The Early Modern Warrior: Three Explorations of Samurai Life

Introduction

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The following three essays focus on lesser-known aspects of the early modern warrior experience: food, shopping, and travel. While each essay is part of a larger scholarly project, the intention of the articles presented here is to serve as an introduction to warrior life. This brief opening essay is designed to provide a context for understanding the rich history of the early modern warrior experience. It begins with a brief sketch of one of the most famous warriors in Japanese history and the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616). It then reviews warrior demography and society, warrior cultural practices, and the urban character of the warrior experience, providing references to secondary literature in English while contextualizing the essays that follow.[1]

Sketch of a Warrior:
Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543–1616)

Tokugawa Ieyasu, one of the most famous warriors in Japanese history, was born into a society in the throes of civil war and into an elite warrior family in difficult circumstances. His father, ruler of the northern part of Mikawa Province, was only sixteen and his mother only fourteen. His talented grandfather, who had helped establish the family name and built Okazaki Castle, was assassinated before he reached the age of twenty five. The constant battles between rival

warlords and the practice of exchanging family members as guarantees of loyalty meant that this young samurai's life was not likely to be stable. Premature death and separation from one's loved ones were in fact common experiences for many warriors. His own father was engaged in a string of campaigns against more powerful warlords who surrounded and threatened his territory. As a gesture of conciliation, Ieyasu's father sent him, at the age of five, as a hostage to a neighboring warlord. In transit, however, he was kidnapped by yet another rival warlord, and two years into his life in that domain learned that his father had died. Later that year he was transferred to Sumpu castle where he became a hostage of the Imagawa until the age of eighteen. Young samurai hostages such as Ieyasu were rarely treated as prisoners. In fact, at Sumpu Ieyasu received a full education in the military and cultural practices of the samurai; he learned to love the outdoors and the practice of falconry in particular; he was married at the age of fifteen to a relative of his captor; and he was sent on his first sortie at the age of sixteen. But even when he seized his independence as head of his natal family at the age of 18, defeated an uprising at the age of twenty-two, and unified Mikawa and took the name "Tokugawa" at the age of 24, his successes were related to the ongoing disruption of the old system of shogun-dominated warrior authority.[2]

Contrast these early, insecure experiences with Ieyasu's later life. In 1590 Ieyasu became ruler of the largest territory in all of Japan, the eastern provinces formerly controlled by the

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[1] I extend my gratitude to my collaborators Eric Rath, Constantine Vaporis, and Laura Nenzi. I also offer thanks to Matthew Stavros, Rachel Saunders, David Eason, Martha Chaiklin, Janice Katz, David Spafford, and Linda Pitelka. The map is by Scott Flodin.

[2] This brief outline of Tokugawa Ieyasu's career is based on my ongoing research into his life and material culture, which uses his letters, extant objects, and the many contemporaneous and slightly later documents to analyze his rise and establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate. Unfortunately, English-language resources on Ieyasu are few. Conrad Totman's popular biography, *Tokugawa Ieyasu: Shogun* (San Francisco: Heian International Inc., 1983) is out of print. A much older biography, A. L. Sadler's *The Maker of Modern Japan: The Life of Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1937) is still widely available but is entirely unreliable.

Hōjō, and he set up his new headquarters in the

Japan, circa 1600

Map 1. Japan circa 1600, detail.

village of Edo. Ten years later, he defeated at Sekigahara a powerful but ultimately disjointed assortment of warlords opposed to his preeminent national position and was rewarded in 1603 with court appointment to the post of shogun, allowing him to establish a new warrior government for Japan. In an act of confidence and to guarantee succession, he stepped down from the position of shogun in 1605 and passed it on to his accomplished son Hidetada. Ieyasu then spent his remaining years doting on his children and grandchildren and advising his son in Edo. From his retirement residence in Sumpu, where he had lived all those years before as a child hostage surrounded by a violent and insecure world, he enjoyed not only stability, but also a range of experiences long appreciated by warlords but that he now could pursue with vigor: regular banqueting, hunting for sport, leisure travel, and patronage of the Noh theater. Like the struggles of his early career, participation in these activities was still a deeply political act: alliances could be struck over tea, land could be confiscated in the name of hunting rights,[3] and status

