Transmission, Inheritance, Emulation 27 by Peter Goldsbury

INTERLUDE
XIII: Samurai and the Soil:
Received Traditions Linking Warriors, Agriculture, and Aikido

Morihei Ueshiba was born into a farming family and took up agriculture several times in his life: in Hokkaido around 1910, in Ayabe and Takeda in the 1920s, and in Iwama from 1942 onwards. At least one of my own aikido teachers emphasized the close connection he thought existed between warrior culture and the physical effort involved in the cultivation of land. On the other hand, as a previous column attempted to make clear, the close putative connection between warrior culture and agriculture / horticulture was one strain in the radical Shinto ultra-nationalism that affected Japan in the 1930s—at precisely the time that Morihei Ueshiba was starting and running his Kobukan Dojo. So one purpose of this essay is to establish as far as possible the degree to which this was an unhappy coincidence. To put this in more general terms, agrarianism was an important strain in this ultra-nationalism and agrarianism has a very long history, being very closely tied to warfare, race, and even genocide. As usual with these columns, evidence is set out relating to cultural factors of which the aikido practitioner might not be aware, and the reader is left to judge. This particular column puts under the microscope Japanese warrior culture in general, and as exemplified by samurai and the ideology known as *bushido*, and the relation of both to 'the soil'.

This cultural background is used as a basis for examining more closely the agricultural activities of Morihei Ueshiba, mentioned earlier. There are two extremes to avoid here. One is the straight romanticism that sees anything to do with the countryside as *ipso facto* superior to anything remotely urban; the other extreme is the opposite of this: the unyielding pessimism, first expounded as far back as the time of Hesiod (in his *Works and Days*), that sees life in the countryside as nothing other than a daily struggle with harsh, intractable, unpredictable elements, including unforgiving deities—and landlords. There is also the quite separate matter of any connection between Morihei Ueshiba's beliefs and activities relating to agriculture and the modern agrarianism that is a response to ecological questions like global warming and the limited sustainability of the earth's natural resources. Some practitioners of a modern martial system like aikido, which generally eschews competition and has a different set of priorities from those of combat sports, have connected their training with a much greater respect for the ecosystem of which they are a part. This respect for the ecosystem is a matter of great importance, but the specific question here is whether the present concerns of some aikido practitioners are a rediscovery of concerns that were also held by Morihei Ueshiba himself, or are something completely new, but something to which the agricultural activities of Morihei Ueshiba have been grafted on, as another 'received' or 'invented' tradition.

As background, we will need first to consider the general role of the warrior in a culture and then the more specific cultural connections between the warrior and agriculture, especially the role of agriculture in forming and supporting the warrior culture and—even more especially—the relationship believed to exist between bucolic virtues and warrior virtues. In respect of Japan, this involves the study of two related matters. One is the evolution and development of the samurai as a distinct social class, but with an ethical system that arises from this awareness of being a separate professional and social group. This is a complex and controversial matter. The other is the extent to which this social awareness was connected with or bounded by agrarianism, which is an ideology based on the importance of agriculture. Of some importance here is the importance of rice and the 'farm village' as a symbol of personal and especially social identity. After some preliminary distinctions concerning language, the essay continues with a general discussion of various topics related to the first matter: the evolution of samurai and *bushido*. After this the focus narrows to the second, more specific, issues involving the Japanese military castes and agriculture, especially agrarianism and agrarian nationalism.

Preliminaries:
1. The Warrior Ethos Across Cultures
Although this is disputed and in any case is virtually impossible to confirm, the history of warfare is sometimes thought to be coterminous with the history of society and rests on the general assumption that warriors have been around since human beings began to form more or less fixed communities. However, fighting and warriors have also been romanticized in every culture and this is certainly true of Japan's military culture. The main purpose of warriors is trained fighting, for their own benefit or, more preferably, for that of others also, but this display of power and 'legitimate' violence against or on behalf of those who do not possess the former and cannot practice the latter has always been given a carefully constructed cultural context. Politicians and philosophers have interpreted—or even constructed—this cultural context in various ways, but the possibility that legitimate violence on the part of the military (which here includes both armed forces and civil police) can become illegitimate and breed civil disturbance, and even civil war, has always rendered some kind of cultural boundaries necessary. In some cultures a sharp distinction is drawn between the armed forces, considered as 'warriors', and the civil police, considered as 'guardians', with a separate code of conduct expected of the latter. Sometimes the distinction is blurred, as it was in Japan during the 1930s and as it appears to be at the present time in the United States. It should also be noted that a distinction could be made here between warfare and war, even though for the warrior the distinction probably amounts to one of scale and in Japan during the 1930s and after, there was a seamless progression from one to the other.

The fundamental relationship between warriors and the culture of which they are a part can be seen as a spectrum, with the balance between military and non-military being struck along various points of the spectrum. A good example of a culture where the balance was tilted very heavily in favor of the military was the Greek city-state of Sparta. For very long periods the armed forces of Japan have occupied various points along this spectrum, especially in the twentieth century. From becoming a totalitarian military state in the 1930s, Japan moved to the opposite end of the spectrum, especially in the decades of the SCAP administration. There is some ambivalence about postwar Japan, however, since along with a horror of militarism shared by most Japanese, there exists a very large and sophisticated military force that acts under the official banner of 'self-defence', but which is now seeking a wider role. There are occasional outbreaks of nostalgia for a golden age that is believed to have existed before the years of the 'dark valley' of the 1930s and the postwar reaction. This nostalgia is sometimes presented as a desire to return to a 'normal' situation, with the military occupying a similar role in Japan to that which is believed to exist in other unspecified nations, of which Japan counts itself as an ally.

2. Language Matters:
Knights, *Bushi*, and Samurai
(NOTE: This discussion on language follows the same pattern as in *Transmission, Inheritance, Emulation 26* and readers who need more information on written Japanese might also find the Digression in *TIE 26* of some use.)
In traditional Japan culture, warriors were denoted in several ways, which probably reflected the changing circumstances in which they operated. Some scholars, for example, William Wayne Farris (see below), regards the items on the following list as reflecting the chronological development of the military class.

Tsuwamono [つわもの], which is the Japanese *kun* reading for 兵 (Radicals 12, 69). The Chinese-derived ON reading for this character is HEI or HYOU and the basic meaning is weapons, warfare and the person who carries weapons or wages war, namely, the soldier. The *kai-ji* [解字] explanation for 兵 suggests that the character combines 斤 (ちょうな , ておの 手斧) and 収 = 両手 [two hands]: an adze or back hammer and two hands: 両手でちょうなを用い、木の面を打って、平らにする意、ひいて、武器を持つ人、兵士の意に用いる: to use an adze or back hammer with both hands; to use such a tool to make the surface of a tree flat or smooth and, by extension, one who holds a weapon, namely, a soldier.
The Kadokawa *Daijirin* gives a large number of compounds, of which the following is a very small selection:兵士 [*heishi*: soldier], 兵家 [*heika*: strategist], 兵隊 [*heitai*: soldier, sailor]; 海兵隊 [*kaiheitai*: Marine Corps]; and 兵卒 [*heisotsu*: private, enlisted man of low rank], but there is no suggestion of the later meaning of samurai. *Heishi* was the term for peasants who were periodically conscripted into the militia run by the early Yamato emperors and *heitai* / *kaiheitai* is also used for members of the present-day armed forces.

Mononofu [もののふ].
This, again, is the Japanese *kun* reading of compounds that can be written in more than one way, but which later came to designate 武士. (See below.) The *Kokugo Daijiten* defines a *mononofu* as 「武勇をもって主君に仕え戦場で戦う人」: a person who shows bravery in fighting for his lord on the battlefield. Other equivalent expressions given are 武人 [*bujin*], 武者 [*musha*], 戦士 [*senshi*], and つわもの [*tsuwamono*].

MU-SHA 武者 (Radicals 77, 125)
This is a compound word composed of two characters, 武 and 者 , read as MU and SHA, respectively. The second character here is 者, a general character for 'person' or 'thing', of which the Japanese *kun* reading is *mono*. The character武is usually combined with other characters and, in view of its meaning, it is seen in a vast number of compounds, but the character does not usually come first. When combined with 者, this first character is read as MU, but this reading is seen very rarely, with compounds of *MUSHA* (such as 武者修業 / 武者修行: *musha shuugyou*) and *MUSASHI* [武蔵: a proper name, of places or persons] being the main occurrences.

BU-SHI 武士 (Radicals 77, 33)
This is a compound word again composed of two characters, 武 and 士 , read as BU and SHI, respectively. These are the Chinese-based ON reading of the characters. The first character, BU, has a cluster of meanings, all to do with military matters. It also has the Japanese *kun* reading of *take* or *takeshi*, which means 'brave'.

The second character has a wider meaning, but this depends on how the character is read. If it read as *SHI*, it has a wide meaning, denoting a man, gentleman, scholar—or a samurai. However, it can also be read as *samurai*, which is the Japanese *kun* reading, and in this case has the more specific meaning of a samurai. The combination of BU and SHI can also be read as もののふ [*mononofu*] and has a similar but wider meaning, namely, 'warrior' or 'samurai'.

Bushi is a general term used and denotes all the various ranks of military officers (but not, apparently, enlisted men). In his book *Hired Swords* (to be discussed below), Karl Friday is very reluctant to apply the term to the military groups which arose in the Heian period, on the grounds that *bushi* and *bushidan* [warrior groups] are historiographical terms and were not prevalent until the 1930s. (His arguments, too detailed to deal with here, can be found on pp. 93-95, 181 of *Hired Swords*.)

From *BUSHI*, the important compound *BUSHI-DOU* [武士道] has been derived (the usual truncated spelling, without the final 'u', is derived from the Hepburn system of romanization). It basically means '*bushi* way' (and like many other compounds ending in *dou*, *aiki-dou* can be read in a similar fashion as '*aiki* way'), but in 'bushido' *bushi* is usually given the narrower meaning of 'samurai' or the

romantic meaning of ‘warrior', and not the more general meaning of ‘soldier'. The reason for this is to emphasize the spiritual aspects of *bushido*, especially the military virtues supposedly deriving from the close relationship deemed to exist between the samurai and his lord. However, in the 1930s the object of *bushido* was deemed to be the emperor and as the Pacific War progressed—and turned to Japan's disadvantage, the obligations of *bushido* was extended to all Japanese, whether they were in the armed forces or not. So all Japanese were regarded as *bushi*. There is more discussion of this point below.

BU-KE 武家 (Radicals 77, 40)
The second character here can also be read as *KA*, *KE*, or *ie*, and means ‘house' or ‘family'. A common compound is *buke-yashiki* [武家屋敷], which denoted the large family mansions built by the samurai retainers of a daimyo and which surrounded the castle of the daimyo. So the meaning really is ‘warrior house', and so 武家, as ‘warrior house', can also be understood in the wider sense of ‘family'.

BU-JIN 武人 (Radicals 77, 33)
The second character here is the normal radical for ‘person', more specific than 者.

Samurai 侍 (Radicals 9, 32, 41)
This character has the Chinese-based ON reading of *JI* and the Japanese *kun* readings of *habe* [はべ]. The character can be used in a verb, *haberu*, which means ‘to serve' or ‘to wait upon', but this action can also be expressed by adding the verb *suru* to the ON reading JI, as in *jisuru* [侍する]. The ON reading is preferred in the vast majority of compounds, as in 侍女 [*jijo*: lady-in-waiting], 侍史 [*jichuu*, private secretary], or 侍者 [*jisha*: attendant, valet]. The character also has the Japanese *kun* reading of *saburau* / *saburai* / *samurai* and has a variety of meanings.

Since there was some development here, we will first discuss the meanings starting from the character itself. According to the 解字 [*kai-ji*] explanation, the character is combined from two other characters: the radical 人 [*hito*: person], giving the meaning; and the character 寺 [*ji*], giving the sound. The explanation is quite imaginative:

> 奴隷は主人の傍らにいて使役に徒事したところから、尊者にはべる人に意に用いる。一説に、意符の意符寺は、まつ意（待＝たい）で、貴人に仕えてその用事を待つ人の意を表すという。*(大事源, p. 106.)*

From the meaning of the slave or servant standing by the master waiting to be sent on an errand, that of serving the master developed. An added explanation is that the sound item *ji* has the meaning of wait (*matsu*, read as *tai*), so we have the servant waiting to be sent on the lord's business.

General Discussion of the Term *Samurai*
The definitions in the *Kojien* dictionary are organized according to the order of the *kana* syllable system and *samurai* has four connected entries: さぶらい, さぶらう, さむらい, さむらう [*saburai*, *saburau*, *samurai*, *samurau*], the different endings denoting nouns as against verbs. The dictionary will record the commonly acceptable definitions of the terms.

Saburai [さぶらい]
After giving the character [侍], the *Kojien* notes that this is the noun form of the corresponding verb *saburau*. The general definition is 「主君のそば近く仕えること。また、その人。さぶらいびと。」: *To be by the side of one's lord and master and serve; a person who does this; a person who serves*. A detailed and specialized definition then follows relating to the Heian period: 「平安時代、新王・摂関・公卿家に仕えて家務を執行した者。多く五位・六位に除された。武器をもって貴族の警固に任じたもの。平安中期、禁中滝口、院の北 面、東官の帯刀などの武士の称。」We are then referred to the entry for *samurai*. (*Kojien* [広辞苑], 1998, p. 1086.)

