.

1700-1724	0
1725-1749	2
1750-1774	11
1775-1799	0
1800-1824	3
1825-1849	15
1850-1867	58

Recognition of Edo as the “eastern *miyako*” strengthened as it became more and more obvious that its urbanity outstripped that of Kyoto, this growing awareness being part of the natural progression towards attaining *miyako* status. Although Tokyo came into abrupt existence as the *miyako* with the renaming of Edo in the first year of Meiji (1868), it is important to trace the prehistory of Tokyo back to the development of Edo as the eastern *miyako*.

2. *Tōto* and *Saito*: The *Miyako* of the East versus the *Miyako* of the West

Let us now look at the changing perception of Kyoto during the period that Edo was developing as the eastern *miyako*. In the *Kokusho sōmokuroku* are ninety-six publications that include *miyako* in their title, although unlike *tōto*, quite a few of these works predate the eighteenth century. *Miyako* appears consistently in titles up until the end of the Edo period, and no remarkable fluctuations in usage can be identified throughout the different periods. As was the case with *tōto*, the information contained in the *Kokusho sōmokuroku* does not allow us to read anything into the references to Kyoto as *miyako*.

In addition to *miyako*, the *Kokusho sōmokuroku* contains examples of Kyoto being referred to as *saito* 西都 (the western *miyako*). For

example, *saito* appears in the following line taken from a poem by Ōnuma Chinzan 大沼枕山 (1818-1891), in which he compares the spring festival held on the Sumida river below the Ryōgoku bridge in Edo with that held in Kyoto on the Kamo river: “As expected, *tōto* surpasses *saito*.” Kyoto is also sometimes referred to as *saikyō* 西京, which could alternatively be read as *nishi no miyako* (literally, *miyako* of the west), one example of which appears in Nagano Magojirō’s 永野孫次郎 *Saikyō hitori annai* 西京独案内 (Solo Guide to *Saikyō*) published in 1848.³ These names suggest that as natives of Edo, both Ōnuma and Nagano regarded Edo as the *miyako* of the east. Thus, although the usage of these terms was far from established, the need to distinguish between east and west when referring to *miyako* indicates that by the late Edo period, there was no absolute *miyako*.

From the early nineteenth century on, one can find quite a few examples of Kyoto being called *kōto* 皇都, which literally means “the mikado’s *miyako*.” Together with *teito* 帝都 (also meaning the mikado’s *miyako*), *kōto* was most likely used as a term of respect for Kyoto as the location of the court. The term *kōto* has a long history. In the *Shoku nihongi* 続日本紀, for instance, there are examples of *kōto* being used to refer to the Naniwa no miya 難波宮 in Osaka.⁴ Also, in the *Jinnō shōtōki* 神皇正統記 (Record of the Lineage of Mikados) is the following passage, “...it was named Dai Nippon Toyoakitsushima 大日本豊秋津洲, which is currently divided into forty-eight provinces. Since the time Jinmu Tennō 神武天皇 subjugated the area, it has been the *kōto* 皇都 and center of Japan throughout the reigns of mikados.”⁵ However, it was only really from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth centuries that the term began to appear with any great frequency.

3. Nagano 1848, p. 53.

4. *Shoku nihongi*, p. 7.

5. Kitabatake 1965, p. 41.

The following poem is by the Zen monk Ryōkan 良寛 (1758-1831).

すめらぎの千代万代の御代なれや花の都に言の葉もなし⁶
sumeragi no / chiyo yorozuyo no/ miyo nareya /
hana no miyako ni / koto no ha mo nashi

Thousands of years
 of the reign of
 mikados—
 no words to describe
 the *miyako* in full bloom.

Having lost its political function and surpassed in urbanity by Edo, by the second half of the eighteenth century Kyoto could only lay claim to being the seat of the court. Its status as a *miyako* was, in other words, dependant solely on the existence of the mikado in Kyoto. For a short period during the first half of the nineteenth century, the term *kōto* (mikado's *miyako*) for Kyoto appears almost to counter the increasing usage of *tōto* for Edo. It should be understood that while *kōto* was used to highlight Kyoto's position as the mikado's *miyako*, the term was not utilized in the political or ideological sense. The emphasis was solely on the cultural refinement and long history personified by the mikado's family. In other words, as with *miyako*, *kōto* used in reference to Kyoto was not meant to imply anything other than Kyoto's claim to being a city of urbane sophistication.

Nishizawa Ippō 西沢一鳳 (1802-1852), the author of *Kōto gosui* 皇都午睡 (Napping in the Mikado's *Miyako*), wrote an essay entitled, "Hyōdai no kigen" 表題の起源 (The Origins of the Title), in which a self-taught avid scholar from the country meets a young traveler from Kyoto.

6. Ryōkan *kashū*, p. 67.

Impressed by how well read the young traveler is, the man from the country inquires, "Surely, young sir, you must have studied very hard indeed." However, the traveler from Kyoto only laughs and says, "I've never picked up a book in my life. You'll learn more by napping in the *miyako* than by studying in the countryside." On hearing this, the country man heads straight for Kyoto, where he takes up lodging on Sanjō and visits teahouses in the Gion-Shimogawara district so that he might apply himself to the task of napping.⁷ There is, of course, little chance of one becoming erudite through such means, and, as expected, the man finds that his intellectual abilities have not improved despite trying many different napping techniques. Frustrated in his efforts, he eventually gives up and returns whence he came. It was in reference to such tales that Nishizawa Ippō says he arrived at the title Napping in the Mikado's *Miyako* for his own work.