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[3] Ieyasu's practice of setting aside land for his

could be displayed through the acquisition of antique paintings or powerful Noh masks. But the methods of confrontation had changed. When Ieyasu died in 1616, he was surrounded by friends, family, and vassals, relatively secure in the knowledge that he had pacified the forces that wreaked havoc on the country for over a century. His successors would struggle to perpetuate this Pax Tokugawa, but Ieyasu's part, at least, was done. Ieyasu began his life in volatility, and ended it in stability. As the essays in this issue illustrate, the Tokugawa stabilization of society would have profound consequences for all those with warrior status.

Warrior Demography and Society

To begin the process of examining the experiences of early modern samurai more generally, we must first ask how large the population of warriors was in premodern Japan. An exact answer is not possible because of the limitations of available primary sources, but broad demographic trends can be estimated. Samurai appear to have made up a small population of medieval Japan, only 1.6 to 1.8%.[4] Growth occurred in the sixteenth century, when shifts in battle tactics and leadership resulted in much larger armies.[5] The warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi's invasion of Kyushu, for example, involved more than

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and his family's hawking purposes has been well documented in Nesaki Mitsuo, *Shōgun no takagari* (Dōseisha, 1999).

[4] Historian William Wayne Farris estimates that in the early eighth century, Japan's total population was 5.8 to 6.4 million, with a warrior population that hovered around 110,000, or about 1.8% of the total. William Wayne Farris, *Japan's Medieval Population: Famine, Fertility, and Warfare in a Transformative Age* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 97.

[5] On changing tactics and growing armies: Delmer Brown, "The Impact of Firearms on Japanese Warfare, 1543–98," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 7:3 (May, 1948). Also, parts of Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

250,000 warriors.[6] Although the national warrior population was never counted during the Tokugawa period, historians estimate that samurai made up around 5-10% of the total population, which rose to nearly 30 million in the late seventeenth century and then hovered at that level until the nineteenth century.[7] These numbers are significant, as they indicate that during the medieval period warriors represented a truly tiny fraction of the overall population and in the peaceful years of the Tokugawa period they came to occupy a slightly larger slice of the demographic pie.

Who made up this population of warriors, a group described variably as *samurai* ("those who serve")*, bushi* (warriors, or, literally read, "military officers"), or *buke* (elite warriors)? Membership in general was defined by both birth and occupation.[8] Commoners recruited as footsoldiers (*ashigaru*) were not considered warriors unless they won special recognition and promotion for extraordinary service.[9] Rather, those who were born into established warrior lineages and who engaged in some sort of public military service maintained this distinct social status. In the medieval period, warrior status was part of the Kyoto court's system of ranks and hierarchy. Nagahara Keiji writes that "the status of samurai was defined within the framework of the medieval state which had the Emperor and the nobles at the head of its formal structure. The samurai, in short, was a status which qualified one for specified ranks within this state, and the principal function of the bushi was to serve as a military arm of the state."[10] The warfare of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, however, loosened status boundaries, and the need of warlords for larger armies created openings for those not from hereditary warrior families to gain access to the military profession. With the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate in 1603 and the defeat of the Toyotomi in 1615, opportunities for social mobility between samurai and non-samurai status declined markedly as Japan entered into a long period of peace and relative stability. Samurai left the countryside and, pulled from above and pushed from below, permanently relocated to urban centers, where they performed military service or worked in the growing domainal and shogunal bureaucracies. Likewise, occasions for peasants to prove their martial valor and thereby gain entrance to samurai status largely disappeared.[11] These changes hint at the

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[6] Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Hideyoshi* (Cambridge, MA: The Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1982), 89.

[7] See, for example, Eiko Ikegami, *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the Making of Modern Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 162; and Susan B. Hanley, *Everyday Things in Premodern Japan: The Hidden Legacy of Material Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997)*, 18. Hayami Akira, *The Historical Demography of Pre-Modern Japan* (University of Tokyo Press, 2001)*, argues that the Japanese population grew by approximately 1 percent per year in the seventeenth century, reaching 31 million by the time of the comprehensive survey in 1721.