Saburau [さぶらう]
The *Kojien* has a lengthy entry for *saburau*, but my Japanese students had never learned the word and had no idea what it meant. Not that this necessarily means a great deal, but, assuming that my students form a reasonable sample of those in a certain age range, it seems clear that the word is not really used among part of the Japanese population. The dictionary gives the term as a reading for two characters: 候, and also 侍, which is normal reading for *samurai*, as given above. The first character is more interesting, being the classical verb ending *sourou*, which is equivalent to ます: the present tense of a verb. Two more characters are given: 居る [*iru*] and 有る [*aru*], which both mean ‘to be'.

The basic definition given is じっとそばで見守り待機する意 [*jitto soba de mimamori taiki suru i* : to be ready and waiting by the side (of someone) -- *jitto* suggesting an unwavering readiness].

The reference to *iru* [居る] and *aru* [有る] also suggests an emphasis here on 丁寧語 [*teinei-go*] or 敬語 [*keigo*], which is honorific speech. In explaining this usage of the word, the dictionary records that a difference evolved between male and female usage here. In the Kamakura period, males used *saurabu* and females used *saburau*, but the latter changed to *samurau* in the Muromachi period. So, apart from the general usage of being at someone's side and serving someone of higher rank, there also the general meaning of ‘to be', expressed honorifically, like *gozaimasu* and *arimasu*.

Samurai [さむらい]
Here the dictionary definition is quite specific and cites the periods in which the term was used. From the equivalent to *saburai*, as recorded above, the *Kojien* notes that the word is also written as 士 and 武士 and adds that:

> 中世では一般庶民を意味する凡下と区別される身分呼称で、騎馬・服装・刑罰などの面で特権的な扱いを受けた。江戸時代では、幕府の旗本、

> 諸藩の中小姓以上、また士農工商の うちの士身分の者を指す。
>
> *Chuusei dewa ippan shomin wo imi suru bonge to kubetsu sareru mibun koshou de, kiba, fukusou, keibatsu nado no men de tokkentekina atsukai wo uketa. Edo jidai dewa, bakufu no hatamoto, shofu no chuushousei ijou, mata shinoukoushou no uchi no shimibun no mono wo sasu.* (*Kojien* [広辞苑], 1998, p. 1086.)

This definition thus reflects the historical development of the term. In medieval times it served to elevate one group from the *hoi polloi*, the marks of which were means of travel (horse riding), dress, and the power to punish for transgressions. In the Edo period it marked the upper ranks in the shogunate (*hatamoto*, or standard bearer), or persons of higher rank in each domain, and was used to distinguish persons of standing within the four categories of warrior, peasant, artisan, or merchant. There is no emphasis in the definitions on the bond with the samurai's lord or on any particular qualities required. So no special characteristics of the samurai 'ethic' are to be found in the dictionary definitions.

Samurau [さむらう]
There is no explanation for this term given in the *Kojien* and the reader is referred to the entry for *saburau*.

Some have suggested that there are two separate and unconnected meanings for the term *samurai*: one who serves, and the higher-ranking member of the *bushi* class. However, the evidence presented above, reflecting the received opinions on the texts themselves, does not provide any basis for this. The controversy surrounding the term is based on conflicting opinions concerning the evolution of the class and the extent to which the qualities seen by those like Yamamoto Tsunetomo, writing in a later period, projected on to the class qualities that were never there to begin with. We will discuss these issues below.

4. Samurai: From First to Last
Even apart from any controversy, the term *samurai* has also been anglicized and has acquired a mystique of its own in English. It frequently appears in the titles of films and books, the former probably as a result of *Seven Samurai* and *Yojimbo*, Kurosawa's famous epic *jidai geki* [時代劇] films, starring actors like Mifune Toshiro. The books vary between illustrated coffee table volumes of little historical value to (far fewer) serious works of scholarly merit. In addition to general works on the samurai, books and films have appeared dealing with particular examples, especially the 'first' and 'last' members of this warrior class.

The First Samurai is the title of a scholarly work written by Karl F Friday about Taira Masakado [平将門: date of birth unknown; died 940]. As we shall see below, the evolution of the samurai is a highly controversial topic and Friday uses the life and revolt of Taira Masakado as a peg on which to hang his most recent research on the matter. *The Last Samurai* is a title that has been given to several different individuals and groups. It is the title of a scholarly work by Mark Ravina about Saigo Takamori (1827-1877) and his revolt in the south of Japan after the Meiji Restoration. It is also the title of a film starring Tom Cruise, also notionally based on Saigo Takamori and his revolt. It is part of the title of another book, written by a US serviceman named Don Jones, who fought in World War II. The book, *Oba: The Last Samurai: Saipan, 1945*, deals with a Japanese soldier named Oba Sakae (1914-1992) and the defence of Saipan in 1945. This book was also made into a film. Finally, *The Last Samurai* is part of the titles of two books by Romulus Hillsborough, one on the *Shinsengumi* and the other on Katsu Rintaro / Kaishu (1823-1899). The titles of the books are *Shinsengumi: The Shogun's Last Samurai Corps*, and *Samurai Revolution: The Dawn of Modern Japan Seen Through the Eyes of the Shogun's Last Samurai*. The *Shinsengumi* was an elite force drawn up by the shogun's government to eliminate those who would overthrow it; Katsu was another samurai from southwestern Japan, who worked to overthrow the said government and bring about the Meiji Restoration. As part of these activities, Katsu played a major role in laying the foundations of the modern Japanese navy.

A major problem with the term 'samurai' in English is that its use carries an assumption that the meaning of the term is the same when applied to people as different as Taira Masakado, Saigo Takamori, Katsu Rintaro and Oba Sakae. This is not the case. Another problem is the impression conveyed by the books and films mentioned in the previous paragraph, especially when applied to *gendai* general martial arts and ways like aikido. The so-called 'spiritual' dimensions of aikido are vaguely connected with a 'warrior' ethic, thought to go back to the days of the samurai and evidenced, for example, by slogans like *masakatsu agatsu katsu hayabi* and the seven virtues apparently symbolized by the pleats in the modern *hakama*. Morihei Ueshiba is sometimes invoked here, since he often used the slogan and is alleged to have talked about the pleats in the *hakama*. He must, one therefore assumes, have thought and behaved much like the samurai are fondly assumed to have thought and behaved. This, also, is not the case.

5. The Curious Phenomenon of *Bushido*:
The samurai are famous for being exponents of *bushido* and this term, also, has acquired a mystique in English—but of a different sort. Through his films, Kurosawa Akira has ensured that samurai have a reasonably good reputation outside Japan and this reputation has also been maintained by some excellent *jidai-geki* films made by Yamada Yoji, *The Twilight Samurai* (known as *Tasogare Seibe* 「たそがれ精兵衛」 in Japan) being a good example. By comparison, the mystique surrounding *bushido* is distinctly negative, conveying ruthless and fanatical devotion to duty, one of the results of which was the torture and murder of foreign prisoners-of-war during World War II. The film star Sanada Hiroyuki, in fact, is accomplished at portraying samurai in

jidai-geki such as *Tasogare Seibe* and also more modern military exponents of *bushido*, as in *The Railway Man*, a recent film about the building of the Burma railway.

This essay has ‘received traditions' as a subtitle. The choice was deliberate and perhaps a brief explanation is necessary. The original phrase coined by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in 1983 was ‘the invention of tradition' and Hobsbawn gives the following definition.

> *"'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past." (Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," Hobsbawn & Ranger, The Invention of Tradition, p. 1.)*

Examples given by Hobsbawm include the choice of a Gothic style for the nineteenth-century rebuilding of the British parliament and the postwar reconstruction of part of this building according to exactly the same plan as before. So there is a reference to the past (sc. the original Gothic style), but this need not be to the far distant past. Hobsbawn continues his explanation:

> *"Insofar as there is … a reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of ‘invented' traditions is that the continuity with it is largely factitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition. It is the contrast between the constant change and innovation of the modern world and the attempt to structure at least some parts of social life within it as unchanging and invariant, that makes the ‘invention of tradition' so interesting for historians of the past two centuries." (Hobsbawm, op.cit., p. 2.)*

It is crucial to Hobsbawm's argument that ‘tradition', in the sense intended by him, differs from ‘custom'. Traditions for Hobsbawm are invariant and the past "imposes fixed (normally formalized) practices, such as repetition". Custom does not preclude innovation, but it gives any desired change or innovation "the sanction of precedent, social continuity and natural law as expressed in history." Hobsbawn cites English customary or common law as a good example. ‘Custom' is the work that judges do in deciding cases in accordance with this customary law; ‘tradition' (in this case invented) is the wig, robe and other formal paraphernalia and other ritualized practices surrounding this work.

Hobsbawm also distinguishes ‘tradition' in his sense from the networks of ‘convention' and ‘routine', characteristic of social practices that need to be carried our repeatedly and have the tendency to become fixed practices. His example here is the wearing of helmets or hard hats for motor cyclists or soldiers, which follows clear practical logic, but the wearing of a particular type of hard hat in combination with a red jacket (called ‘pink') for fox-hunting follows a different kind of logic.

Some traditions associated with samurai and *bushido* are considered to be plausible examples of ‘invented tradition'. As it happens, much of the research spadework and intellectual scene setting on the samurai has been done by the scholars mentioned earlier, but there has been little discussion on samurai ‘traditions' and even less scholarly work has been done in English on the related concept of *bushido*. In a new book, entitled, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai: Nationalism, Internationalism and Bushido in Modern Japan*, Oleg Benesch gives a detailed explanation of the evolution of the concept of *bushido*. At the beginning of his book, Benesch discusses the arguments of Hobsbawn & Ranger and also the variations introduced by Stephen Vlastos, in a collection of essays published under the title of *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*. Some idea of the clusters of traditions that Vlastos has in mind can be gained from the section headings: "Harmony," "Village," "Folk," "Sports," "Gender," and "History."

Benesh regards *bushido* as one important example of an ‘invented tradition' in the senses explained by Hobsbawn and Ranger. However, other scholars have suggested that the concept of ‘invented tradition' needs to be refined somewhat. *Bushido* is clearly a received tradition, in the sense that people of one generation can talk of the traditions associated with the samurai and *bushido* as something passed down from earlier generations, which to them have no clear starting point. It might also be an ‘invented' tradition in the sense intended by Hobsbawm & Ranger and accepted by Benesch, but the general notion of what constitutes a ‘tradition', and the supposed invention of this tradition, by whom and for what purpose, are less clear. The case of *Chuushingura* is an illustration of the issues involved here and the general symbolism of cherry blossoms is another example. We will return to this matter of traditions, received or invented, in the conclusion to this essay.

The supposed association of *bushi* and agriculture is also a tradition, certainly received and argued by some scholars to have been invented, but Benesch does not discuss the samurai and agriculture at all. For a book as comprehensive in scope as his book appears to be, the omission might mean that he does not believe that there is such a link, or that the link is so obvious in a pre-industrial society that it does not need stating, or that reference to agrarianism or agrarian nationalism does not illuminate the close examination he makes of the historical development and multiple senses of *bushido*. We will discuss agrarianism in Part Three of this essay.

Part One:
1. Death or the Maiden? Samurai and Knights

In some of the scholarly literature Japanese samurai have often been compared with western knights, but such a comparison is a complex undertaking. It involves examining a number of separate but closely connected aspects under which the two may be compared: the development of weapons; the development of the mechanics and strategy of fighting; training for such fighting, usually by means of competitive tournaments; the rituals connected with victory; the importance of heroes and role models; the relationship between actual warfare and the romanticization of such in a warrior ethos, including the creation of legends, poems and tales designed to show the importance and superiority of the warrior; the evolution of the warrior ethos -- general warrior culture and ideology, exemplified for the samurai by the constant discussions concerning the combination of the world of fighting [*bu*: 武] and the world of letters or humanities [*bun*: 文]; the use of mythology and history; the social role of the warrior and the integration of warriors into society in general; the evolution of heraldry and the connection of heraldry with nobility, to mention some aspects. In any comparison it is important, however, to remember the secular origins of western chivalry and not see it solely as a warrior version of Christian ethics. The knights were indeed Christianized, but this was a grafting of something new on to what was already there—and flourishing. The samurai, too, have been depicted by Ozaki Yukio (1858-1954) as more-or-less English knights and by Nitobe Inazo (1862-1933) as more-or-less Christianized warriors, but both depictions are largely romantic fiction. Ozaki was the first to apply *bushido* to the context in which it is now regularly used—as a hallowed tradition, but which is also an ideology—and Nitobe took Ozaki's freshly minted concept and used it to present the samurai in a new light, as he saw it. Though his book, *Bushido: The Soul of the Samurai*, had been written for American readers, Nitobe's view of the samurai achieved some popularity in Japan, but this was long after his book had been translated into Japanese.

2. The Rise of the Samurai

Comparing samurai with knights is not the main purpose of this essay, but some scholars of Japanese history have used the issues involved in making such a comparison as a starting point for their analyses of the samurai and *bushido*. One of these issues is directly relevant to this essay, namely, the connection between the samurai and agriculture, or, to put it another way, the connection between being professional soldiers and being members of the landed gentry.

The origin and development of the samurai class is still a controversial topic, which is perhaps surprising when we consider that the general basis for the controversy is quite limited, consisting as it does of (1) many 軍記物 [*gunkimono*: 'war tales'] chronicles, such as 『平家物語』 [*Tales of the Heike*] and 『太平記』 [*Taiheiki*], which were generally written well after the events they describe and saw the events through later, biased, eyes, and (2) the later discussions about the samurai, which took place after they had ceased to be a regular fighting force. These contemporary debates focused on the demands of *bushido* and the 'samurai code', especially the conflict between loyalty and duty or righteousness. The controversy over the Ako Incident, which took place in 1701, and the discussions in and about the *Hagakure*, first published in 1906, are good examples of such debates.