While the term *kōto* was in vogue for a while, it was used merely to stress the distinction between the urbane and the provincial. In this sense, Nishizawa Ippō could have replaced *kōto* in the title with Kyoto, *miyako*, or city and still achieved the same effect. *Kōto gosui* was simply a collection of "stories heard while napping through mornings, days, and early evenings in the three *miyako*, that I've written down without worrying about their truth content, and with my own touch added here and there." Nishizawa adds, "The stubborn recluse who had dozed for three years in the Asakusa district of the eastern *miyako* said if you wish to poke fun at these stories because you believe them to be the sleepy talk of a Japanese rather than tales heard while napping, then so be it."⁸ As seen in these examples, *kōto*, when used to stress the urbanity of a *miyako*, could just as readily be applied to any of the three major urban centers of Kyoto, Edo, and Osaka, thus emphasizing the fact that by the latter half of the Edo period there no longer existed one universally

7. Nishizawa 1976, p. 481.

8. Nishizawa 1976, p. 481.

recognized *miyako*.

While it certainly served as the nurturing ground and long-term repository for the concept of *miyako*, Kyoto was developing in a direction further and further removed from the ideals of a *miyako*. The time for an ultimatum was fast approaching. Either it had to be acknowledged that Kyoto no longer deserved to be called a *miyako*, or else the concept of *miyako* had to be modified once again to take into account the reality of what Kyoto had become. In any case, in Japan of the late Edo period, Edo was yet to realize its full potential as the “*miyako* of the east,” and Kyoto was in decline, headed toward becoming the “ancient *miyako*,” and thus neither was able to fully claim *miyako* status.

3. Vanishing Edo?

Émile Guimet (1836-1918) had the following to say about Edo after visiting Japan in 1875.

Yeddo? What is that? Where did you pick that up from? Why do you talk about Yeddo? Nobody knows Yeddo. No doubt, it's a city in a foreign country that you're confused with. Travelers, such as us, who take the time to find out a little bit about Japan before they make the trip, are left slightly aghast to find out that nobody here has heard of the capital of the tycoon.⁹

While Guimet's comments contain more than a degree of hyperbole, they nevertheless help to shed some light on the significance of Tokyo for Meiji Japan.

Although it certainly overlaps geographically with the area formally

9. Guimet 1983, p. 5.

known as Edo, it should not necessarily be presumed that Tokyo is a direct extension of Edo. Guimet goes on to surmise that perhaps the reason nobody seems to have heard of a place called Edo is because the city was itself physically dismantled and Tokyo erected in its place.

We are thus tempted to believe that, after political troubles of some sort, the city was perhaps ravaged, destroyed, or burnt, and that the cursed land was then sown with rice. At this point, it is strongly impressed upon us that the capital of the people exists next to the newly established town of Yokohama.¹⁰

Guimet immediately acknowledges, however, that Edo was not in fact razed. "Thus we discover that the city has not been destroyed, that there has been no fire, nor any plundering, but simply a name change, an official modification that was one morning ratified by all."¹¹ However, just because there was "simply a name change," it seems a bit inconceivable that people would think, "this is now Tokio and has nothing to do with Yeddo at all."¹² Thus Guimet concludes that, "Consequently it is understood between us that, any time people say Tokio, it will mean Yeddo, and that people do not say Yeddo because it is forbidden, and prohibited under the severest punishment."¹³ Of course, there was no such understanding, or at least the Meiji government did not issue any ordinance prohibiting use of the denomination "Edo."

Given that there had been no destruction of Edo, nor any political attempts to enforce a ban of sorts on the name, the question remains as to why the Japanese people Guimet came into contact with were obliged to so adamantly deny the former existence of Edo. The simple answer

10. Guimet 1983, p. 4.

11. Guimet 1983, p. 4.

12. Guimet 1983, p. 5.

13. Guimet 1983, p. 5.

would be to conclude that the Meiji bureaucrats and politicians with whom Guimet associated belonged mainly to powerful domains in the southwest part of the country, for whom memories of Edo and the shogun stood as symbols of the past to be obliterated. In fact, it is common practice in academic circles to place Tokyo, newly formed by the Meiji government, in opposition to Edo, with its strong links to the past, and thus see the new as gradually eroding away the values of the old. While not in complete disagreement with this thesis, I find it insufficient as a means of fully explaining the significance of Tokyo for Meiji Japan. The issues at stake go deeper than this. In the background are the fundamental problems of “What is *miyako*?” and “What is the relationship between *miyako* and capital?”

4. A Reversal in the Topology of *Miyako*

The establishment of Tokyo represents the culmination of the Edo period transition of *miyako*. Only in these terms can the emergence of Tokyo be properly understood. The slow decline of Kyoto as the urbane center of Japan had continued unabated from the first half of the nineteenth century to the end of the Tokugawa bakufu. In *Saiyūsō* 西遊草 (An Essay on Traveling in Western Japan) published in 1855, Kiyokawa Hachirō 清河八郎 (1830-1863), who hailed from the former province of Dewa 出羽 (present-day Yamagata and Akita prefectures), makes the following incisive comments in comparing Edo with Osaka and Kyoto.

Needless to say, Edo is the most thriving place in Japan, and there is nowhere in the world where food is so cheap and yet so delicious. While better than Kyoto, the food in Osaka, even though one of the three *miyako*, is not much to speak of.¹⁴

In terms of “the most thriving place in Japan,” Kiyokawa was of the

14. Kiyokawa 1991, p. 292.

opinion that Osaka and Kyoto provided no contest to Edo. He comments further that, "The best festivals are the lively ones, but the ones in Kyoto are somber and quiet."¹⁵ Although Kiyokawa's opinion of Kyoto differs little from those aired during the eighteenth century, it shows that criticism of Kyoto was no longer restricted to Edo literati.