[8] Buddhist priests who fought in wars during the medieval period, for example, were not categorized as warriors. See Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers, and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), chapter 6; and *The Teeth and Claws of the Buddha: Monastic Warriors and Sōhei in Japanese History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007).

[9] Little scholarship on *ashigaru* or lower-ranking warriors is available in English. In Japanese, see Sasama Yoshihiko, *Kakyū bushi ashigaru no seikatsu* (Yūzankaku, 1991) and Takayanagi Kaneyoshi, *Zusetsu Edo no kakyū bushi* (Kashiwashobō, 1980).

[10] Nagahara Keiji, "The Medieval Origins of the Eta-Hinin," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 5:2 (Summer, 1979): 398.

[11] Michael P. Birt, "Samurai in Passage: The Transformation of the Sixteenth-Century Kanto," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 11:2 (Summer, 1985): 369–370; Mary Elizabeth Berry, "Public Peace and Private Attachment: The Goals and Conduct of Power in Early Modern Japan," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 12:2 (Summer, 1986): 237–271; Philip Brown, *Central Author-*

profound ways in which warrior identity and labor changed over the centuries.

One of the defining characteristics of Tokugawa society was its broad division into four legally-binding social categories. Warriors were at the top, followed by agriculturalists, who were valued because they fed the nation. Next came artisans, who didn't produce resources but transformed them into goods for consumption. Merchants, whose profiteering was believed to drain the vitality out of society, were located at the bottom. The ideological foundations of this structure, borrowed from China's social hierarchy that placed scholar-officials on the top rung, was more significant as theory than practice, but still provided the broad structure. Within these categories, finer status gradations determined the complexities of daily interactions. As Donald Shively explains, "The Tokugawa authorities viewed society as consisting of dozens and dozens of status layers piled in hierarchal order. Each individual was expected to play the type-role assigned by birth and occupation; his behavior and consumption should be according to his level."[12] Because social interactions were based on discrimination, status was used "to regulate daily life to its basic details in Tokugawa Japan: social position, domicile, clothing, travel, housing, food, marriage, social interactions, occupation, expenditures, consumption, rituals, the employment of others, and various privileges, such as possessing a surname or wearing swords."[13]

For warriors, subdivisions of status were in part a result of gradations in rank. The top position in warrior society was the lord at the summit of the pyramid of feudal bonds of vassalage. In early modern Japan, this position was occupied by the Tokugawa shoguns, fifteen of whom ruled Japan before the collapse of this system in 1868.

ity and Local Autonomy in the Formation of Early Modern Japan: the Case of Kaga Domain (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).
[12] Donald H. Shively, "Sumptuary Regulation and Status in Early Tokugawa Japan," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964–1965): 143.
[13] Douglas R. Howland, "Samurai Status, Class, and Bureaucracy: A Historiographical Essay," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 60:2 (May, 2001): 360–361.

Below the Tokugawa shogun were the feudal warlords (*daimyō*), defined as direct vassals of the shogun with domains assessed at 10,000 *koku* or more. (*Koku* was a unit of rice equaling about 180 liters.) They ruled their fiefs with a fair degree of autonomy and in some cases enormous wealth. Below warlords in stipend and land ownership were the direct retainers (*hatamoto*, sometimes called "bannermen") of the shogun, with a stipend of less than 10,000 *koku* and more than 500 *koku*. Next in rank and income were housemen (*goke'nin*), a term that referred primarily to shogunal retainers during the Tokugawa period. Below these were the lowest-ranking warriors, foot soldiers and clerks who, depending on the source, might not be considered samurai at all. Within the domains of the semi-independent feudal lords, ranking systems differed depending on local tradition and the bureaucracy that had developed over time. In general, however, samurai were ranked by hereditary service obligations and their associated stipends.[14] These two variables—duty and economic means—resulted in enormous disparities in lifestyle, as we will see in the essays that follow, among those holding samurai status.