The *gunkimono* tales, on which the evidence of the samurai is largely based, were written from around the tenth century through to the seventeenth century and combine much fiction with some fact.

> *"Focused primarily on warriors and warfare, the war tales are based on historical events but have been embellished to various degrees. Hence they are mixtures of history and fiction. Little is known about the authorship of any of the tales, although in some cases, such as the two most important tales, The Tale of the Heike [Heike Monogatari: 平家物語] and Taiheiki [太平記], they are clearly products of more than one author. As the principal repositories of information about warriors, their values, behavior and exploits for at least the tenth through fourteenth centuries, the tales are indispensable sources for historians investigating the earlier stages of the warrior ethos in Japan. But historians must also be cautious, for when studying the tales, they constantly need to judge between fact and fiction." (Sources of Japanese Tradition, Volume One, p. 267.)*

It is the separation of the fiction from fact, together with the conflicting assumptions supporting the explanations underlying the chronicles, that is the source of controversy. One issue for this essay rests on the assumptions involved in the notion of the samurai as a distinct warrior caste, with its own awareness of its special status and with an ethical system allegedly devised to match it. The issue of the ethical system can be seen from the following extract:

> *"As portrayed in the war tales, the vassal warrior is typically motivated by great personal loyalty to his lord, but he is also highly sensitive to his personal honor and the honor of his house. In this regard, warrior society in this age—and indeed throughout the pre-modern centuries—can aptly be described as a 'shame' society, inasmuch as the maintenance of honor required that the warrior avoid shame above all or, if he has been shamed, that he avenge the insult and redeem his honor. And therein lay a problem, for the demands made on the warriors by loyalty to his lord on the one hand and personal honor on the other could easily lead to a clash of interests in which the warrior was obliged to choose between the two—that is, between loyalty (lord) and honor (self). Although the loyalty-honor clash is not, in fact, a theme found in the war tales, it was always a potentially powerful issue among warriors." (Op. cit., p. 268.)*

Notwithstanding the controversy surrounding the origins, the time span of the samurai is quite long, from the rise of the Yamato emperors in the fifth and sixth centuries up until its abolition in the Meiji era in 1868. We can see the general fragility of the conceptual structure supporting the samurai, seen as a caste or class with a specific ethical system, by briefly examining the arguments of three scholars. The controversy and the arguments illustrate the degree to which the mystique of the samurai can influence even good scholarship.

2. 1. William Wayne Farris: 'Western Analogues' and Evolution

The discussion of samurai compared with western knights rests upon a more general assumption that it is possible to compare the fighting systems found in different cultures in a very basic and general way. However, this assumption rests on a general premise of cultural relativity and so does not envisage that any one culture is superior, nor does it depend on any particular paradigm of historical development. The 'western analogue' theory is based on a different assumption, which is that the framework for such a general discussion rests upon a 'paradigm', a supposedly superior model actually based on the evolution of knights in Europe after the decline of the Roman empire. A brief description of this is given by William Wayne Farris in his book, *Heavenly Warriors: The Evolution of Japan's Military, 500-1300.*

> *"The Western analogue theory held that European historical development was paradigmatic and that although Japan had started out under the influence of China, continental institutions had quickly failed. Japan entered an era of anarchy by 900, which resulted in the formation of powerful new engines of economic growth (private estates) and a nascent class (the samurai) to protect them. In 1185, the inevitable happened when Minamoto Yoritomo overthrew the effete Kyoto aristocracy and founded his shogunate. Feudalism was born in Japan." (Farris, Heavenly Warriors, 1995, p. xvii.)*

Farris presents a detailed account of the evolution of *bushi*, in which he detects the occurrence of several stages. The primary element in the early stages is the adoption by the Japanese of the mounted archer as the main instrument of warfare, which comes into clear focus after a major defeat in Korea in 633. Farris regards this—the accomplished horse rider who is expert with the bow, as well as the sword—as the defining mark of the later samurai, but he argues that the adoption came from Korea and was a local adaptation of a general characteristic of Asian warfare. The increasing skill and sophistication of the Japanese mounted archer went hand in hand with the gradual diminution in importance of infantry armies largely made up of peasant conscripts. Evidence for this lay in the long campaigns conducted against the *emishi* 'barbarians' in the northeast of Honshu during the eighth and ninth centuries. After the *emishi* had been subdued, there were domestic problems to deal with, epitomized by the revolt of Taira Masakado and the depredations of pirates in the Inland Sea area of Japan. After these had been put down, the prospect loomed of Mongol invasions and dealing with this threat, also, served to establish the class in its own right and as a result of the clash between the Taira and Minamoto, under the leadership of Minamoto Yoritomo they displaced the court as the effective means of government. The Kamakura shogunate did not last very long and power finally passed to the Hojo regents, at which point Farris ends his analysis.

Farris bases his analysis of *bushi* warfare on anthropological studies of the animal kingdom. Farris distinguishes two types and places them at opposite ends of a spectrum. One type is predatory warfare: "the human equivalent to a pride of lions attacking an antelope." Human examples given are Hitler's conquest of France in World War II or the Roman defeat of Carthage in the Punic Wars. The other type is intraspecific warfare and is "modeled on behavior frequently taking place between two animals of the same species."

> *"In intraspecific combat, ritual, individual battle among males involves elaborate weapons, and aims to secure dominance or the continuation of the males' contribution to the gene pool, usually within a group such as a family, region or class. The best examples of intraspecific warfare come from times when the state is weak and combat deteriorated into individual tests of strength and bravery, such as the jousts of medieval Europe to win the admiration of a lady or the battles of Homeric heroes to secure the fair Helen. In both these cases the style of combat -- individualized and highly ritualized -- are sure signs that the wars were intraspecific. Usually social scientists base the distinction between predatory and intraspecific conflicts as much on the means of combat as on the goals of either side. Aspects of traditional weaponry and war that appear irrational to the modern eye may have originated as parts of intraspecific conflict." (Farris, op.cit., pp. 8-9.)*

Basing his thinking on Robert L O'Connell's theories about the evolution of animal weapons and warfare allows Farris to depict the evolution of *bushi* warfare in much the same way. Given its wide timespan, close attention to detail, and extensive use of Japanese sources, *Heavenly Warriors* is probably as good a place as any to begin the serious study of the early evolution of the samurai as a military class. However, the account is not without problems, one being the emphasis that Farris puts on evolution and another being his account of the nature of warfare.

With respect to his theory of the evolution of *bushi*, Farris presents a development that unfolds in eight distinct stages, during the 800 years from 500 till 1300. However, the samurai as a class were abolished during the Meiji era, which began another 500 years after 1300, and this fact suggests that they might well have evolved further, at least until the beginning of the Tokugawa era and probably more dramatically afterwards, when they largely ceased to do any

fighting. The point here is not that *bushi* evolved, but that Farris's explanation in terms of evolution in fact has very limited value. Farris modified his views somewhat for the paperback edition of his book (published in 1995), but clearly not sufficiently to satisfy Karl F Friday, who, while accepting that Farris presents an alternative view to his own, goes on to attack his arguments in some detail.

2. 2. Karl F Friday: The Culture of War

One major issue for Friday is the role of the imperial court during this process of change, the options considered being that of a progressively incompetent bystander, incapable of governing the country, or of a canny and skilled organizer, that maintained a firm control of the whole process. Earlier scholars, such as George Sansom, Stephen Turnbull and Paul Varley, attributed the rise of the samurai as a distinct warrior class to the inability of the Heian court aristocracy to govern the country effectively, especially the southwestern and northeastern border areas. It was the inability of the Heian court, it is argued, absorbed as they were in the kind of leisurely activities recounted by Murasaki Shikibu in *Genji Monogatari* [『源氏物語』: *The Tale of Genji*], that led the aristocrats in these border areas to organize their own military forces to police the frontier, in process of which these forces eventually acquired their own status as samurai. Friday presents much evidence that this view is seriously mistaken.

Hired Swords did not go beyond the Heian period, but in 2004 Friday supplemented this work with *Samurai Warfare and the State in Early Medieval Japan*, a book with a more detailed account of the mechanics and culture of warfare. This is an exhaustive study of early samurai and samurai warfare during the Kamakura and Muromachi shogunates, for it was during this period the samurai gradually ceased to be hired mercenaries and became more of a 'warrior order'.

Friday has supplemented his books with a number of essays and articles, but his general aim is to undermine the commonly accepted thesis that the rise of the samurai as a distinct military class, with its own distinctive cultural and ethical system, was due to the inability of the Heian court to govern the country. Friday is also concerned to undermine any thesis that the samurai possessed this distinctive cultural identity and ethical system before the Tokugawa shogunate was established, when the samurai actually ceased fighting and became shogunate officials. Samurai certainly had a strong sense of honor and much of the warfare that took place occurred with increasing frequency because of perceived slights and insults. The oft-cited hallmark of the samurai, namely, devotion to his lord at all costs, was given an exceptionally flexible interpretation.

Friday's attack on the theories of Wayne Farris concerned the techniques and culture of warfare as much as the evolutionary nature of *bushi* development, but to see this more clearly, we need to consider the views of a third scholar, who is a social anthropologist rather than a historian.

2. 3. Eiko Ikegami: *Mibun* 身分, *Ichibun* 一分, and Ritualized Combat

In her book entitled, *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the Making of Modern Japan*, Eiko Ikegami criticizes both Farris and Friday for their response to earlier scholars who saw the rise of the samurai primarily in terms of economics and the technology of warfare.

> *"To challenge this view, they focus equally heavily on the history of warfare and military technology, and they claim that the samurai's appearance can be understood as a contingent result of the ancient Japanese state's military policies and reforms, as well as the sequences of wars and technological innovations." (Ikegami, The Taming of the Samurai, p. 55.)*

The problem with this approach, according to Ikegami, is that it reduces

> *"a complex social phenomenon to a single dimension. The complex issues of changing land tenure systems in Japan, the dynamics of class relationships, the organizational and cultural differences between the eleventh- and twelfth-century samurai on the one hand and ancient warriors on the other are either considered secondary (Farris) or simply not analyzed at all (Friday)." (ibid.)*

***Mibun*身分and *Ichibun* 一分**

This approach of Farris and Friday, it is argued, does not explain the differences between Japanese samurai and their military counterparts in China and Europe. In particular, the accounts omit a crucial element in the process, which is the emergence of *mibun* [身分: status], namely,

> *"a new social category, which in turn introduced a series of distinctive economic, political, military, organizational, and cultural changes. These features set them apart from the older court aristocracy." (ibid.)*

According to Ikegami, Farris argues that the samurai class in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was an ongoing development and was merely one variant of the Asian-style mounted archer predominant in the Middle East and the steppe. Eiko Ikegami presents her own very detailed account of the development of the samurai, but she places emphasis on some aspects that the other scholars do not. *Mibun* [身分: status], with the related concept of *ichibun* [一分: pride] is one such aspect, and her main argument is that it was *mibun* that differentiated the samurai from the aristocrats in the imperial court. In accordance with her basic premise, Ikegami presents an account of the development of the samurai focusing largely on *mibun* and the related concepts of *ichibun*, *hitomae* [人前:], *seken* [世間:], and *fukaku* [不覚:].

> *"Whereas the term ichibun refers to a samurai's individualistic feeling of pride inherent in his sense*

> *of dignity, the frequently occurring terms hitomae and seken have to do with a concern for his reputation. Hitomae (literally, 'person-front') denotes the honorable status that allowed a man to face his peers. In other words, it was his social appearance in the seken, the imagined community of honor, in which his honor was reflected and evaluated." (Ikegami, op.cit., pp. 230-231.)*

Ikegami's account is complex and thus difficult to summarize, though a summary of sorts is presented as a table on Page 333 of her book. The main problem with her account is that of timing: exactly when *mibun* and associated concepts became defining marks of the samurai as a class. For Ikegami, this new social category emerged very early on, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but other scholars suggest that its importance, at least, emerged later. In a paper on status and class, published in the *Journal of Asian Studies*, Douglas Howland makes the following point, supported by some serious documentation.

> *"Mibun refers to the circumstances of one's birth, one's family's rank among the noble or common, and hence one's station in life or position in society; we do well to translate mibun as social status. First used in China during the Song period (960-1279), the term grew in importance in Japan during the late sixteenth century, a period, like the Song, of great social change and mobility brought on by new commercial opportunities and warfare, both of which have tended throughout human history to promote new individuals and groups to higher positions in society. In that regard, mibun represents a conservative wish to reduce social fluidity and to fix social status." (Howland, "Samurai Status, Class, and Bureaucracy," 2001, JAS, 60, p. 355.)*

Vassals, Quarrels and Ritualized Combat

Ikegami uses the concept of *mibun* to present an account of samurai warfare and she connects the concept with the rise of vassalage in the Kamakura era. She regards vassalage as an innovation that emerged as Minamoto Yoritomo created a group of *gokenin* (direct vassals) and protected them in their relations with provincial governors and the *shoen* lords who were connected to the Kyoto aristocracy. As the *gokenin* expanded their power base, primarily through the acquisition of land, this protection created a debt relationship, since in return for the protection the vassal had to provide service in the form of military support in campaigns ordered by the shogun. She describes this relationship in terms of 'mental disposition'.