Not only had Kyoto lost ground to Edo as the urbane center of Japan, but by the latter half of the Edo period, its status as the location of the court had also undergone a major transformation. Now symbolizing little more than venerable cultural authority, the *gosho* 御所 (mikado's palace) had become, if anything, simply the most famous of the sights of Kyoto. Counter to the declining significance of Kyoto as the seat of political power was a flourishing interest in the classics around this time, which sought to breathe new life into the role of the court as a vital part of the concept of *miyako*. Upon arriving in Kyoto in 1857, the first place the classical scholar and poet Nakajima Hirotari 中島広足 (1792-1864) visited was the mikado's palace, which he recalls in the following passage:

Taking my master along, we went to the area near the *daidairi* 大内裏 (Greater palace) and looked around. The palace had been rebuilt after the fire; it was very impressive indeed, and the big gate was very dignified, so much that I was brought to tears and humbly offered a prayer.¹⁶

While the palace was one of the most important sights to visit for the many travelers to Kyoto, it would certainly take a scholar of classical studies to be moved to tears by the experience.

Over and above these changes, it was the political disputes and

15. Kiyokawa 1991, p. 292.

16. Nakajima 1857.

social upheaval, beginning with the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry's black ships in 1853, which had a decisive impact on the transition of *miyako*. At a political level, the rivalries leading up to the Meiji resurrection were marked by an upsurge in nationalist sentiment centering on the mikado, a typical example of which was the ideology of *sonnō jōi* 尊皇攘夷, literally "Revere the mikado, expel the barbarians." The role of the court as an essential element structuring the concept of *miyako* was reevaluated, and for a brief moment, there existed a "Kyoto bakufu" when the hub of politics shifted from Edo to Kyoto. Suddenly, *Miyako* Kyoto found itself assuming the characteristics of a capital city. It was in Kyoto that Tokugawa Yoshinobu 徳川慶喜 (1837-1913) was sworn in as the fifteenth and final shogun of the Edo bakufu in 1866. Without ever stepping foot in Edo as shogun, the following year, at Nijō castle in Kyoto, he returned political power to the court (*taisei hōkan* 大政奉還).

Despite the increasing emphasis placed on the urbane qualities of *miyako* in the latter half of the Edo period, as Edo (commonly recognized as the "eastern *miyako*") grew in size and importance, a combination of factors in the final years of the bakufu led to a regression of Edo's seemingly assured political superiority. One factor was the "relaxing," or effective banning, in 1862 of the system of *sankin kōtai* 参勤交代, according to which daimyo were required to be in "alternate attendance" in Edo. Another was the long-term absence of the shogun from Edo. The revival of Kyoto, resulting from the return of its political function and the reevaluation of the role of the court, only served to further complicate the concept of *miyako*, given that Edo was still considered by far the more urbane of the two. Thus, the increasing tendency during the Edo period to stress the urbane qualities of *miyako* was effectively disrupted. Although remaining "the most thriving place in Japan," Edo appeared no closer to achieving *miyako* status now that its political capacity had been weakened. Kyoto, on the other hand, having regained its political potency and with the role of the court restored, looked set to once again become the complete *miyako*. Ironically, this

turn of events in fact signaled the final demise of Kyoto's term as a *miyako*, and brought about a paradigm shift in the concept.

5. The Transfer of *Miyako*

On the seventeenth day of the seventh month of 1868 according to the old lunar calendar, an edict was issued stating that since "Edo is the largest city in the eastern provinces, and is the place where people from all over gather, it would be the most suitable place for the mikado to govern from." Therefore, "From now on, Edo will be known as Tokyo." On the thirteenth day of the tenth month of the same year, a notice was released stating that, "After his coronation in Kyoto, when the mikado moves east to reside in Edo castle, the name will be changed to Tokyo castle." Thus having completing the enthronement ceremony in Kyoto, the new mikado undertook the journey called "*shaga tōkō* 車駕東幸 (eastward move of the mikado)" and entered Edo castle on horseback, at which point Edo castle was renamed Tokyo castle and Tokyo literally acquired royal status. This was a period of many conflicting political agendas, and while the significance of changing from "Tokyo" to "Edo" was not enunciated, the aim was clearly the transfer of the *miyako* to Tokyo. Also, the discontinuity between Edo and Tokyo noted by Émile Guimet had to do with the fact that "Tokyo" was a city created with the intention of "transferring" the *miyako*.

Kyoto might have been a *miyako* for a thousand years, but its duration as a capital city was short-lived. The vaguely defined nature of the concept of *miyako* meant that even throughout the period that Kyoto no longer had any political standing, it was able to remain as a *miyako* without this issue being resolved. However, with the restoration of imperial rule (*ōsei fukko* 王政復古), Kyoto suddenly found itself restored as the political center, from which point on the concepts of *miyako* and capital became inseparably intertwined. In the end, Kyoto was considered too traditional a *miyako* to be suitable as the capital. The debate over the transfer of the *miyako* that took place in the early years of

the Meiji period centered around the need to move the “capital” from the antiquated *miyako* of Kyoto to a city more suitable for housing the central government. Whereas the urbane qualities of *miyako* had been emphasized during the politically stable years of the Edo period, the debate in early Meiji shifted focus onto the political function of *miyako*, as was to be expected during a period of great political upheaval.

This shift in focus signaled a paradigm shift in the understanding of *miyako*. It is common knowledge that the factor directly triggering the transfer of the *miyako* to Tokyo was a statement released on the nineteenth day of the first month of 1868 by Ōkubo Toshimichi 大久保利通 (1830-1878), a councilor in the newly established Meiji government, which claims, “There is no more appropriate place to move the *miyako* than to Naniwa.”¹⁷ Ōkubo argued that Osaka was the most appropriate location for the transfer of the capital because it provides “access to exchange with other countries, has resources for enhancing the country’s wealth and military strength, and holds the supreme power to defend the country through controlling the navy and the army.” As revealed in Ōkubo’s comments, at stake here was not so much the urbane qualities of a *miyako* as the political, diplomatic, and military functionality of a capital city.