Even the most powerful of warriors, those who ruled their own semi-independent domains, were categorized and ranked in this society of distinctions. Warlords were broadly divided into three groups: Family Lords, or those who were related to the Tokugawa (*shimpan daimyō*); Inner Lords, or those whose ancestors had been vassals of Tokugawa Ieyasu (*fudai daimyō*); and Outer Lords, or those whose ancestors had not been vassals of Ieyasu before the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 (*tozama daimyō*). Those in the first and second group were given the greatest responsibilities in the shogunal bureaucracy and ruled the most strategically valuable domains in the archipelago, while those in the latter group tended to be scattered to the more distant regions of Japan, where they were less likely to mount an assault

[14] Harold Bolitho, "The *Han*," in John Whitney Hall, ed., *Early Modern Japan*, vol. 4 of *The Cambridge History of Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), contains a useful summary of domainal politics and hierarchies: 225–234.

on Edo.[15] Other means of discriminating among warriors were available. Warlords, for example, emphasized their genealogical connections (real or fictitious) to aristocratic families or famous warriors of the past. In the medieval period in particular, they also held various court ranks through which they could compete with one another. Domains of different size produced different incomes, which informed perhaps the ultimate display of warrior rank and status in the Tokugawa period: warlords' parades to Edo from their home domains.[16] Also important were their ceremonial seating and rituals within the confines of Edo castle.[17]

An interesting example of how distinctions of rank influenced the structures of daily life can be seen in the following description of education during the Tokugawa period:

> At one school, that run by the government of the Kaga fief, for instance, it was laid down that members from the highest families should come to the school accompanied by only two retainers, one additional servant to look after the student's sandals during lectures, and one umbrella-holder on rainy days. The next rank could have one retainer, a sandal-minder and an umbrella-holder. The next, one retainer and a sandal-minder, but they should carry their own umbrellas. Younger sons and those of the lowest rank should come without servants; the school would provide someone to look after their

sandals. From other schools there survive detailed regulations of seating in the lecture room and the exact place at which swords were to be removed by people of different ranks—at the entrance, in a waiting room, or at their actual seat in the lecture hall.[18]

Maintaining the trappings of rank and status was expensive. Most warriors received stipends, derived from land that they nominally ruled but in fact rarely visited. Over time, however, these stipends became less and less valuable in relative terms. Here we need to make what David Howell calls a distinction between occupation and livelihood, between hereditary rank with its immutable stipend and temporary rank or work with a salary that could not be passed down to one's heir.[19] Warriors often took short-term domainal positions that earned them additional pay, or took on artisanal work in the home such as craft production to supplement official wages. But warrior status did not inure one to poverty or even downward mobility. As Howell notes, "[Y]ounger sons of low-ranking samurai who were neither adopted into other households as the heir nor given service appointment of their own dropped out of samurai status entirely." More famously, in the second half of the Tokugawa period, inflation, famine, and an unsustainable economic system combined to force most domainal lords into debt, with many mid- and low-ranking warriors becoming regular visitors to moneylenders.[20] In such hard economic times merchants and artisans with the means and con-

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[15] See Albert Craig's discussion of one particularly important *tozama* house, the Mōri, in "Chōshū and the Tokugawa Polity," the first chapter of his *Chōshū in the Meiji Restoration* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961).

[16] Constantine N. Vaporis, "To Edo and Back: Alternate Attendance and Japanese Culture in the Early Modern Period," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 23:1 (Winter, 1997): 25–67.

[17] William H. Coaldrake, "Edo Architecture and Tokugawa Law." *Monumenta Nipponica* 36:3 (Autumn, 1981): 253–284; Kasaya Kazuhiko, "Bushi no mibun to kakushiki," in Asao Naohiro, ed., *Mibun to kakushiki*, v. 7 of *Nihon no kinsei* (Chūōkōronsha, 1992), 179–224.

[18] R. P. Dore, "Talent and the Social Order in Tokugawa Japan," *Past and Present* 21 (April, 1962): 62.