> *"The samurai developed a distinctive mental disposition, style of emotion, and spirit of self-sacrifice based upon the master-vassal relationship and their professional duties in military life." (Ikegami, op.cit., p. 84.)*

Ikegami deals with the possible conflicts between honor and duty by admitting that this is indeed a problem and suggesting that there were two types of master-vassal relationship: one representing an *autonomous* -- and more reciprocal -- relationship with the master, the other representing a more *heteronomous* relationship, wherein the vassals were much more tightly incorporated into the master's house, or *ie*.

The distinction between autonomy and heteronomy leads Ikegami to discuss the matter of *kenka* [喧嘩: quarrels]. These were semi-official, fairly closely defined affairs which were usually settled by *jiriki kyuusai* [自力救済: self-redress of grievances].

> *"The use of force was common, and the honor and pride of individuals and groups often erupted into open hostilities. Quarrels and fights…were wars of honor fought on private terrain, and any damage incurred in a quarrel had to be redeemed through acts of revenge. The principle of jiriki kyuusai represents a critical characteristic of medieval Japanese society." (Ikegami, op.cit., pp. 86-87.)*

The fact that the Kamakura and Muromachi shogunates issued codes of conduct prohibiting private warfare for solving disputes, especially disputes involving land tenure, suggests that such disputes were actually a regular occurrence. The consequence, that such quarrels often resulted in death, leads Ikegami to consider "the samurai's peculiar conjunction of honor, death and warfare."

> *"Of specific importance in this conjunction was a mental disposition that induced a samurai to risk his life for the sake of his reputation, particularly his military honor. This willingness to lose one's life is clear evidence of the emergence of a new norm. The samurai's honorific mentality and unique attitude towards death not only reflected their political economy, which enforced such an attitude, but, along with their professional military skills and technology (including the use of horses, bows, and swords), were a vital force in helping the samurai to achieve political hegemony over the country. Thus, the rise of the ethos of the honorable warrior was as much a catalyst of social change as it was its result." (Ikegami, op.cit., p. 95.)*

The matter of correct behavior in a quarrel was complicated by another concept deemed by Ikegami to be of crucial importance, especially in the Tokugawa shogunate, when the 'catalyst' had achieved the required 'social change' and wars among daimyo had largely ceased.

> *"The quarrel was also considered to be an accurate index of a man's preparedness during this period: his conduct under stress would reveal the quality of his mental and physical discipline. The samurai always had to be ready for a sudden crisis situation. Failure*

> *to rise to such an occasion received the humiliating label of fukaku (unpreparedness or negligence). Fukaku is a difficult concept to translate. Strictly speaking, it is not so much a specific act of cowardice as a want of preparedness to meet the challenges that a samurai would face. The warrior ideal of this period criticized a lack of proper attitude as much as improper behavior. Thus, the Tokugawa authorities often condemned both dimensions of a samurai's behavior: the act itself and the spirit behind it. Being labeled fukaku could have serious consequences. Therefore, even though the immediate cause of a quarrel might be trivial, the quarrel itself was an occasion (and actually almost only an occasion in this peaceful time) that revealed the samurai's quality of preparedness as a warrior." (Ikegami, op.cit., p. 213.)*

Ikegami presents a detailed account of early medieval warfare, which, according to Karl Friday, is incorrect, but has been 'reified' in many popular and textbook accounts. Friday cites several scholars but his main target, apart from Ikegami herself, is Stephen Turnbull. Friday offered the following riposte to Ikegami. His reference is to Heian warfare and one issue here is whether it could apply equally to later periods. Given her emphasis on *mibun* and related concepts, Ikegami assumes without much argument that it certainly could—and did.

> *"Popular images and a good bit of the scholarly received wisdom concerning combat during the Heian period suggest a picturesque and quaintly ritualized order to battles: Challenges were issued, followed by agreements on the time and place for fighting. At the appointed hour, the two sides would draw up their lines, and messengers would exchange formal, often written, declarations of hostilities. Special whistling or humming arrows were used to signal the opening of combat, which would commence with a general—and mostly ineffectual—exchange of volleys of arrows at a distance. After that, individual warriors would gallop forward; recite their names, pedigrees and battle résumés; and pair up with suitable opponents for one-on-one combats that would constitute the brunt of the day's fighting. Enemy troops who surrendered or were captured were treated with respect and honor, and care was taken to ensure the safety of noncombatants on or near the field." (Friday, The First Samurai, p. 43.)*

Friday condemns this sort of account for presenting an impossibly rosy picture of warfare, even as early as the Heian period. This is also the main ground of Friday's attack on the views of William Wayne Farris, when the latter presents *bushi* development as an example of intraspecific warfare.

> *"This hypothesis [on predatory and intraspecific conflict] is imaginative and tantalizing, but the analogy on which it turns breaks down at both ends. In the animal, as well as the human world, intra-specificity is a necessary condition of ritual combat, but it is far from a sufficient condition. Clearly, rules limiting the weapons, targets, and other conditions of warfare can evolve only for conflicts between constituent groups or individuals within a larger society whose members share and agree on the values underlying the rules. But neither the creation nor the observance of such rules can be expected unless the objectives -- what can be gained from victory -- are overshadowed by the consequences of winning by illegitimate means. In practice, ritual combat occurs when and only when the purpose of the combat is ritual." (Friday, Samurai, Warfare ad the State in Early Medieval Japan, pp. 135-136.)*

Friday adds a long footnote on intraspecific conflicts in the animal kingdom and the niceties of classical Greek and Trojan warfare, and suggests that Farris's analogy was an attempt to explain the 'received wisdom' on early samurai warfare, which emphasized the importance of ritual and formalism, enumerated by one scholar in six fundamental rules of samurai engagement:

> Fixing of the time and place for battles
> Guarantees for the safety of messengers exchanged at the start of battles
> Fighting centered on one-to-one duels (ikki uchi)
> Selection of suitable or worthy opponents by self-introduction (nanori)
> Honorable treatment for surrendered or captured enemy troops
> Guarantees for the safety on non-combatants on the battlefield

These rules were drawn up by a Japanese scholar, Ishii Shiro, in a book entitled, *Nihonjin no kokka seikatsu* (『日本人の国家生活』 = 'The National Life of the Japanese': the rules can be found in a section entitled 「つわもののの道」 [*Tsuwamono no Michi*: 'The Way of the Weapon-Bearer'] on pp. 14-23). In this connection, before he attempts a demolition of Ishii's six rules one by one, Friday notes that

> "*Analyses and descriptions of the gentlemanly rules alleged to have governed early samurai warfare all begin from the premise that such rules did in fact exist. Historians who have identified and endeavored to explain such ritual and formality on early medieval battlefields have done so because they expected to find it there. The blinders imposed by preconceptions have restricted these scholars' views of their sources and precluded consideration of alternative interpretations.*
>
> *Closer scrutiny of the sources, even the most familiar ones, indicates that Heian and Kamakura* bushi *were a good deal less gentlemanly in their battlefield*

> *antics than was once believed.*" (Friday, *ibid.*, p. 137.)

The comments made by Friday about Ishii Shiro would apply equally to the arguments advanced by Eiko Ikegami, discussed above. Ikegami uses Ishii's book as one of her sources. She places *mibun* and related concepts at the core of her account and it is not surprising that she finds much evidence from the *gunkimono* chronicles that such concepts did on fact exist. Whether she is also wearing restrictive 'blinders' is something for the reader to consider.

The issues raised by this controversy are quite important because samurai warfare in the Heian and Kamakura periods provides the basis for the tales told in the *gunkimono* [war chronicles] and the later accounts of the samurai given by those like Yamamoto Tsunetomo and Nitobe Inazo. They also indirectly relate to more recent questions concerning the nature of *budo* as a martial ethic. Aikido, especially, relies on the importance of this ethic, since, in the absence of the competition and championships seen in combat sports, it rests on a notion of *budo* as an undefined spiritual activity, but one that is based on technical skills supposedly learned on the battlefield and therefore grounded in a long history, extending back over the whole period covered by the three scholars discussed above. This assumption is based on an interpretation of samurai history that is traditionalist, in the sense that it argues, with Farris and Ikegami, that there was a seamless evolution of this ethical code right from the beginning. Friday, on the other hand, accepts the existence of the ethical code, but argues that this was a much later development, coming well after the samurai ceased to be warriors in any real sense. In fact, Friday goes further and argues in a paper presented in 2003 that the *budo* training itself—the foundation of aikido and the combat sports mentioned above—was a recent development, actually having little to do with battlefield experience. The *budo* schools which developed in the sixteenth century training were part and parcel of a "broader trend to systematization of knowledge and instruction in various artistic pursuits."

> "*During the Muromachi period, virtuoso calligraphy, flower arranging, music, drama, painting and the like began to think of their approaches to their arts as packages of information that could be transmitted to students in organized patterns, and to certify students' mastery of the teachings with licenses and diplomas.*
>
> *"The nascent* bugei ryuha *appropriated the forms, teaching methods, and vocabulary of these other applied arts. More importantly, however, the martial and other arts also shared a sense of ultimate—true—purpose, defined in the medieval Japanese concept of* 'michi' *or* 'path.' ... Ryuha bugei, *emerging within this cultural and philosophical milieu, took its place alongside poetry composition, incense judging, noh drama, the tea ceremony and numerous other medieval* michi." (Friday, "Off the Warpath," pp. 255-256.)

So according to Friday, the traditionalist account is faulty for three reasons, not one: (1) the ethical code is recent and (2) the technical training designed to instill and manifest the code is also recent, and (3) neither is based on battlefield experience.

Related issues have been raised by Oleg Benesch in his recent book on *bushido*, mentioned earlier. Like the evolution of *bushido* as an ideology, the evolution of the samurai as a distinct social class is certainly a cluster of 'received traditions', understood in a very wide sense, but some aspects of this evolution can also be seen as a set of 'invented' traditions, in the senses understood by Hobsbawm & Ranger and accepted by Benesch. Benesch argues that *bushido* was an ideology basically invented in the Meiji Restoration and projected back on to an earlier period. In the same vein, one can argue that received traditions of samurai as a distinct class or caste were actually developed in the Tokugawa era and after—well past the time when samurai actually used their martial skills—and then projected back on to an earlier period. One can thus ask to what extent the pre-Tokugawa 'samurai' themselves were aware that they constituted a distinct social class—a class of exponents of the ethical system of *bushido*—and to what extent this awareness existed in the period before they were officially sanctified as such a class by the Tokugawa shoguns.

3. The Romance of the Samurai.
There is insufficient space for a detailed discussion of the later history of the samurai, but we can set out the guidelines for such a discussion by considering the views of Yamaga Soko on the 'mission' of the samurai in the Tokugawa era. We can then conclude this discussion on the samurai by briefly examining two topics closely related to romantic samurai folklore: the Ako Incident & the 47 *Ronin*; and the *Hagakure*.

3. 1 Yamaga Soko [山鹿素行] on Tokugawa Samurai
In his book on *bushido*, Benesch regards Yamaga Soko (1622-1685) as a pioneer of *bushido*, in the sense that he has been held up by other, later, thinkers as the first to focus on the ideology and its meaning. However, Yamaga was not regarded with any favour in his own lifetime and was sent into exile in the Ako domain. It was only later that he was pardoned and rehabilitated and consequently called the Father of Bushido. Several people were responsible for this change and Benesch singles out Inoue Testujiro for particular attention and also General Nogi Maresuke, who led Japan to victory in the Russo-Japanese War. Nogi became a major embodiment of *bushido* in the eyes of the Japanese public, as we shall see below. Yamaga set out his views on the samurai in a discourse entitled 「士道」 [*Shidou*].

(For those who want to compare the Japanese original with translation made by Oleg Benesch, I have interspersed the translation with the Japanese text. Yamaga follows the same

style as Morihei Ueshiba and writes *okurigana* in *katakana*. He also occasionally uses the *yomikudashi-bun* style of Chinese *kanbun*, but to make it easier for *Aikiweb* students of Japanese, I have converted Yamaga's *okurigana* to *hiragana* and simplified the *yomikudashi-bun* parts. However, I have not modernized his choice of older Chinese characters. There is another translation, of a longer extract from *Shidou*, in *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Volume Two*, pp. 192-194.)

"*The tasks of a samurai are to reflect on his person, to find a lord and do his best in service, to interact with his companions in a trustworthy and warm manner, and to be mindful of his position while making duty his focus.*
凡そ、士の職と云うは、其身を顧に、主人を得て奉公の忠を尽し、朋輩に交て信を厚くし、身の独りを慎で義を専とするにあり。
Oyoso shi no shoku to iu no wa, sono mi wo omou ni, shujin wo ete houkou no chuu wo tsukushi, tomogara ni majiwarite shin wo tsukushi, mi no hitori wo tsutsushinde, gi wo moppara to suru ni ari.

In addition, he will not be able to prevent involvement in parent-child, sibling and spousal relationships.
面して己れが身に父子兄弟夫婦の不得已交接あり。
Shikou shite onore ga mi ni fushi-kyoudai-fufu no yamu wo ezaru kousetsu ari.

Without these, there could be no proper human morality among all the other people under Heaven, but the tasks of the farmers, artisans and merchants do not allow free time, so they are they are not always able to follow them and fulfill the Way.
是又天下の万民各なくんば不可有の人倫なりといへども、農工商は其職業に暇あらざるを以て、常住相従て其道を不得尽。
Kore mata tenka no banmin onoono nakunba arubekarazaru no jinrin nari to iedemo, noukoushou wa sono shokugyou ni hima arazaru wo motte, joujuu ai shitagatte, sono michi wo tsukukoto wo ezu.