This tendency to evaluate the role of the *miyako* in terms of political capacity can be traced back to the Edo period. For instance, Satō Nobuhiro 佐藤信淵 (1769-1850) notes in his *Kondō hisaku* 混同秘策 (Miscellaneous Strategies) written during the early nineteenth century, that:

Generally speaking, the establishment of a nation begins with constructing a city to house the palace. Since the city with the palace is the basis of a nation, it is important to choose a

17. Ōkubo 1967, p. 194.

location that is in the best strategic position. As Naniwa is the center of the nation, it is the place where everything comes together. However, the land is narrow, and the population large, which means that the rice and crops produced there are not enough to feed the people. For this reason, one needs to think carefully before building a large city here for housing the court. Consequently, the most suitable land for building the *miyako* is none other than Edo.¹⁸

In the same work, Satō refers to Edo as “Tōkyō,” while Osaka becomes “Saikyō.”

The arguments of Maejima Hisoka 前島密 (1835-1919), one of the notable members of the Meiji government who later supported the transfer of *miyako* to Edo, bear an astonishing similarity to the ideas laid out by Satō Nobuhiro a generation earlier. Stimulated by Ōkubo Toshimichi's call for the *miyako* to be transferred to Osaka, Maejima states clearly that, “The seat of government of the *teito* should be in the center of the empire,” in arguing that the mikado's *miyako* (*teito*) be, by extension, the focal point of the empire.¹⁹ In other words, the early Meiji debate over the “transfer of *miyako*” (遷都論 *sentō-ron*) had little to do with the *miyako* as such. Rather it was the “transfer of the capital” (首都移転 *shuto iten*) that was the true object of discussion. The debate ended up revolving around the transfer of *miyako* because the concept of a “capital” was itself new to Japan, and consequently there was no precedent for discussing the capital as distinct from the *miyako*. In fact, if such a precedent had existed, the discussion would have paradoxically boiled down to transferring the capital from Edo to Tokyo, and involved little more than a name change.

18. Satō 1977, p. 429.

19. Maejima 1932, p. 13.

Some of those who traveled to Japan during the early years of Meiji understood the change from “Edo” to “Tokyo” as being just that, a name change. “Before the capital was called Edo, and the shogun and important officials lived there. After the revolution of 1868, the name of the city was changed to Tokyo, meaning the *miyako* of the east.”²⁰ This would certainly be true if Edo had been the capital previous to Tokyo, but in Edo period Japan there existed only the concept of *miyako*. Although Edo was in fact the political center of the country for close to three hundred years, this function in itself was never conceptualized.²¹

6. *Miyako* versus Capital

The debate at the end of the Edo period was essentially about redefining the characteristics of *miyako* to conform more closely to those of a capital city. While *miyako* had until then been characterized in terms of a vague relationship between court, political, and urbane functions, the reformulated *miyako* was to serve primarily as the locus of political power. This relationship had to be such that *miyako* was automatically associated with being the seat of government. Thus in reality, the debate over the transfer of *miyako* had more to do with modernizing the actual meaning of *miyako* than with any transference of location.

Many Westerners understood the change from Edo to Tokyo as involving not only a name change, but the transfer of the capital from one location to another. For example, in *Japan in 1872* (1873), Antonius Geerts (1843-1883) refers to Edo by saying “Now more than ever Edo is

20. Covarrubias 1983, p. 62.

21. There is evidence that the word *shuto* did exist at the end of the Edo period. In the *Eiwa taiyaku shūchin jisho* 英和对訳袖珍辞書 (English-Japanese Pocket Dictionary) published in 1862 by the Center for Western Studies established by the bakufu in 1861, *shuto* is given as the translation for “capital.” There is, however, no explanation as to how *shuto* was to be defined, nor any indication as to where the *shuto* of Japan was imagined to be at the time.

considered to be the capital," and Kyoto as "The residence of the emperor, and the former capital of the country."²² Émile Guimet expressed a similar perception in the following passage:

Kyoto was no more than a capital out of service; the old metropolis was authorized to exercise the right to retire. Yeddo became the new imperial city, and so that people could notice the change in the fate of these two cities, a decree abolished the name of Yeddo and declared that henceforward the residence of Mikado would be called Tokio, the eastern capital in opposition to Kyoto, the western capital.²³

Since Tokyo was the newly established capital of Japan, naturally the question arises, "So where was the previous capital?" Guimet and Geerts, as did many other Western observers of Japan at the time, assumed that Kyoto was the capital prior to the founding of Tokyo. Kyoto was not "just a capital out of service," but rather the capital that never was, apart from a brief moment during the turmoil at the end of the Edo period. For Western observers familiar with the concept of a capital city, it was only natural to assume that the establishment of a new capital presupposed the transfer from a former capital. However, what actually occurred was that the traditional understanding of *miyako* was revised so that it took on new significance as the focal point of the empire. Thus the transfer of *miyako* that took place in the Meiji period involved not only the spatial shift from Kyoto to Tokyo, but also a shift from the traditional role to a new role based on the *miyako*'s political function.