[19] David Howell, *Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 25.

[20] See, for example, Bolitho, "The *Han*," 213–225; Susan B. Hanley and Kozo Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change in Preindustrial Japan, 1600–1868* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); Aono Shunsui, *Daimyō to ryōmin* (Kyōikusha, 1983); Katsu Kokichi, *Musui's Story: The Autobiography of a Tokugawa Samurai* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991).

nections could purchase samurai status with its rights and privileges, but sometimes without the onerous duties of service.[21]

Warrior Cultural Practices

Despite such economic constraints, from the time of their first involvement in national politics, elite warriors in Japan had been serious patrons and students of calligraphy, poetry, and music, cultural practices of the Kyoto court, as well as the forms of cultural production associated with esoteric and popular Buddhism and Shintō. In the late medieval period, elite warriors also embraced various cultural practices that the historian Paul Varley has called "situational" (*yoriai*) arts, "which brought people together to engage socially or collectively in both the creation and the appreciation of art."[22] In the ritual preparation of tea, for example (often referred to as "the tea ceremony" in English), a warrior host invited a group of guests to visit a special room or hut designed in a rustic fashion, often surrounded by a carefully designed and maintained garden. The host arranged art for the guests to admire and served them two or more courses of tea as well as a simple meal, all according to prescribed rules of etiquette and using choreographed and rehearsed movements. Some medieval warrior leaders, such as Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa, loved versions of these tea gatherings described as "extravagant" (*basara*) in contemporaneous records.[23] Later elite warriors came to enjoy a more muted version of the tea gathering, and employed professional tea masters such as Imai Sōkyū (1520–1593) and Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591) to organize and facilitate events large and small.[24]

During the Tokugawa period tea became such a vital social grace for those of warrior status that entire tea schools arose catering solely to the samurai. Katagiri Sekishū (1605–1673), for example, was lord of the Koizumi domain in Yamato province, near present-day Nara. He oversaw a major expansion of Chion'in Temple in Kyoto in the 1630s, and while living in the city devoted himself to studying and practicing tea. In 1665, Sekishū was appointed tea master to the Tokugawa shogunate, and thereafter regularly served tea to Shogun Tokugawa Ietsuna and the elite warriors who attended him, as well as to a range of domainal lords resident in the capital. Many warriors studied tea with Sekishū before he died in 1673, and his school of tea practice spread among the samurai and some commoners, until by the nineteenth century, more than fifty branches of the Sekishū lineage of tea could be found in Japan.[25] The lowest ranking of warriors probably did not have the means or the opportunity to study tea, which could be expensive, but it was at the very least part of the aspiration of most warriors in early modern Japan.[26]

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[21] Howell, *Geographies*, 57–58.

[22] H. Paul Varley, "Cultural Life of the Warrior Elite in the Fourteenth Century," in Mass, *The Origins of Japan's Medieval World*, 201. Eiko Ikegami refers to these cultural practices as the "*za* arts," which refers to "the fact that they were performed collectively within a group of seated (*za*) participants." Eiko Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility: Aesthetic Networks and the Political Origins of Japanese Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 76.

[23] Donald Keene, *Yoshimasa and the Silver Pavilion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 145.

[24] On Imai Sōkyū, see Andrew M. Watsky, "Commerce, Politics, and Tea: The Career of Imai Sōkyū," and on Rikyū and his age, see Dale Slusser, "The Transformation of Tea Practice in Sixteenth-Century Japan," both in Morgan Pitelka, ed., *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History, and Practice* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003).

[25] See Morgan Pitelka, *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons, and Tea Practitioners in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), 63, for more details.