A samurai puts aside the tasks of the farmers, artisans and merchants, and the Way is his exclusive duty. In addition, if ever a person who is improper with regard to human morality appears among the three common classes, the samurai quickly punishes them, thus ensuring correct Heavenly morality on Earth.
士は農工商の業をさし置いて此道を専つとめ、三民の間苟も人倫をみだらん輩をば速に罰して、以て天下に天倫の正しきを待つ。
Shi wa noukoushou no nariwai wo sashioite kono michi wo moppara tsutome, sanmin no aida iyashiku mo jinrin wo midaran yakara wo ba sumiyakani ba shite, motte tenka ni tenrin no tadashiki wo matsu.

It should not be that the samurai knows the virtues of letteredness and martiality, but does not use them.
是士に文武之徳知不備ばあるべからず。
Kore shi ni bunbu no tokuchi sona zaran ba aru bekarazu.

Therefore, formally a samurai prepares for the use of swords, lances, bows and horses, while inwardly he will endeavor in the ways of lord-vassal, friend-friend, parent-child, brother-brother, and husband-wife relations. In his mind he has the way of letteredness, while outwardly he is martially prepared. The three common classes make him their teacher and honour him, and in accordance with his teachings they come to know what is essential and what is insignificant. "
されば形には剣戟弓馬の用をたらしめ、内には君臣朋友父子兄弟夫婦の道をつとめて、文道心にたり武備外に調て、三民自ら是師とし是を貴んで、其教にしたがい其本末をしるにしたり。
Sareba katachi ni wa kengeki kyuuba no you wo tarashime, uchi ni wa kunshin houyuu fushi kyoudai fuufu no michi wo tsutomete, bundou kokoro ni tari, bubi sotoni totonoite, sanmin onozu kara kore shitoshi kore wo toutonde, sono oshie ni shitagai sono honmatsu wo shiru ni shitari.
(Yamaga Soko, quoted by Benesch, Inventing the Way of the Samurai, p. 20; Japanese text from, 田原嗣郎, 守本順一郎, 『山鹿素行』, 日本思想体系 *32, 1970,* 岩波書店, *p. 32.)*

The above extract is part of a lengthy account that assumes a status hierarchy, which defines the series of occupations that are serviceable to society and also exhibits a moral system based on orderly social relations. Yamaga's theoretical hierarchy is clearly based on Chinese Confucian pronouncements, resting on the concept of *shimin* [四民: four classes: of officials, peasants, artisans and merchants], that go back to an original 'state of nature'. His argument is that when the human community was first separated from nature, the natural distribution of talent and ability justified the social division of labor and the moral values based on this division. Howland expresses this division succinctly in the paper cited earlier, commenting on the Confucian philosopher Mencius.

"*The key to the moral significance of labor is its productive value: the officials are morally highest because they assist the sovereign in ruling; the peasants second, because they work with the earth to produce the food that sustains human society; the artisans third, because they transform the products of the earth into tools useful to human society; and the merchants last, because, unproductive, they merely take advantages of human need in moving goods from one market to another.*" (Howland, *op.cit.*, p. 356.)

Yamaga squarely confronts the question of a samurai's function, but the problem with his account is the discrepancy, understood by many at the time he wrote it, between the ideal and the reality. Howland notes that,

> "*The perennial problem for all who consider status from the perspective of* shimin*, however, is the gap between the theoretical and the real. Some scholars, after a century of Tokugawa rule, realized that officials in China, defined by their learning and expertise, were markedly different from samurai in Japan, defined by their military service. ...To bridge the bookishness of the model and the reality of Tokugawa society, scholars have taken a number of routes, each of which emphasizes a more refined manifestation of status and thereby serves to ground* mibun *more concretely in social life.*" (Howland, *ibid*.)

In their notes on Yamaga's text, the editors constantly emphasize that by 士 [*shi*], Yamaga really means the more elevated 武士 [*bushi*], but Howland adds a footnote to the effect that Korean observers in 1719 rather slightingly remarked that Japan had no scholar officials [*shi* = 士], but only soldiers [*hei* = 兵]. The remark perhaps offers a context for the constant preoccupation that samurai had with 文武両道 [*bun-bu ryoudou*]: striking the correct balance between 'letteredness' and 'martiality'. As the *Pax Tokugawa* progressed, those in the lower three ranks perceived with increasing frequency—and accuracy—that many samurai were lacking in both.

Yamaga Soko became a major *bushido* opinion leader and, despite the absence of any hard evidence, is popularly thought to have influenced Ooishi Kuronosuke in his revenge attack on Lord Kira (to be discussed in the next section).

3. 2 The Romance of *Chuushingura* [忠臣蔵]

Chuushingura is the name given to the fictionalization on the stage of a series of events that occurred in Japan between 1701 and 1703, though some details of what actually happened are not known. The difficulties of interpretation are similar to those relating to the life of Miyamoto Musashi. The description of the incident that follows is summarized from several sources (See Further Reading).

Asano Naganori (1667-1701) was the lord of the Ako domain, which was situated in the province of Harima, in western Japan. Asano was a young *daimyo* who had been given responsibility for some of the ceremonies involved when legates from the imperial court in Kyoto came to the Shogun's castle in Edo. This was part of the duties incurred during the period of *sankin koutai* [参勤交代], imposed on all daimyo by the Tokugawa shoguns. Kira Yoshihisa (1641-1703) was not a daimyo, but an experienced and high-ranking chief of protocol to the third Shogun, Tokugawa Tsunayoshi, and apparently had the responsibility of instructing Asano about the ceremonies. At some point during the ceremonies to mark the visit of the imperial legates to give New Year greetings to the Shogun, Asano drew his sword and wounded Kira. We do not know the reason for this but as a result he was arrested and on the same day ordered to commit *seppuku* [切腹: death by disemboweling]. The punishment was carried out on the same day. Asano's estates were subsequently confiscated by the shogun and his samurai retainers were dispersed and became *rounin* [浪人: masterless samurai]. Just under two years later, a group of these retainers under the leadership of Ooishi Kuronosuke (1659-1703) attacked Kira's residence in Edo and beheaded Kira. In samurai warfare, it is considered of great importance for the victors to acquire and exhibit the head or heads of the defeated and so they took Kira's head to Asano's grave in Sengakuji, from where the retainers informed the authorities about what they had done and waited to be arrested. After six weeks of deliberation by the shogunate, the retainers were ordered to commit *seppuku* and did so, thereby concluding the incident.

Two weeks after the retainers were buried, the first dramatization of the incident was performed. It was not a direct dramatization of the actual events and was in any case closed down by the shogunate authorities, but it was followed by other dramatizations, culminating in *Kanadehon Chuushingura* in 1748. This adaptation of the story ranks with fleeting cherry blossoms as a Japanese cultural touchstone. The latest incarnation of the story is *47 Ronin*, which is a film basically built around one actor, Keanu Reeves, and containing mostly fiction, but interspersed with the very occasional fact. (My Japanese students much preferred the similarly fictional *The Last Samurai*, this time with the plot built around Tom Cruise. Along with the display of all the warrior virtues, fleeting cherry blossoms also play a major part in this film.) Together with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with its *Ode to Joy*, and NHK's annual 紅白歌合戦 [*kou-haku-uta-gas-sen*: Red and White Song Battle], the *Chushingura* story is a regular feature of year-end TV programmes in Japan and is virtually guaranteed to be a nostalgic reminder for Japanese audiences of their supposed martial heritage.

Many aspects of the Ako Incident and aftermath are unclear, as are the reasons why both became so popular as entertainment very soon afterwards. One reason postulated was the censorship imposed by the Tokugawa shogunate, which lasted more or less until the end of the shogunate. Since accounts of the incidents could not appear in print, they were circulated in manuscript form. Another reason is that the incident occurred during the Genroku era. This was a time when traditional arts, including martial arts, were increasingly being practiced by the general population and was also a time when it was also becoming increasingly clear to the general population that the samurai class were not living up to the reputation they had given themselves as expert warriors and as exemplars and guardians of the strict moral code imposed by the shogunate on the rest of the population.

The affair was the subject of much debate, which began very soon after the incident took place. Several issues were debated: why Asano attacked Kira in the first place, why Kira did not defend himself more adequately, why the retainers waited two years before carrying out their revenge on Kira, why they needed to take revenge at all, and, surprisingly, how many persons actually took part in the attack. Numbers vary between 46 and 48.

The contemporary debates allegedly focused on the issues of the ‘samurai code', namely, the conflict between loyalty and duty or righteousness. This is the view of John A Tucker and Barry Steben, in their introduction to the contributions to the debate presented in the second volume of *Sources of Japanese Tradition*. The chapter in question is entitled "The Way of the Warrior II", and the statement is made that

> "*the Way and ethos of the warrior (*bushido*) ... achieved it first notable articulation in medieval times.*"

There is a reference to the first volume of the same work, which contains a chapter, entitled "The Way of the Warrior", introduced and edited by Paul Varley. This chapter discusses the various *gunkimono* chronicles, briefly mentioned earlier, but, apart from the possibly conflicting claims of loyalty and honor, Varley does not, in fact, provide any articulation of the ‘way of the warrior' at this time, and one historian has questioned whether, if there was such a ‘way', it was anything more than a name. We have seen that Karl Friday has argued that the war tales cannot be taken at anything like their face value and, as we shall see below, Oleg Benesch has argued in addition that it is not at all clear what was actually meant by the ‘way of the warrior'. Certainly, Varley makes a reference to an issue that was the main focus of discussions about the Ako Incident, which is the choice to be made between loyalty (one's lord) and honor (oneself).

Eiko Ikegami makes a more complex analysis. According to Ikegami, the emphasis on *mibun*, *ichibun*, *hitomae*, *seken*, and *fukaku* as distinguishing marks of the samurai ethos, increased in importance to the extent that their ability to rely on actual warfare and martial prowess declined. The conflicting interplay of these distinguishing marks led to a "moral dilemma" concerning *kenka* [quarrels].

> "*If a man retaliates in answer to an insult, he will be executed in the name of law and order. If he keeps quiet, he might survive, but he will be dishonored in the samurai community. At the same time, since the Tokugawa system did not allow commoners to hold government positions, the samurai's military status was also their symbol of social dominance. Thus, both the state and the samurai never abandoned the principle that lay at the base of their military culture. The problem for the samurai was that, although he was fully incorporated into the state's political culture and had no economic basis for independence, he was required on moral grounds to demonstrate his ability to deviate from the organization's laws when they touched his personal honor.*
>
> *The collective honor of the samurai class was in fact the symbolic architectural foundation of the* bakuhan *state. The samurai were politically defined as men worthy to be the rulers of Japan because they were warriors; it was therefore difficult for the authorities to reject this aggressive tradition of honor in its totality.*" (Ikegami, *op.cit.*, pp. 212-213.)

Ikegami thus places heavy emphasis on the contradiction involved in attempting to follow the code. For Ikegami, the focus of the contradiction was the doctrine and practice of *kenka-ryou-seiba* [喧嘩両征伐: severe punishment of both sides in a quarrel], a practice that became increasingly established in the period of civil war [戦国時代: *sengoku jidai*: 1467-1590], and which was adopted by the Tokugawa shoguns. The practice existed side by side with the older practice of *jiriki kyuusai* [自力救済: self-redress of grievances], mentioned earlier, but gradually displaced this, as the *sengoku daimyo* increasingly discouraged the violent settlement of individual quarrels. However, the Tokugawa shogunate, in turn, gradually passed beyond the crude practice of *kenka-ryou-seiba* and developed a third way: the state-sanctioned resolution of quarrels that curbed the freedom of samurai to resort to private conflict resolution whilst strengthening the status of the samurai as a group that had an effective monopoly on the use of legitimate violence.

Ikegami gives various examples of how the shogunate dealt with outbreaks of violence involving samurai and discusses in particular quarrels involving *kabuki mono* [歌舞伎者: social deviants] and violent fights over male-male love relationships with *wakashu* [若衆: ‘beautiful boys'], which were common among samurai. Guidebooks were even produced for the correct conduct of male love:

> "*These guidebooks to samurai homosexuality usually commended exclusive relationships and praised lovers who sacrificed their lives for the sake of their beloved.*"
>
> "*Violent fights over the favors of beautiful young boys were not only a normal part of samurai life during this time; they were often considered acceptable expressions of honorific sentiments. ... We cannot understand some of the incidents of honorific violence without taking the prevailing sentiments and erotic aesthetic of male-male love into consideration.*" (Ikegami, *op.cit.*, pp. 209-210.)

According to Ikegami, contemporary reactions to the Ako Incident were a kind of commentary on all the aspects of this contradiction and her analysis makes use of all the concepts of *mibun*, *ichibun*, *hitomae*, *seken*, and *fukaku*, discussed above. Ikegami thus concludes that there was indeed a code, but that the "emotional dilemmas resulting from the cultural contradictions of the Tokugawa samurai" ensured that the

code was very difficult to follow. Oleg Benesch, on the other hand, argues that for the so-called samurai there is no clearly defined ethical code at all, and that the early discussions of the Ako Incident are an illustration of this fact. He discusses the *Chuushingura* phenomenon in the second chapter of his book as background to the invention of *bushido* sometime later.

> "*...the Ako Incident of 1703 is one event that serves as a fulcrum for* ***attempts to create*** *a Japanese warrior ethic. This event is frequently mentioned in discussions of samurai ethics and behaviour and ... became one of the most popular sources for samurai narrative by the mid-eighteenth century and from Meiji onwards was incorporated into* bushido*-related reassessments that posited it as the key event in Japanese samurai warrior history.*" (Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai*, p. 22. My emphasis.)