The official reason given for renaming Edo was that, "Edo is the largest city of the eastern provinces and the place where everyone

22. Geerts 1983, p. 39.

23. Guimet 1983, p. 5.

gathers.” It was strategic positioning to place Japan under the management of the “eastern provinces” which had not previously had much to do with the mikado’s family. In a copy of an edict is written, “Since the bakufu was established in Edo during the Keichō era [1596-1610], Edo has become more and more prosperous, and as a result the rest of the land has looked to Edo, and the wealth and produce has collected in Edo.” The prosperity enjoyed by Edo, however, was brought to an abrupt end with the fall of the bakufu. As a result, many of “the suffering people” had to struggle to make a living. Maejima Hisoka’s theories were also based in part on redressing the downward slide of Edo. He wrote, “Even if Naniwa doesn’t become the *teito*, there is no fear of it declining, and it will remain one of Japan’s major cities. If Edo does not become the *teito*, its citizens will leave the city and it will become a lonely town in the eastern provinces.”²⁴

As a result of the restoration of imperial rule, Kyoto suddenly found itself elevated to the position of the capital on account of its being the seat of the court, while Edo, the actual capital in terms of political capacity, reverted to being just another large city. It was this seemingly untenable situation that led to calls for Edo to be made the capital. The elevation of Kyoto to the position of capital effectively meant the complete renouncement of everything Edo had come to stand for prior to the restoration, turning Edo into the “lonely town in the eastern provinces.” It takes a great deal of time for a city with political standing to reestablish itself after that standing has been taken away. Kyoto during the Edo period had been successful in this respect, but Edo in the early Meiji period still had a long way to go. As Sanjō Sanetomi 三条実美 (1837-1891) notes.

Considering the state of the whole nation, the prosperity or decline of Kyoto and Osaka depends on the prosperity or

24. Maejima 1981, p. 381.

decline of Tokyo. Whether Tokyo prospers or declines affects whether the country of Japan as a whole prospers or declines. For example, if Kyoto or Osaka is lost, it does not mean that Japan will be lost as long as Tokyo is not lost.

The movement to establish Edo as the capital was as much about securing the future of the nation of Japan as it was to do with elevating Edo to its rightful position. The new Meiji government, lacking a firm base of support, had little choice but to recognize the fact that Edo had been the effective capital of Japan for close to three hundred years by officially sanctioning its status. No one could deny that Edo had first claim to being the capital; not the shogunal retainer Maejima, nor Ōkubo, one of the prominent figures involved in toppling the bakufu (it is said that Ōkubo expressed agreement with Maejima after reading his arguments in support of Edo as the capital), nor even the court noble from Kyoto, Sanjō Sanetomi. In fact, it was precisely because the case for Edo becoming the capital was so strong that these men devoted their energies to making sure it was realized. Although approaching the problem from different angles, all three shared the trait of being political realists who fully understood the challenges facing Japan.

7. Continuity and Discontinuity

The new capital Tokyo represented a break with not only Kyoto, the former *miyako*, but also with Edo of the Edo period. With Tokyo, the notion of a capital took on ever expanding importance within the concept of *miyako*, transforming the concept entirely. Kyoto's attempts to establish a clear political function for itself and become a place befitting of a capital during the formative period of a nation state culminated in the *miyako* being enticed away from the thousand-year-old seat of the palace. In other words, Kyoto's efforts to become the perfect *miyako* left little choice but to abandon the city altogether. Implicit in the distancing of the *miyako* from Kyoto was that the capital Tokyo would become the *miyako* Tokyo.

The change from Edo to Tokyo would hardly have amounted to a break of the proportions Guimet seems to suggest if it had simply been about proclaiming the unofficial capital, or about the bakufu handing over central governing authority to the new Meiji government. Rather, the significant break occurred when the unofficial capital took on the role of *miyako* with a clearly defined authority to govern. The following undated waka quoted at the beginning of a section entitled “Tōkyō tento no kigen 東京奥都の起源” (The Origin of Tokyo the *Miyako*) in the *Meiji jibutsu kigen* 明治事物起源 (The Origins of Things in Meiji) expresses well the sentiment of the period.²⁵

栄えにし松も常盤の色かへて菊こそかをれ武蔵野の原
sakae ni shi / matsu mo tokiwa no / iro kaete
kiku koso kaore / Musashino no hara

The evergreen needles
 of the flourishing pine tree
 have changed;
 chrysanthemums²⁶ are fragrant
 on the plains of Musashino.

To be precise, however, it was not so much a case of Edo becoming a *miyako* as the latter engulfing the former. Thus Miura Jōshin's 三浦浄心 claim that the city in which resided “the shogun, sovereign, and protector of the land” should rightfully be called the *miyako* was realized three hundred years later when Edo became Tokyo as a result of changes wrought by the temporary relocation of the bakufu to Kyoto.

As the *miyako*, Tokyo was clearly distinguished from Edo in terms of housing both the seat of government and the court. Although the

25. Ishii 1969, p. 1281.

26. The chrysanthemum flower is the official emblem of the mikado's family.

concept of *miyako* had been reworked with the founding of Tokyo, there still remained traces of its past forms. In terms of the urbanity of *miyako*, there existed obvious continuity between *tōto* 東都 and *tōkyō* 東京, which may both be rendered literally as the *miyako* of the east,” or the “eastern *miyako*.” In the *Konjaku kurabe* 今昔較 (Comparisons of Past and Present, 1876), Oka Ranpei 岡蘭平 writes:

Similar to the universality of English throughout the world, the dialect spoken in Edo is understandable throughout the more than sixty provinces of Japan. The reason for this is that in the three hundred years since Tokyo became a *miyako*, the powerful daimyo of the various domains have taken turns serving duty in Tokyo, and also because it is the largest city in Japan, people from the sixty provinces come to Tokyo for trade and sightseeing. This is the reason for the dialect of Tokyo being so widely understood.²⁷

The arguments Oka espouses here basically repeat the views of Tada Yoshitoshi in *Nanreishi*, the only difference being that the standard dialect is no longer being spoken in Kyoto but Tokyo.