[26] The low-ranking warrior Morita Kyūemon served his domain, Tosa, as a potter. In 1678–79 the domain sent him to several cities and domains in Japan to study ceramic techniques and to take lessons in tea, which would improve his ability to make tea wares for tea practitioner customers. This implies that previously he had no formal training in tea, though we do know that the domainal lord of Tosa, as well as other high-ranking warriors in Shikoku, actively studied tea. See Louise Allison Cort, "A Tosa

An even more fundamental social and cultural practice than the study and practice of tea ritual was the distinct food production and consumption of warriors. Eric Rath explores the "dull" but symbolically powerful practice of elite samurai banquets in his article in this issue and illuminates the ways in which warrior diet and cuisine acted as a means of creating distinctions between other social groups and among warriors. These distinctions were heightened in the Tokugawa period when new sumptuary laws separated peasant, commoner, and samurai lifestyles through the regulation of architecture, dress, and cuisine. Warriors and other elites were permitted to eat polished white rice, the common staple of the Japanese diet today, while peasants were limited to grains such as barley and millet. The complex shogunal banquet analyzed by Rath here, on the other hand, represents a palpable expression of power and hierarchy. Rank and status were thus imbibed and embodied in the Tokugawa period, omnipresent dictates of identity that determined even the source and form of nourishment.

A serious passion of many warriors that related both to cuisine and to the arts of war was hunting. Using bows, spears, and swords to hunt rabbit, deer, wild boar, and even raccoon-dog (*tanuki*), appears to have been common among warriors in the medieval period, and continued as a rare opportunity to demonstrate one's battle prowess in the Tokugawa period. Luke Roberts notes the following story about a samurai official in the Tosa domain:

> One day in 1745 he was out hunting with friends, lying in wait on a boar's run. They had hired farmers as beaters who made a racket back in the hills to chase the animals into the ambush. A large boar came running. The samurai let loose the charges in their muskets, hitting it. The wounded and enraged boar charged; the hunters scattered to find safety in the trees. [He] had no tree nearby, and the boar came straight at him. Having no

alternative, he drew his sword and swung down at the boar, "killing it with one stroke," he wrote with great pride in his diary. This was the closest [he] had ever come to using the military skills he practiced regularly.[27]

Hunting thus appealed to the warrior's interest in battle and a desire to demonstrate (to himself and to his peers) mastery of certain weapons.

Perhaps a more subtle form of hunting that inspired zealous devotion was falconry, which Tokugawa Ieyasu pursued with particular intensity. Originally the preserve of aristocrats, early medieval warriors gradually seized the rights and privileges of this practice for themselves. Over the course of the sixteenth century the acquisition of the proper birds, access to and control of appropriate land, and the arrangement of specialized training and care for the animals (by falcon experts or *taka yakunin*) became closely intertwined with the growing authority of warlords like Ieyasu, who once said of the practice:

> Falconry is not just for pleasure. It goes without saying that you can go out to distant villages and sympathize with the suffering of the common people and the conditions of local soldiers. Physical labor lets your limbs become nimble. Rather than growing weary of the cold and the heat, illnesses and such naturally do not occur.

Even more vigorous is another passage attributed to Ieyasu that had clear repercussions for his successors, who were, after all, military rather than civilian leaders:

> Do not see falconry as merely the practice of catching as many birds as possible. In times of peace when both low and high laze about, the limbs go slack and people naturally become unable to rise up and fulfill their duties. If this happens, both low and high can exercise their bodies through activities such as deer hunting and falconry. Toss aside your

Potter in Edo," in Melinda Takeuchi, ed., *The Artist as Professional in Japan* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), for an introduction to Morita Kyūemon in English.

[27] Luke Roberts, "Mori Yoshiki: Samurai Government Officer," in Anne Walthall, ed., *The Human Tradition in Modern Japan* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 2001), 26.

palanquins and go on foot. Overcome the mountain slope, ford the river's current. Engage in various forms of labor and make your body strong. Through such activity, vassals have the opportunity to see the conditions of the strong and the weak on the outskirts [of the castle town]. Vassals will also exert themselves, turning them into healthy walkers and preparing them for any kind of service. Therefore, falconry for the warlord is a form of military strategizing and training.[28]

Like many of the cultural pursuits explored in this issue, falconry was ultimately a means of social and political control, as well as a demonstration of status.