Benesch makes the important point that the Ako Incident was not an example of behavior that could be accepted as representative of samurai ethics because it was actually unique: it was the only case in the Edo period of a revenge killing carried out by a lord's retainers. It was not an example of a family vendetta, which permitted revenge in certain circumstances, nor was it an example of a lord-vassal vendetta, which did not. Even if such a vendetta had been accepted practice, the Ako Incident would not have qualified, since Kira did not make any attempt to kill Asano: he was merely the plaintiff in a judgment made by the shogun. There was also much discord among the forty-seven retainers themselves and Benesch suggests that the significance of the affair for *bushido* and samurai ethics lay, not in the incident itself, but in the responses to the incident.

Since the government imposed a strict censorship on works directly related to the incident, discussions of the incident took the form of manuscripts circulated by Confucian scholars. The discussions were criticized for being Confucian thinking about samurai, rather than representing actual samurai thought, but, as Benesch notes, some of the Ako samurai themselves sought justification in Confucian thinking, since there was no precedent for avenging the death of one's lord. Even in the discussions by Confucian scholars themselves there was a great variety of viewpoints and opinions, for and against the actions of the Ako samurai. Benesch suggests that the criticism of Confucian thinking about the affair wrongly assumes the existence of a separate, widely accepted ethical norm that was more appropriate.

> "*Modern promoters of bushido often contend that the vendetta was in keeping with samurai ethics at the time, but there are few surviving non-Confucian commentaries. ... A more fundamental factor was that there no widely accepted 'way of the samurai' that could plausibly serve as an alternative evaluative framework.*"

He concludes that

> "*Ultimately, the few surviving texts from the time that judge the Ako samurai on the basis of 'samurai ethics' were generally more critical of the vendetta than modern promoters of* bushido *have been, and neither the Ako Incident nor the myriad reactions to it provide compelling evidence for the existence of a broadly accepted warrior ethic.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, pp. 26-27.)

Benesch is thus quite even handed in his interpretation of the event and does not discuss in detail its dramatization in the theatre and cinema. On the other hand, Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, a Japanese social anthropologist, believes that the Ako Incident and the *Chuushingura* dramatization played a major role in the gradual militarization of Japan during the period from the Meiji era until the Fifteen Years War (1931-1945). We will briefly discuss her views below, in connection with *bushido* and cherry blossoms.

3. 4 Yamamoto Tsunetomo as Marcel Proust:
Memories of Times Wistfully Believed to be Lost
Perhaps the comparison implied in the section title does not do justice to Proust, for the author of the *Hagakure* has been called "irrational, servile and nihilistic, whose experience with violence" [the samurai stock-in-trade] "was limited to silly quarrels and sadistic, eyewitness accounts of beheadings and torture-executions." The work has been condemned as the "seditious ramblings of a disgruntled curmudgeon, grumpy at the degeneration of the age." On the other hand, Yamamoto Tsunetomo has had his admirers, including Eiko Ikegami, who finds in the work "one of the most acute reflections of a samurai's self-understanding, expressed by a man who internalized and wrestled with the tensions of samurai existence in the early eighteenth century."

His admirers, as well as the controversy, have ensured that Yamamoto Tsunetomo [常朝, also read as Jouchou] is the purported author of one of the most famous books on Japanese culture. He ranks with Lafcadio Hearn, Inazo Nitobe and Ruth Benedict as an articulator of their own culture for Japanese people themselves, despite the fact that the latter all wrote in English for foreign readers.

Yamamoto Tsunetomo is the accepted author of the *Hagakure* (葉隠, 葉可久礼, 葉隠れ聞き書き: 'Dictations given hidden by leaves'), which is a depiction of aspects of the samurai code as he understood it. It was written about 50 years after Yamaga Soko wrote his *Shidou* essay, but was circulated in manuscript within the Nabeshima domain only, and was not intended for general publication. Selections were first published only in 1906, some 190 years after it was first dictated, but the entire collection of aphorisms was not published until 1935, with a 3-volume pocket-sized 'popular' edition appearing in 1940 in Iwanami's *Iwanami Bunko* series.

Yamamoto's main claim to fame among his later readers lies in his depiction of *bushido* at the beginning of the first book. The Japanese text is given below, after Bennett's translation.

> *The Way of the Samurai is to be found in dying.*
> 一、武士道と云は、死ぬ事と見付たり。
> *Hitotsu, bushidou to iu wa, shinukoto to mitsuketari.*
>
> *If one is faced with two option of life or death, simply settle for death.*
> 二つ二つの場にて、早く死方に片付ばかり也。
> *Futatsu futatsu no ba ni te, hayaku shinukata ni katazuku bakari nari.*
>
> *It is not an especially difficult choice;*
> 別に子細なし。
> *Betsu ni shisai nashi.*
>
> *just go forth and meet it confidently.*
> 胸すわって進む也。
> *Mune suwatte susumu nari.*
>
> *To declare that dying without aiming at the right purpose is nothing more than a 'dog's death' is the delicate and shallow way of the Kamigata warriors.*
> 図に当らず、犬死などいふ事は、上方風の打ち上がりたる武道なるべし。
> *Zu ni atarazu, inu jini nado iukoto wa, kamigata fu no uchi agari taru budou naru beshi.*
>
> *Whenever faced with the choice of life or death, there is no need to try and achieve one's aims.*
> 二つ二つの場にて、図に当たるやうにする事は不及事也。
> *Futatsu futatsu no ba ni te, zu ni ataru you ni narukoto wa oyobazarukoto nari.*
>
> *Human beings have a preference for life.*
> 我人、生る方がすき也。
> *Ware hito, ikurukata ga suki nari.*
>
> *As such it is a natural tendency to apply logic to justify one's proclivity to stay alive.*
> 多分すきの方に理が付べし。
> *Tabun suki no kata ni kotowari ga tsuku beshi.*
>
> *If you miss the mark and you live to tell the tale, then you are a coward.*
> 若図に迦れて生たらば、腰ぬけ也。
> *Moshi zu ni hazurete iki taraba, koshi nuke tari.*
>
> *This is a dangerous line of thought.*
> 此境危き也。
> *Kono sakai ayauki nari.*
>
> *If you make a mistake and die in the process, you may be thought of as mad, but it will not bring shame.*
> 図に迦れて死たらば、気違にて恥には不成。
> *Zu ni hazurete shi ni naraba, ki chigai ni te haji ni wa narazu.*
>
> *This is the mind-set of one who firmly lives by the Martial Way.*
> 是が武道の丈夫也。
> *Kore ga budou no joubu nari.*
>
> *Rehearse your death every morning and night. Only when you constantly live as though already a corpse, will you be able to find freedom in the Martial Way and fulfill your duties without fault throughout your life.*"
> 毎朝毎夕、改めては死に々、常住死身に成て居る時は、武道に自由を得、一生落度なく家職を仕課すべき也。
> *Mai asa mai yuu, aratemete wa shi ni shi ni, joujuu shi ni mi ni narite iru toki wa, budou ni jiyuu wo e, isshou ochido naku kashoku wo shioo subeki nari.*
> *(*齋木一馬, 岡山泰四, 相良亨, 『三河物語　葉隠』*, p. 220; Tsunetomo / Bennett, Hagakure, pp. 42-43. The Japanese text has been slightly modified from being in horizontal format.)*

Alexander Bennett, in his introduction to his translation of the *Hagakure*, comments on the propensity of "foreign scholars of Japanese history and culture to take a skeptical view of the modern cultural nationalistic constructions of bushido as 'invented tradition', with the historical value of the *Hagakure* … often dismissed." (Bennett, *Hagakure*, pp. 15-16.) This for Bennett is understandable, but he counsels a more sympathetic understanding of the man and his times if one is to make any sense of the content of the work—and he displays this in the careful notes appended to his translation.

Eiko Ikegami follows Bennett's counsel and gives a very detailed, but rather unusual, explanation of the work. For Ikegami, Yamamoto was the 'voice of one crying in the wilderness' and this is why both the work and her analysis raise problems. She presents an analysis that is similar to her previous analysis of the Ako Incident and uses the *Hagakure* as material for an extended psychological examination of the author's state of mind. It is presented as a concrete example of the emotional turmoil caused by the contradictions she has discovered in the samurai ethos during the Tokugawa period. The work is "a rich source for the history of ethnomentality", a term that Ikegami leaves undefined.

> *"One cannot fully understand this dimension of the Hagakure[sc. the 'reflections of the samurai's self-understanding' as he 'wrestled with the tensions of samurai existence in the early eighteenth century'] without taking into consideration the paradoxical stresses placed on the samurai by the emergence of the Tokugawa order." (Ikegami, op.cit., p. 280.)*

Ikegami argues that Yamamoto's spiritual turmoil was caused by the harsh requirements of *kenka-ryou-seiba* [喧嘩両征伐], the severe—inevitably capital—punishment of both

parties in a conflict, regardless of who started it. Since the *Hagakure* is a collection of thoughts on the dymanics and consequences of *kenka* [喧嘩: quarrels], it should come as no surprise that the book is also a handbook on the dymanics of *shini gurui* [死に狂い: the death frenzy], which dispenses with rational calculation and simply charges into a counterattack. This is explicitly stated in Paragraph 113 of Book 1.

> 武士道は死狂也。一人の殺害を数十人して仕かぬるもの也。
> *Bushidou wa shinigurui nari. Hitori no satsugai wo suujuunin shite shikanu mono nari.*
> *Bushido is a death frenzy. Even dozens of men cannot kill a man in a frenzied state.*
> *(*齋木一馬, 岡山泰四, 相良亨, 『三河物語　葉隠』*, p. 251; Tsunetomo / Bennett, Hagakure, p. 97.)*

Coupled with this defense of 'passionate and instinctually violent behavior' is the depiction of an 'ideal of faithful and efficacious devotion to the public good' and Ikegami regards this heady combination (liberally interpreted) as the key to the work's popularity with the Japanese militarists in the 1930s. Part of this was Yamamoto's conception of the master-follower relationship, which consisted of absolute devotion on the part of the followers without any expectation of an appropriate reward from the master. On this basis,

> "*To serve the lord is to be dead to oneself, thereby overcoming his* [the vassal's] *own egocentric nature and instinctive desire for self-preservation. According to Tsunetomo, the self-abnegating state of mind could be achieved only by being in* shini gurui*, or 'death frenzy'.*" (Ikegami, *op.cit.*, pp. 288-289.)

Another way that Tsunetomo described this relation was *shinobu koi* [忍ぶ恋: secret love—and it is clear that he meant between males], which means loving without ever letting the person know about one's feelings and therefore expecting no reward or reciprocity. Ikegami admits that this reinterpretation of the master-follower relationship was unrealistic to 'most Tokugawa samurai.' Nevertheless, it was a "powerful refocusing of samuraihood in Tokugawa Japan." (Ikegami, *op.cit.*, p. 293.)

The real problem with Ikegami's analysis (and with Bennett's introduction) lies in its contemporary relevance: she presents little evidence of how many samurai living at the time actually shared Yamamoto's thinking. Compared with the vast amount of contemporary literature on the Ako vendetta, which represented the wide variety of viewpoints that were held at the time, with Yamamoto Tsunetomo, on the other hand, even in his own domain the dictated manuscripts were passed around secretly, since the contents were considered far too dangerous for general publication. One of the more radical commentaries on the *Hagakure* was written much later, by the novelist Mishima Yukio, and in 1970 Mishima carried out Yamamoto's general recommendations to the letter and committed *seppuku* in the Ground Self-Defence Headquarters. The bemused public reaction to Mishima's death matched that of the majority of Tokugawa samurai to Tsunetomo's aphorisms: unusual, but not really relevant to more important concerns.

For Oleg Benesch, who is one of the 'foreign scholars of Japanese history and culture' referred to by Bennett, the problem with the *Hagakure* is that this 'way of the samurai', the passing of which Yamamoto is so sorely lamenting, is most certainly an invented tradition. The main argument of Benesch concerning Yamamoto is that the *Hagakure* did not play any role in forming a samurai ethical code before it was first published in 1905, long after the samurai had ceased to exist.

***Hagakure* and Aikido Training**

Tsunetomo was born into a family of retainers in the Nabeshima domain in southern Kyushu. Eventually he became a junior retainer of Nabeshima Mitsushige, but could not commit the act of *junshi* [殉死] on Nabeshima's death, because it had been forbidden much earlier. So Tsunetomo committed 'social' seppuku', to use Bennett's phrase, and became a Buddhist monk / hermit. He dictated the *Hagakure* to Kuramoto Tashiro, his *deshi* of seven years. The *Hagakure*, then, is an intensely felt commentary on an ideal of the master-student relationship and it should not come as a surprise that Tsunetomo's sentiments have been applied to the martial arts in general and, since it is a martial art where progress is measured in ways other than winning and losing in matches, to aikido in particular.

One of the distinctive features of the *Hagakure* is its style of composition. It is a vast collection of short anecdotes and aphorisms, seemingly unrelated to each other, and it is mainly for this reason that it has never been translated into English in its entirety (a distinction shared with Deguchi Onisaburo's 81-volume *Reikai Monogatari*). It is therefore very easy to quote the work out of context—since there really is no context, and use the aphorisms for completely different purposes. Being prepared for death and seeking a close semi-mystical relationship with one's master are two aspects of the *Hagakure* that lend themselves to generalization in other contexts and there is at least one teacher of aikido known to the present writer who actually used the *Hagakure* as a sourcebook for his own thinking about life and death in general and, more importantly, about the quality of the master-student relationship. He regarded it as his business to bring his students as close to 'death' as possible within the confines of training in the dojo, so that they were able to face and control the primal emotions of panic and fear in an encounter with attackers who certainly meant business. I will discuss this further in *Transmission, Inheritance, Emulation 28*.