Tokyo is portrayed as being “the largest city in Japan” where “the daimyo of the various domains have come and served duty for generations.” Oka makes no distinction in *Konjaku kurabe* between Tokyo and Edo. Although historically speaking, it is actually Edo that is being referred to here, the point Oka makes is that people from “more than sixty provinces” gathered in Japan’s largest “metropolis” for “trade and pleasure,” and through the mingling of the various dialects over time, the dialect of Tokyo was refined. Thus in the three hundred years since the city was established, the dialect of Tokyo had become universal throughout the whole of Japan, as predicted in the *Nanreishi*: “It doesn’t

27. Oka 1876.

matter where it is, if a place is an urbane city for over three hundred years." More than simply achieving universality, Oka claims in fact that, "Because the dialect of Edo is widely understood throughout the country, it has become the standard dialect in Japan, and the tendency is for the dialects of other provinces to slowly but surely approach the Edo dialect."²⁸

8. The Flourishing *Miyako* of Meiji Enlightenment

These assertions by Oka were not grounded in mere parochialism. For instance, an article carried in the *Tokyo nichinichi shinbun* of 20 March 1875 contained the following statement.

Recently the copying of Tokyo trends has become popular in Osaka amongst not only geisha, but also the local women and the daughters of rich merchants, more than half of whom have their hair done up "Edo style." Single women have stopped wrapping their *obi* left to right and leave it dangling, and are now going around in *azuma geta* rather than layered *zōri*, and they now prefer everything from Tokyo such as *kanzashi*, *kushi*, and *kōgai*, which has resulted in the disappearance of the graceful figures that one used to see. Men such as head clerks are using the Edo dialect as if they knew how, which only make one laugh to hear it.

In sum, the establishment of Tokyo as a *miyako* signaled the realization of nearly three hundred years of urbane development as the eastern *miyako*. In this sense, Tokyo was a direct extension of Edo. The year 1874 marked nearly three hundred years since the establishment of Edo.

28. Oka 1876.

NB: In 1889 an event was held to celebrate the three hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the “Edo bakufu,” with festivities centering around former bakufu retainers who formed the “Edo Kai” 江戸会 (Edo Society). The reason for celebrating the three hundredth rather than the twenty-second anniversary was obviously because of the strong connection between Tokyo and Edo, and also because of the desire to acknowledge the role played by Tokugawa Ieyasu in the continuing prosperity of Tokyo. Moreover, bringing Edo once again into focus and acknowledging the contributions of the Tokugawa bakufu and its retainers provided the former bakufu retainers a chance to air their mixed feelings toward the Meiji government.²⁹ However, the significance of the three hundred years could have been duly emphasized without all the swaggering, simply by acknowledging the importance of the eastern *miyako*’s urbanity to the *miyako* status of Tokyo. Certainly, the driving force behind the eastern *miyako*’s urbanity was not the bakufu retainers but the townspeople, so in this sense there probably was a need for their blustering.

Despite the close relationship between Tokyo and Edo, the prosperity enjoyed by the two cities was different in kind. The atmosphere in Tokyo during the period of modernization was obviously quite different from the traditional urban culture that energized Edo. In *Tōkyō Gingai shōshi* 東京銀街小誌 (The Story of Ginza, Tokyo), Sabonshi 榎孟子 refers to the eight districts from Kyōbashi 京橋 to Shinbashi 新橋 collectively as Ginza 銀座, which he describes as “the most *miyako* of the *miyako*.”³⁰ Sabonshi adds that it is not possible to discuss “the prosperity of Tokyo” without reference to Ginza. Thus, although not discounting the continued prosperity of more established areas such as Asakusa Kannon 浅草観音, Ueno park 上野公園, Shinbashi 新橋, Yanagibashi 柳橋, and Yushima Tenjin 湯島天神, Sabonshi distinguishes Ginza as being an urban

29. *Tōkyō hyakunen shi*, pp. 1143-1146.

30. Sabonshi 1882.

space that, removed from the “old things of Edo,” represents “the new prosperity of Tokyo.”

The railway and the horse-drawn omnibus, sukiyaki and the rickshaw, the telegraph and the newspaper—these telltale signs of Meiji *bunmei kaika* 文明開化 (civilization and enlightenment) were obviously not part of the urbanity that characterized the eastern *miyako*. Tokyo was the “center of enlightenment and the locus of prosperity,” and within that, Ginza represented the “*miyako* of the *miyako*.”³¹ Here, “*miyako*” (都) of course places emphasis on the urbane aspects of the concept.

Although “bureaucratic” Tokyo is often contrasted with “people’s” Edo, I am doubtful whether the feverish pitch of the early Meiji effort to attain “civilization and enlightenment” can be adequately understood from this stance. For example, to find the energy source that allowed the artificially created political city of Tokyo to remain as the “center of enlightenment” throughout the era of “civilization and enlightenment,” we must look instead to the latent *miyako* qualities of Edo as the eastern *miyako*. In other words, Tokyo and Edo complement each other to a greater extent than is perhaps commonly recognized.

Since the eastern *miyako* failed to achieve full *miyako* status, the *miyako* consciousness of the residents of Edo never developed to any great extent. However, all this changed with the advent of Tokyo, and it was, in fact, the rekindled parochialism of the citizens of what was now Tokyo that provided the driving force behind the city achieving complete *miyako* status.

9. The Perfect *Miyako*

As a center of urban culture housing both the national government and

31. Takamizawa 1992, p. 15.

the court, Tokyo combines the three main elements that define the concept of *miyako*—the first time this has been achieved since Heian-kyō held the position of *miyako* from the seventh to the eleventh centuries. However, although these three elements were unarguably part of the pre-Tokyo concept of *miyako*, their relationship within this concept was far from well defined. Rather than being the product of a single architect or a historically located directive of authority, the concept of *miyako* owes its existence to the gradual melding together of the thoughts, ideas, hopes, ambitions, and interests of a great many people over a long period of time. The lack of cohesion was, in fact, quite natural for a concept formed from such a conglomeration of elements—what with the courtly function having existed since ancient times, the urbane aspects resulting from the phenomenal expansion of the eastern *miyako*, and the political function originating in Kyoto, but then coming to the fore during the process of realizing the modern nation state of Meiji.