Urban Warriors

The image of an armored samurai running or riding a horse over a hill into battle is, of course, a trope of modern American and Japanese cinema, and therefore immediately comes to mind when we imagine the lives of premodern Japanese warriors. In the early modern period, however, most Japanese of warrior status lived in urban centers for the majority of their lives, particularly after their rapid urbanization of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. [29] Though warriors did travel through, work in, and on occasion fight in the countryside, they were primarily castle-town or city dwellers, making them central to the development of Japan's urban culture and modern infrastructure. Their concentration of samurai in towns and cities and their frequent movement to and from Edo furthermore stimulated the economy and created a thriving national consumer culture. As Mary Elizabeth Berry notes about warriors during the Tokugawa

period, "[t]ransformed from landholding village notables into stipend-receiving urban consumers, the samurai generated, and depended upon, dense market constellations."[30]

The most significant urban warrior populations were found in castle towns, which proliferated in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These urban centers grew up around large fortified structures and over time acquired increasing importance as bureaucratic and commercial centers. The concentration of warrior bureaucrats and their families created the need for licensed merchants and artisans, and as markets grew and became more profitable, the population increased, particularly through immigration of peasants in search of new economic opportunities. Some of these towns grew into cities of significant size. Kanazawa and Nagoya, for example, had populations of more than 100,000 each, making them larger than contemporaneous European cities such as Amsterdam, Madrid, Milan, and Rome.[31] These urban centers did not grow organically, however, but were carefully planned and regulated by their warlord rulers with some input from commoner leaders. Indeed, early on in particular, castle towns were centrally planned and administered. Over time, however, commoners and other urban dwellers came to have a greater say in the appearances of their streets and neighborhoods.[32] In their general out-

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[28] Nesaki Mitsuo, *Shōgun no takagari* (Dōseisha, 1999), 36-37. In English, see Rachel Saunders, "Pursuits of Power: Falconry in Edo Period Japan," *Orientations* 36:2 (March 2005).

[29] James L. McClain explains that "Japanese urban growth during the years from 1580 to 1700 constitutes one of the most extraordinary periods of urbanization in world history" in his essay "Castle Towns and Daimyo Authority: Kanazawa in the Years 1583–1630," *Journal of Japanese Studies* 6:2 (Summer, 1980): 267.

[30] Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Information and Nation in the Early Modern Period* (Honolulu: University of California Press, 2006), 28.

[31] McClain, "Castle Towns and Daimyo Authority," 268.

[32] See the many publications of James L. McClain for more on this topic, including: *Kanazawa: A Seventeenth-Century Japanese Castle Town* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); "Edobashi: Power, Space, and Popular Culture in Edo," in *Edo and Paris: Urban Life and the State in the Early Modern Era*, ed. James L. McClain, John M. Merriman, and Ugawa Kaoru (New York: Cornell University Press, 1994); and "Space, Power, Wealth, and Status in Seventeenth-Century Osaka," in *Osaka: The Merchant's Capital of Early Modern Japan*, ed. James L. McClain and Wakita Osamu (New York: Cornell University Press, 1999).

line, castle towns spatially mapped social status. High- and mid-ranking warriors and certain Buddhist institutions tended to be housed inside the major fortifications and close to the central keep, while commoners were usually limited to space outside of the protected areas and separated by occupation, a system that amounted to a kind of status-based zoning.[33]

Warriors also could be found in significant numbers in Japan's largest cities: Kamakura and Kyoto during the early medieval period; Osaka and Kyoto in the late medieval period; and above all Edo during the Tokugawa period because it was home to the shogun and the required alternate residence of every domainal lord and his retinue. Although Edo grew to be probably the largest city on the planet, with a population of more than a million by the early eighteenth century, in the early seventeenth century it was a more modest castle town situated strategically between two rivers on the Musashino plateau. Chiyoda castle, the stronghold of the Tokugawa shogunate, was located at the center of the city, surrounded by moats and other fortifications and with strategic points of entry occupied by the residences of Tokugawa branch families and warlord allies. Artisanal and merchant neighborhoods soon grew up around the castle as well, primarily to serve the warrior populations that first settled the city. As originally conceived, this was a city built by, and for, the shogun and his administration; city officials, for example, referred to Edo as "The Lord's City" (*gofunai*) and made numerous attempts to clearly demarcate the borders and boundaries of what became a kind of living organism.[34] More and more of the

city became the playground of wealthy merchants, serving a commoner clientele low in status but increasingly powerful in terms of economic means. Over time, cities became the undisputed center for the production of early modern popular culture such as *bunraku* puppetry and kabuki theater, which often possessed themes and scripts that were witty and satirical critiques of the warrior overlords.