Another matter, sometimes discussed in *Aikiweb* columns, stems from discussions on Yamamoto and the *Hagakure*. It is relevant to the detailed analyses made by Ikegami of *mibun*, *ichibun*, and especially *kenka*, as these affected the samurai, and also related to the issues discussed in the previous

paragraph. It is sometimes stated that Morihei Ueshiba had a short temper and would flare up at people, especially as he became older. With Morihei Ueshiba these outbursts were quickly explained away: apart from his age, he was enlightened and therefore had insights and capabilities beyond those of ordinary mortals. In any case, his outbursts were like a thunderstorm—an explosion followed by calm. In other words, Morihei Ueshiba was beyond ever having to learn anger management, or deal with what would have been road rage before there were any cars. The aikido teacher referred to in the previous paragraph had an extremely acute perception of *mibun* and *ichibun* and occasionally had serious conflicts with some of his students, involving physical encounters with weapons followed by periods in hospital. His students struggled to interpret these outbursts in the same way that Ueshiba's disciples interpreted his: he was somehow entitled to them by virtue of being an aikido master—and his spectacular abilities on the mat somehow made up for the damage he caused off it. These students clearly had not read the *Hagakure*, especially Tsunetomo's identification of the essence of *bushido* with the *shini-gurui* [the death frenzy that is essentially irrational].

4. The Fall of the Samurai
Samurai as a class ceased to exist in a series of edicts [*chitsuroku shobun*: 秩禄処分] made by the Meiji government between 1869, when samurai became *shizoku* [士族], and 1876, when stipends were converted to bonds *kinroku kosai* [金禄公債]. The importance of this event is usually stressed in general histories of Japan and the crumbling internal structure of the Tokugawa regime is often cited as the main cause. Also emphasized is the controversial nature of the decision, for it indirectly led to the Satsuma Rebellion in 1877, and it is ironic that the decision was largely taken by those who were themselves samurai—some of whom came to regret it. However, what is not stressed so much is the generally adverse public perception of the samurai as a declining class, as evidenced by the many variations of the *Chuushingura* story and the lamentations of Yamamoto Tsunetomo. Benesch cites a Japanese proverb:

> 花は桜木人は武士
> *Hana wa sakuragi hito wa bushi.*

Benesch quotes editorials from the *Yomiuri Shimbun* of 1879 and 1883.

> "*The traditional saying ... was considered anachronistic, and some commentators described the* shizoku*, not as cherry blossoms, but rather as hanging wisteria blossoms blowing in the wind.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 39.)

The following explanation of the proverb is given in the *Koji Zokushin Kotowaza Daijiten*:

> 花の中では桜はがもっともすぐれており、人は武士がもっともすぐれている。
> *Hana no naka de wa sakura ga mottomo sugurete ori, hito wa bushi ga mottomo sugurete iru.*
> *'Cherry blossoms surpass other flowers; warriors surpass other men.'*
> *(『故事・俗信ことわざ大辞典』, 1982,* 小学館, *p. 929. My translation.)*

On the other hand, by the late 1880s the hostility had begun to weaken and samurai came to be regarded as anachronistic and irrelevant, but also as material for similar outbreaks of nostalgia as had occurred earlier, with Yoshida Shoin and Yokoi Shonan in the years before the Ansei Purge (1858-1860, during which the rebellious and stubborn Yoshida was executed by the shogunate authorities).

Conclusion to Part One
It is clear that samurai gradually ceased to become hired mercenaries and evolved into a military order, but this did not happen until after they had largely finished fighting. The real issue for this essay is the question of samurai as a class (which is itself a value-laden term), with its own sense of status and the 'ethical' system that was supposed to go with it. There are different opinions here, as evidenced by contrasting texts.

> "*The history of the bushi as a class begins at this point* [the mid-Heian period]. *With the progressive inability of the central government to maintain order in the provinces, both the administrators of public domains and the proprietors of public estates began to develop their own armies to protect their interests…This movement was actually initiated by the court itself as early as 792…*" (William Scott Wilson, Introduction to *Ideals of the Samurai: Writings of the Japanese Warriors*, p. 18.)

The 'writings' in question are those of warriors who lived over a period from 1198 to 1623. The translator calls this the "classical period", when "their activities in national affairs were greatest in scope." As a result, "the formulation of martial precepts was based directly on experience and was vital to the problem of the continuance of the clan." Scott Wilson adds that

> "*They* [the writings] *are all alike in that they represent the ideals of the warrior class and were written down to help guarantee the perpetuation of the clan* [*han*: 藩 = the warrior families that were formalized in the Tokugawa period]*; they are statements* from *warriors* to *warriors, without the approval of other classes in mind. They are, therefore, vital and sincere.*" (Scott Wilson, Op.cit., pp. 15-16.)

Scott Wilson's account is traditional, perhaps even Marxist in approach, in that he takes for granted that the samurai class existed as a structured entity, along with other classes, within the period covered by the texts. A different account is given

in a collection of essays edited by Karl Friday, in which the following statements are made:

> "*It is important to remember that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, there was no sharply defined warrior 'class'. Rather, many of the men whom we identify as warriors also served as local officials, land managers, tax collectors, bureaucrats and police.*" Ethan Segal, "Kamakura and the Challenges of Governance," p. 204.)

> "*At an even more basic level, the very notion of 'samurai' was a shifting and poorly defined category, … 'defined by the very diversity and ambiguity of what constituted samurai status.' Sixteenth-century armies consisted not of not just elite hereditary warriors, but a wide range of men caught up in a particular domain's mobilization. While those with proven martial ability were prized, military service was a form of tax paid by a particular area under the daimyo's control, and men from all walks of life might be expected to fight in a particular campaign.*" (Denis Gainty, quoting Michael P Birt, "The New Warriors," p. 345.)

> "*The samurai can be described as a hereditary 'class' only after the establishment of the measures of the Tokugawa regime to stabilize society.*" (Denis Gainty, *op.cit.*, p. 347. The two essays by Segal and Gainty can be found in Karl Friday ed., *Japan Emerging*, 2012. See the bibliography.)

These extracts suggest that the samurai 'class' was less structured and less well defined than the traditional accounts would have us believe and that, as a result, any 'received traditions' concerning the samurai will be based on evidence that is necessarily selective. Of course, both the traditional and 'revisionist' accounts are all supported by textual evidence, but interpreted appropriately. In fact, it should be noted that the term 'tradition' has been used in Part One of this essay only in connection with the later developments of the samurai as a class (one of the four *shimin* [四民] classes , from the start of the Tokougawa period onwards.

Was Morihei Ueshiba a Samurai?
Morihei Ueshiba was never a samurai. It was for this reason that in 1912 he had to be introduced to Takeda Sokaku by Yoshida Kotaro, who was of samurai stock, as was Takeda himself. As stated earlier, Ueshiba was born into a family of middle-income farmers and never changed his status. In any case, the classification of Japanese society into nobles, samurai, farmers, craftsmen, merchants, and others had been abolished before Ueshiba was born. His father was a local town councillor and his son Kisshomaru records his father's apologies for the behavior of his wayward son over a fisheries protest in 1908.

The question should therefore perhaps be rephrased, first in general terms and then with specific reference to Morihei Ueshiba. Dennis Gainty lists three 'reminders' of the importance of samurai after they has been abolished by the Meiji government. First, the Meiji Restoration was actually a coup engineered and conducted by samurai themselves. Secondly, the samurai were transformed into 'gentry' [*shizoku*: 氏族], but continued to wield considerable political power after the transformation.

> "*Third, and perhaps most significant, the cultural force wielded by the idea of samurai—the image of Japanese writers—was actually strengthened by the nation's leap into modernity. Freed from the distraction presented by* actual *samurai—those shambling, threadbare, literate bureaucrats with unsupportable social status and fading dreams of martial glory—the imaginary samurai could populate the minds of all Japanese…While the flesh-and-blood reality of the samurai ended with the modernization of the Meiji period, the samurai as a cultural force became even stringer and more influential. Thanks to the complex elevation and domestication of the warrior class during the two and a half centuries of Tokugawa Japan, samurai were transformed from proud, unpredictable warriors to specters haunting the halls of Japan's past and present.*" (Gainty, in Friday, *op.cit.*, pp. 353-354.)

So we can ask whether Morihei Ueshiba saw himself as a samurai, that is, as an individual participant in the glorious—but complex and multifaceted, in some respects 'invented' and therefore dismissed as counterfeit—Japanese warrior tradition discussed above. The evidence is sparse and the main source is Kisshomaru Ueshiba's biography and various interviews collected by historians like Stanley Pranin. Perhaps he might well have done with respect to the fishing dispute in Tanabe to which Kisshomaru Ueshiba refers, but this was early in his life. However, it is very likely that he acted like the good Japanese that he was, and believed that he was following in a glorious martial tradition. This, at least, is the main message that we receive from his son's biography.

Part Two
The ethical system of the samurai was also known as *Bushido* [武士道: *Warrior Way*] and, as we will see in Part Three, *bushido* has been closely connected with agrarianism and agrarian nationalism. Before examining agrarianism in detail, however, it will be appropriate to look at the rise and fall of *bushido* in general, since in some ways this mirrors the rise and fall of the samurai, the fall of the samurai being the trigger for the rise to prominence of *bushido* as a tool for explaining virtually all aspects of Japanese culture. The main focus of the next part will be the account of *bushido* given by Oleg Benesch in his book, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai*. Benesch has written a very complex and finely argued work and includes a wealth of detail concerning virtually all those who were concerned in some way with the rise and fall of bushido after the Meiji restoration up till 1945, followed by the resurrection of bushido during the 1980s in Japan. This

matter is of some relevance to aikido. Another merit of Benesch's research is that it includes many Japanese primary and secondary sources. Lack of space will allow only the discussion of the most important topics.

Benesch regards *bushido* as an 'invented' tradition in all three of the types delineated by Hobsbawm and Ranger.

> "*They* [invented traditions of the period since the industrial revolution in Great Britain] *seem to belong to three overlapping types: a) Establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities, b) those establishing or legitimizing institutions, status, or relations of authority, and c) those whose main purpose was socialization, the inculcation of beliefs, value systems, and conventions of behavior.*"
>
> "*These categories are useful for examining bushido, as it served all three functions at various times.* Bushido *was first debated around 1890 as a Hobsbawn type c) invented tradition, and was popularized as a type a) after 1895. In the early twentieth century, bushido became an ideological tool of type b) used by the Japanese government, while maintaining characteristics of a) and c). After 1945,* bushido *returned as an invented tradition of type a), although there have been concerted efforts to re-establish it as a type c) in the past decade. This broad applicability of* bushido*, which is a function of the fluid nature of its content, has been a primary factor behind its resilience.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 7, quoting Hobsbawm, *op.cit.*, p. 9.)

Benesch charts the course of *bushido* as an ideology in several chapters, dealing, respectively, with the origins; the growth of *bushido* in Meiji Japan, up till 1914; the reaction in Taisho Japan; and the resurgence in the early Showa era, as Japan prepared for war. He rounds off his book with a chapter on the resurrection of *bushido* in postwar Japan. Since the origin and development of *bushido* as an ideology roughly coincides with the birth of Morihei Ueshiba and the origin and development of aikido, the question whether there is any connection between the two should not come as a surprise.

1. Meiji *Bushido*:
Ozaki Yukio [尾崎行雄], Nitobe Inazo [新渡戸稲造]:
***Bushido* as an International Bridge**

One of the most important 'engines' for the rediscovery of *bushido* was Japan's ambivalent relationship with the rest of the world, especially the 'West', meaning the colonial powers that were expanding into China and the rest of Asia. The ambivalence was like the swings of a pendulum and is still a major factor in present-day interpretations of *bushido*. At one end of the pendulum was the attraction of westerners and so Ozaki and Nitobe, respectively, stressed the fact that *bushido* was a mark of similarity between samurai and English gentlemen, or between samurai and American Presbyterian Christians. Ozaki had this to say about *bushi* and *bushido*:

> "*In England they are called gentlemen, here they are called* bushi. *Although the terms are different, they are ultimately the same. What makes English merchants without equal under heaven is that most of them have the preparation of gentlemen, and are not cowardly or unskilled. The merchants of other countries are dazzled by insignificant interests, and easily divide their virtues, but the English merchants do not, they are completely trustworthy and even if they die they will not break their word. For this reason, all people under heaven desire to deal with them. The success of English trading is primarily due to the high degree of trust in their merchants. This high degree of trust is because they are rich in the qualities of honesty and chivalry, is this not called the English quality of gentlemanship? Is this not called the quality of* bushi *in our country? Therefore, it can be said that those who do not know* bushido *will not be great merchants, and in other words, if the level of* bushido *falls the business can certainly not burn brightly.*" (Ozaki Yukio, quoted by Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 53.)

In other words, the whole point of *bushi* and *bushido*, as Ozaki understood this in 1891, was to do business in the same gentlemanly way as the English did and Ozaki reused the old proverb, cited earlier, to show that Japanese had to become real *bushi* again. Otherwise Japan would never become a 'civilizational heaven' and stand on a par with other nations. Before this date, according to Benesch,

> "*Ozaki described Western civilization as so valuable that it might be worth paying the price of Japan's independence to obtain it, but from 1981 he began to argue for the superiority of Japanese civilization … he argued forcefully for the dissemination of bushido in Japan, encouraged by changing popular views towards the samurai in the interim.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 54.)