Yoshimi Shun'ya 吉見俊哉 identifies a process by which the revitalized concept of *tennō* gradually became fused with the newly devised concept of *teito* 帝都 (literally, the mikado's *miyako*, although in Meiji Japan the meaning was closer to “*miyako* of the empire”) as a result of the official visits by the *tennō* to various regions around Japan during the early years of Meiji. The national awareness galvanized by these official visits led to the affirmation of Tokyo as *teito* of the nation in the second decade (1880s) of the Meiji period. Consequently, “a relationship was established according to which the people looked up to Tokyo as *teito*, and the *tennō*'s palace as the center of *teito*.” Yoshimi argues that a “strategy of visibility” was the driving force behind the nationalization of the concept of *teito*: “People were made to look at the *tennō*, and at the same time they were made aware that the *tennō* was looking at them.”³² This theory, which could perhaps be referred to as a socio-political

32. Yoshimi 1991, p. 253.

interpretation of *miyako*, ultimately suggests that a hierarchical relationship existed between the *tennō* and the people as subjects.

While not in total disagreement with this interpretation, I find it difficult to adequately explain the attraction of Tokyo for such large numbers of people solely by reference to this oppressive relationship between ruler and subjects. The drawing power of *teito* cannot be explained using theories of power alone. The relationship between the oppressive courtly and political aspects of *miyako*, and the drawing power implicit in the urbane aspects of *miyako*, depended on whether Tokyo was ultimately to be recognized in terms of the *tennō*'s palace or thriving, bustling centers such as Ginza. I locate the phenomenal development of Tokyo in the expansion of its urbane rather than courtly or political aspects. As pointed out by Yoshimi Shun'ya, it was in the second decade of Meiji, following the initial structuring of the nation, that the political and courtly functions of Tokyo became clearly defined. Of course, this did not signal the completion of Tokyo the *miyako*. Its urbanity continued to develop, and a cycle was established whereby the people drawn in by the prosperity of the city worked to create greater prosperity, which in turn attracted more people. Once this process of expansion was set in motion, the prosperity of the *miyako* expanded with increasing vigor.

In *Tōkyō fūzokushi* 東京風俗志 (The Customs and Manners of Tokyo), Hiraide Kōjirō 平出鏗二郎 (1869-1911) refers to Tokyo in the third decade of Meiji in the following terms.

More than three hundred years has passed since the bakufu was established on the Musashi plain, where the moon once rose and fell among the grasses, and now the light of the land shines brilliantly in the moonlight and the prosperity of the people grows more vigorously than do the grasses. Already it has been thirty years since this land was designated as a *miyako*. The light now shines more brilliantly and the prosperity continues

to increase. To call this the largest city in the east is truly no exaggeration.³³

The prosperity of Tokyo fed itself, as did the hustle and bustle of the *miyako*. I wish to emphasize again that Tokyo was defined as a *miyako* not so much by its political or courtly elements as by its urbanity. The not fully realized *miyako* consciousness of the eastern *miyako* was truly forgotten now that Tokyo had achieved the “zenith of prosperity.”³⁴

The *miyako* qualities of Tokyo were clearly founded in Edo’s highly developed urbanity. Despite the existence of several *miyako* during the Edo period, the number had been reduced to only one in Meiji Japan, thus realizing the principle espoused in the *Keichō kenbunshū*: “There can only be one sovereign ruler and one *miyako* in the land.” Today, more than ever, Tokyo monopolizes the urbane qualities of *miyako*. Moreover, as the sole *miyako*, Tokyo has unarguably achieved a position of cultural superiority far in excess of that enjoyed by the eastern *miyako*, which was merely one of three *miyako*.

The *Tōkyō fūzokushi* contains the following reference to the *miyako* consciousness of Tokyoites around 1897.

The citizens of *miyako* are self-reliant and know nothing of the provinces. They look down on anyone they suspect of being from outside Tokyo, and indiscriminately referring to them as “country bumpkins” (*inakappe* 田舎っぺ), they avoid them with a show of arrogance. As far as they’re concerned, the only place to view the cherry blossoms is Mukōjima 向島, the only temples worth visiting are *monzeki* 門跡 (imperial temples), and the only actor worth going to see is Danjūrō 團十郎. Anything not

33. Hiraide 1979, p. 76.

34. Shinoda 1907, p. 24.

related to Tokyo is basically not worth the effort. Thus even if a talented actor from Kyoto or Osaka were to perform in Tokyo, he would be very unlikely to get any recognition. Not that the citizens of Tokyo are particularly good judges of acting. They simply consider that anyone from the provinces can't be worth seeing, and so they don't make the effort to go in the first place."³⁵

Anywhere outside of Tokyo was thus regarded as *inaka*, which without exception included Kyoto and Osaka.

The large numbers of people that gathered in Tokyo were attracted to the "city amongst cities" for diverse reasons. The *Nanreishi* tells us that "everything is in abundance" in the city. Those newly arrived in Tokyo worked hard to support and increase the prosperity of the *miyako*, and as word spread of Tokyo being the "zenith of prosperity," young men from the provinces "made their way to Tokyo in search of honor and glory rather than wasting away in the countryside, causing Tokyo to expand daily." This was the natural direction of developments. The population in the old parts of the city lying within the boundary marked by the Yamanote line was around 600,000 in 1873. But by 1891 the population had doubled to 1.2 million, and by 1915 the figure was 2.25 million, or over three million if you include the suburban population.