Constantine Vaporis explores the urban experience of a much lower-ranking and later warrior in his essay on the consumer activities of a samurai in Edo. "During periods of service to his lord in Edo, who was in turn in attendance on the Tokugawa shogun, the domainal samurai had ample spare time to take part in the money economy of the Tokugawa capital by dining at restaurants, food stalls and drinking establishments; searching for medications to treat bodily ailments or simply to maintain health; going to public baths; making pilgrimages to local shrines and temples, as well as attending festivals there; and, of course, shopping." Vaporis explores the purchases of two retainers serving in Edo from Hachinohe domain, particularly the souvenirs and gifts bought for and on behalf of friends and family back home. We learn that "a variety of teas and brown sugar, and tangerines (*mikan*)" made good gifts because they resisted spoilage during the long trip back to the domain, while specialty goods imported to Edo from other domains, such as "the Hida lacquerware (*shunkei*), Osaka *tabi* and archer's arm protector from Echizen," were sought after as well. Rather than commerce-hating Confucianists, as is often assumed of early modern samurai, Vaporis reveals members of the warrior class of early modern Japan to have been "astute consumers."

The final essay by Laura Nenzi, is a fitting conclusion to this exploration of the early modern samurai. She examines the travels of a young and well-off samurai to the cities of Nagasaki and Yokohama in 1858, just years before the revolution that would bring about the demise of the Tokugawa shogunate. Though he could not have known it at the time, this young warrior's "encounter with the foreign" serves as a useful

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[33] The case of Ichijōdani, the castle town established by the lords of the Echizen domain, is a good example. Ono Masatoshi, an archaeologist who has worked on the excavation of the city and on mapping its original shape and dimensions, provides maps and diagrams demonstrating the relationship between space and status in the city in his *Sengoku jōkamachi to kōkogaku* (Kōdansha, 1997), 18–24.

[34] Katō Takashi, "Governing Edo," in James McClain, John M. Merriman, & Ugawa Kaoru, eds., *Edo & Paris: Urban Life & the State in the Early Modern Era* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1994), 43.

prefiguring of what would soon become the task of the nation: making sense of the powerfully attractive and at times completely repellent Euro-American peoples and cultures who within a decade would be deeply involved in Japan's attempt to modernize. Initially repulsed by the foreigners and European material culture he encountered, he soon became an admirer of the West who felt confident that it could be met on its own terms. It is therefore with a melancholy sense of irony that Nenzi notes the circumstances of this young samurai's demise in the wars that brought about the end of his age: "At the end of an era which had witnessed the taming and domestication of the samurai, this curious intellect and admirer of things foreign remained loyal to his lord and died the death of a warrior."

The essays presented here merely skim the surface of the rich, textured histories of the lives of warriors in early modern Japan. They draw on materials explored in the growing Japanese literature on "the history of daily life" (*seikatsushi*), a field that needs further exploration in English-language studies. These essays also demonstrate that additional study of the lived experiences of the samurai and other status groups of early modern Japan will help us to better understand the relationship between power and identity. Many questions remain to be asked and answered: How did early modern warriors of different rank negotiate their hierarchical interactions and complex identities? What do changes in patterns of samurai material consumption reveal about shifts in economic power and social norms? Pursuit of these issues will necessarily build on prior scholarship on institutions, intellectual traditions, and cultural practices by illustrating how these structures influenced the daily lives of the samurai, and how the sometimes mundane realities of warriors, in turn, shaped the politics of early modern culture.