The expanded significance of the urbane aspect within the concept of *miyako* resulted in the very concept itself being revised. While the existing courtly and political elements of the concept determined that the *miyako* be the governmental and cultural center of the country, Tokyo, as the "center of enlightenment" during the modernization process, absorbed not only large numbers of people, but also many of the functional and organizational qualities of the cities and towns from

35. Hiraide 1979, p. 76.

which these people came. In *Tōkyō gaku* 東京学 (The Study of Tokyo), which was first published in 1909 and became one of the major guides at the time for those seeking to study in Tokyo, Ishikawa Tengai 石川天崖 summarizes precisely the changes undergone by the concept of *miyako*.

Tokyo is affectionately known as the *miyako* in full bloom, and certainly there is every justification for referring to it as such. The *miyako* in full bloom . . . in addition to being serviced by convenient systems of land and sea transport, houses all the political apparatus of the country as a result of the tycoon choosing to locate the imperial residence there.³⁶

Needless to say, Ishikawa here refers to the courtly and political functions associated with the concept of *miyako*. He continues: "Consequently, not only business, but also the centers of education, the arts and crafts, and religion are all to be found in Tokyo."³⁷

While Ishikawa connects the two sentences with "consequently," it is not logically inevitable that the city housing the *tennō* and central government will of necessity become the focal point of the economy, culture, and "all other activities." While the connection is not as natural as Ishikawa would have us believe, it was the reality of what Tokyo had become by the last decade of Meiji that made such an assumption seem perfectly reasonable. Thus emerged, in Japanese language dictionaries, the contemporary meaning of *miyako* as "a prosperous place that forms the center of government, the economy, and culture." Here, the concept of *miyako* has been reconceived in response to the reality of Tokyo, in much the same way that it was once compelled to change to accommodate the reality of Kyoto.

36. Ishikawa 1909.

37. Ishikawa 1909, pp. 1-2.

On 12 September 1923, a rescript was issued following the Kantō earthquake that signaled the culmination of the *miyako*'s transfiguration over the thousand years since the establishment of Heian-kyō: "Tokyo is the capital, the political and economic center, and the cultural fountainhead of the empire."³⁸ While Tokyo is referred to as *shuto* (capital) in this rescript, "*miyako*," or perhaps "*teito*," which was in popular usage at the time, would have been more appropriate. It was, after all, on account of Tokyo being the *miyako* that its position as the capital as well as the economic and cultural focal point of the nation, was secured. Tokyo had, in other words, developed to become "the center of all trades." Although Tokyo emerged from a blending of disparate elements—the courtly function dating from ancient times, the urbane quality fostered during the Edo period, and the political function of the modern nation state—these elements had melded together within the revitalized *miyako*. In some respects, Tokyo can be regarded as a reincarnation of ancient Heian-kyō, the degree of integration evident in Tokyo by far outstripping that of Heian-kyō.

Tokyo was able to achieve the level of integration it did as a result of its formation as the *miyako* overlapping with Japan's modernization. The momentum of modernization saw all nature of activity introduced into Tokyo, with the reality of what the city had come to represent as the *miyako* peaking during the Meiji and Taishō periods. Despite previously likening Tokyo in some respects to a reincarnation of Heian-kyō, the perfect *miyako*, Tokyo was in actual fact far removed from Heian-kyō in terms of the range and scope of centralization.

Also, during the Edo period there was not much leeway in Edo for developing new modes of life, despite the social stability meaning that there was "plenty of everything" for everyone. The energy of people who arrived in the city was inevitably directed toward the refinement of

38. *Kantō daishinsai ni kansuru shōchoku*, p. 245.

existing ways of doing things, rather than expanding the “overall number of trades.” However, Tokyo, the modernizing *miyako* in full bloom, developed into the political, economic, and cultural focal point to an excessive extent as a result of being the *miyako*, and succeeded in creating the bustling, sophisticated air of a *miyako*. Allow me to quote *Tōkyō gaku*.

The men and women here, like beautifully handcrafted clothes, are truly magnificent in appearance. Not a single item is out of place on those who hold their heads high, the rainbow of colors catching the eye. And after nightfall the streetlights, electric and gas, light up like flowers to reveal the sleepless districts in all their splendor. This city is most certainly worthy of being called the *miyako* in full bloom.³⁹

In the half century following the Meiji Restoration, Tokyo literally became the *miyako* in full bloom, and the first true *miyako* since the decline of Heian-kyō. The historical irony is that having reached the point of extinction following the gradual decline of Kyoto, the ancient institution of *miyako* suddenly found itself revived as “ultimate *miyako*”—Tokyo. The essence of Tokyo lies in the overbearing presence of past eras. During the Edo period, when there existed several *miyako*, it seemed likely that a *miyako* would revert to being the equivalent of an urbane city, or else a further specialization of functions would culminate in one of these cities becoming the capital. If we advance one of the central pillars of social science theory, which claims that social “evolution” involves the specialization of functions, then the survival of the *miyako* is hindering the “evolution” of Japan, as a result of bestowing an excessive consolidation of functions in Tokyo.

Currently, the extreme centralization that characterizes Tokyo has

39. Ishikawa 1909, p. 2.

become a major social issue, although most of the discussion barely scratches the surface of the problem. As we have seen throughout our examination of the transition of *miyako*, the very existence of the notion is clearly at the root of the problem. Even today Tokyo is not merely a capital city, but the *miyako*, first and foremost. The problem of over-centralization is located in the stimulation by Japan's modernization of a concept that had been passed down by Kyoto over a period of more than a thousand years, and also in the realization of the *miyako* as never before. The question is, can we do without a concept that has been with us since antiquity?