Benesch makes the point here that, coincidentally or not, Ozaki had returned from his 'lonely exile' in London and had entered Japanese politics as member first Diet, which met in 1890. Other *bushido* enthusiasts at the time were less than happy at the time that Ozaki had equated samurai with merchants. However, Benesch underlines the fact that Ozaki's writings in the 1890s mark him out as the pioneer of modern thinking about *bushido*. More rehabilitation of *bushido* as the apex of Japanese-ness came a few years later and this was mainly the work of Nitobe Inazo and especially Inoue Tetsujiro.

Nitobe Inazo published his book *Bushido: The Soul of the Samurai* in 1900, about ten years after Ozaki Kunio was propounding his theories of *bushi* as the Japanese counterparts of gentlemanly English merchants. Benesch

notes that Nitobe's reputation as the founder and exponent of modern *bushido* is highly ambiguous.

> "*In contrast to his current image, Nitobe was not central to* bushido *discourse in pre-war Japan, and only attained his status as a most influential writer on* bushido *in the 1980s.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 91.)

The ambiguity lies in the fact that Nitobe was outside the 'metropolitan centers' when the early discourse on bushido in Japan occurred and played no role in this discourse. As we shall see, when his book appeared in Japanese, it was heavily criticized by scholars like Inoue Tetsujiro, who regarded himself as the archpriest of *bushido* thinking in Japan.

Nitobe was born near Morioka in northern Japan and studied at the Sapporo Agricultural College under the guidance of William S Clark, where he converted to Christianity. Along with Uchimura Kanzo (famous as the man who in 1890 failed to bow before a portrait of the emperor), joined the Christian group known as the Sapporo Band. Between 1884 and 1900, Nitobe spent ten years in Germany and the United States, where he published *Bushido* in English. The book became in international bestseller a few years later, when Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War aroused much international interest in Japanese history and culture.

Lack of space prevents a detailed examination of the contents of *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*, but Benesch explains why the book had limited success in Japan.

> "*Whereas bushido discourse had become considerably more nationalistically confident by 1900, Nitobe portrayed his book as a response to a foreign stimulus, just as Ozaki's ... early bushido theories were responses to traits ... identified in Western culture. ... In comparison, when Nitobe's contemporaries discussed European chivalry or other foreign ethical systems, they tended to insist that Japanese bushido existed entirely independent of these traditions, and was in no way a response to them.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 92.)

In spite of its glaring shortcomings in anything that resembled an argument, Nitobe's book was successful outside Japan because it revealed a picture of Japan to those who knew very little about the country and so allowed western readers to find confirmation of all the misconceptions they had. The book was especially notable for its racist overtones, especially towards the rest of East Asia, and for its emphasis on *Nihonjinron* theories of Japanese uniqueness. Such racial theories came into vogue after the Sino-Japanese War, when theories of Social Darwinism were invoked to bolster theories of racial or national superiority and inferiority. Benesch sums up Nitobe's aims:

> "*The fundamental goal of Nitobe's argument was for equality between Japanese and Westerners, and he spent much time in combating racism inherent in the European-dominated international system. Through the use of bushido and Victorian social theories, Nitobe could appeal to the common humanity of Japanese and Westerners, while removing Japan from the rest of Asia.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 94.)

So, for Benesch, despite its earlier international popularity and later rediscovery in the 1980s, Nitobe's *Bushido: The Soul of Japan* is very much part of the general 'invented' tradition of modern *bushido*.

When it first appeared, Nitobe's book attracted severe criticism both in Japan and abroad. Tsuda Sokichi wrote a review in 1901 arguing that despite its apparent popularity, the book revealed extensive ignorance on the part of its author. Tsuda rejected all of Nitobe's arguments and these criticisms were followed in the same year by a similar attack from Inoue Tetsujiro, who argued that Notobe was mistaken in thinking that *bushido* was an unwritten code "*unuttered and unwritten, possessing all the more powerful sanction of veritable deed and of a law written on the fleshly tablets of the heart.*" (Inazo Nitobe, *Bushido*, p. 5.) Inoue believed that Nitobe had forgotten the writings of Yamaga Soko (discussed and quoted earlier), and an anonymous reviewer in England condemned the book as 'fabrications without any historical validity.' These criticisms led Nitobe to resist publishing a Japanese version of the book until 1908, when he was persuaded by a friend to allow him to make a translation.

Inoue Tetsujiro [井上哲次郎] and Imperial *Bushido*

The other side of the ambivalence noted above towards *bushido* became evident around the turn of the century, with Japan's defeat of two great powers: China, first, and Russia, a few years later. This side of the ambivalence stressed Japan's uniqueness, over against the Western powers and western culture in general. There were several major players in this swing of the pendulum, but the chief intellectual proponent of *bushido* as something uniquely Japanese was Inoue Tetsujiro, a professor at Tokyo Imperial University.

Like Ozaki and Nitobe, Inoue spent several years studying outside Japan and developed some extreme views as a result of the experience. He believed that the Japanese were at an earlier stage of their evolutionary development than Westerners and thought that foreigners should live in separate enclaves in Japan until the Japanese had caught up. After his return to Japan, however, Inoue changed these views, but promoted his nationalism more aggressively. He believed that bushido was the ideal way to do this and so published a continuous stream of books and articles right up until his death in 1944. Benesch sums up the main characteristics of Inoue's bushido activities:

> "*In addition to patriotism and loyalty to the emperor, ... a close relationship with the military as an educator and ideologist; ultranationalism and the emphasis on the unique Japanese spirit; pronounced anti-foreignism framed in the rhetoric of Japanese superiority; aggressive intolerance of other views as*

> *a self-appointed defender of imperial bushido orthodoxy; and the exaltation of Yamaga Soko as one of the most important thinkers in Japanese history.*" (Benesch, op.cit., p. 99.)

Inoue had contacts in the military and academic world and his position as the first professor of philosophy at the foremost university in Japan enabled him to become a kind of arbiter of *bushido* taste. However, not content with having just this role, Inoue became the spearhead of the National Morality movement [国民道徳: *kokumin doutoku*], based on *bushido*, which was created to counter the hostile reactions to the Treaty of Portsmouth. This treaty was the treaty which had formally ended the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, but which was considered disadvantageous to Japan.

According to Benesch, Inoue's contribution to *bushido* ideology marked a turning point, since he was instrumental in 'inventing' the tradition. As time progressed, Inoue sanctified Yamaga Soko as the patron saint of *bushido* and in several collections of documents he also created a canon of *bushido* scriptures. He divided the evolution of *bushido* into four periods.

> "*Following discussions of* bushido*'s roots in Japan's pre-history ad its manifestations through the sixteenth century, the third age of bushido was the Tokugawa period, when,* 'bushido *was developed through education'. Inoue stressed what he considered the pivotal roles of Yamaga Soko, the loyal retainers of Ako, and Yoshida Shoin. ... The fourth age of bushido began in 1868.*
>
> "*Inoue began his analysis of modern* bushido *by arguing that, although* bushido *was greatly influenced by the feudal age, it had existed before that time and did not perish with the samurai class. Inoue reasoned that* bushido *was actually stronger in the non-feudal ages, as it was not monopolized by a single class, but rather spread throughout all of society. Inoue thus established a spiritual link between the Meiji period and an idealized ancient Japan before the introduction of foreign thought such as Confucianism and Buddhism. On the other hand, Inoue credited the samurai with refining and upholding* bushido *until Meiji, when the role of guardians of the* bushido *spirit and model for the nation was transferred to the Japanese military, is encapsulated in the Imperial Rescript for Sailors and Soldiers.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 116.)

Inoue thus laid out the ideological groundwork for the central role of *bushido* in the gradual militarization of Japan from 1905 onwards.

General Nogi [乃木希典] and *Bushido* as 'Japanese Fighting Spirit'

Japan's defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 marked the high point of the '*bushido* boom' in Meiji Japan and also had the effect of elevating General Nogi Maresuke to a major place in the Japanese *bushido* pantheon. The elevation had the effect of plastering over the errors of judgment made by Nogi in his military career. He managed to lose the regimental colors during the siege of Kumamoto in 1877 and his successful assault on Port Arthur in 1894 during the Sino-Japanese War was made much easier because the Chinese had largely abandoned the 'indomitable' fortress. His reputation as the hero of Port Arthur was largely untarnished by the second assault, ten years later, which cost many thousands of lives, including those of his two sons, and led to Nogi's replacement by Kodama Gentaro, who was able to take the fortress after several more weeks of fighting.

Nogi supplied another crucial element in the concept of *bushido* as it was popularized after the war. To make up for the lack of guns and ammunition, the troops were trained to attack continuously, no matter how heavy the odds, and this was elevated to be a distinct and unique feature of *bushido*. Nogi used the 'human bullet' [肉弾: *nikutai*] approach, a phrase that was originally coined by Sakurai Tadayoshi, a lieutenant who fought in the war. Sakurai believed that the victory was the result of 'the invincible spirit' of *yamato-damashii* [大和魂], and strict military training. Another phrase was 'death madness' [死に狂い: *shi ni gurui*], argued by Sato Tadashi to be the most important element of war, and which involves 'charging through bullets without fear and enjoying battle.' (Quoted by Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 109.)

Of course, the method proved very costly in lives and was shown to have very limited value and nor was it supported by the soldiers themselves.

> "*In an ideal world, the Meiji leadership had hoped to inspire conscripts from the middle and lower classes to identify with the elite cultural values of the former samurai class, which stressed the utmost importance of loyalty to one's lord and its accompanying ethos of death. ... Conscripts remained unfazed by calls from above to identify with such a culturally alien set of values. For them, these notions remained abstract and, more to the point, irrelevant to their life, as their immediate concerns centred on their survival, for the sake of their families. In the end, ... the link between the conscript and his home becomes even stronger on the battlefield as he faces death.*" (Naoko Shimizu, *Japanese Society at War*, p. 87.)

During the Meiji era according to Benesch, *bushido* displayed all three aspects of invented traditions delineated by Hobsbawm. It symbolized social cohesion or membership of communities, real or imagined; it established or legitimated institutions, status or relations of authority—in particular, the emperor and the emperor system; and it aimed to inculcate a belief, value system or convention of behavior, expressed in the military as 'fighting spirit' or 'death madness'.

2. Taisho *Bushido*:

***Junshi* [殉死], Martial Arts and Education**
In 1912 the Meiji emperor died and on the day of his funeral General Nogi and his wife Shizuko committed the forbidden form of suicide, called *junshi* [殉死]. The effect of this gesture was to focus popular attention on *bushido* and also to mark the beginning of a decline in interest. In Benesch's account, Nogi's suicide marked the end of Meiji *bushido* 'boom' and the beginning of Taisho *bushido*, which received a different emphasis. In his discussion, Benesch covers three main topics: the consequences of Japan becoming a 'respected' member of the international community, able to stand in equal terms with the western powers; the role of *bushido* in promoting sports and martial arts; and its role in developing education, especially military education. We will briefly consider each in turn.

Decline of *Bushido*
The general reaction to the suicide of Nogi and his wife was positive and negative. Inoue Testujiro lauded it as 'an event worth celebrating', which 'demonstrated the great strength of the bushido of our Japan' and a future education minister compared Nogi's suicide very favourably to that of Ooishi Yoshio [Kuronosuke], the leaders of the Ako retainers. Mr Okada's thoughts verged on the lyrical:

> "*The death of General Nogi must be seen as superior even to the death of Yoshio. With his death, Yoshio repaid the favour of his lord, but the General dedicated his death to the sacred son of heaven who had bestowed great blessings higher than the mountains and deeper than the sea. The times are different and so it is unavoidable that the General's death has been compared to Yoshio's and has taken its place.*" (Okada Ryouhei, quoted by Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 154.)

The times were indeed different, but not in the way Okada thought. *Bushido* had become closely linked with Nogi on his death and the adverse reactions to his 'theatrical *bushido*' also extended to *bushido* itself.

> "*Nogi's death cast a very tangible interpretation of bushido into the spotlight and many people were surprised at what they saw. The anachronistic sense of detachment from the modern age alarmed many progressives, and people with only a passing knowledge of bushido were bemused by this noble but tragic act. When Nogi seemingly became the manifestation of bushido through his suicide, bushido was also joined with Meiji in the public consciousness. As a result, when the nation moved on from Meiji, it also moved on from bushido, drawing the bushido boom to a close.*" (Benesch. *op.cit.*, p. 156.)

It was also generally felt that Japan's arrival on the world stage made traditional interpretations of *bushido* obsolete. The military sharply declined in popularity, especially as a result of the harsh reaction to the 'rice riots' of 1918. The importation of foreign ideas came from a position of cultural strength, not weakness, and the insecurity regarding Japanese identity lessened between 1912 and 1930. However, *bushido*, as understood in Inoue Tetsujiro's National Morality movement and as related to the emperor, continued, but there was more discussion and argument about its value among intellectuals and those who opposed the government.

Sports and *Bushido*
Despite the declining popular enthusiasm for it in the Taisho era, *bushido* was nevertheless an important feature of the promotion of sports, both Japanese and foreign, and this provides some important cultural background for the harsh view of western sports held by Morihei Ueshiba. Ueshiba took a dim view of 'western sports' and repeatedly stated that his *budo* was quite different. 'No competition' in aikido is sometimes used like a mantra, especially in the Aikikai, with no serious attempt made to understand why. The importation of *bushido* into sports occurred between 1900 and 1930, at precisely the time when Ueshiba was training in Daito-ryu and founding the Kobukan. Before this, 'foreign' sports of baseball, tennis, boating, soccer, hockey and athletics, were being practiced in Japanese schools since the 1880s, but judo and kendo were not taught until 1911.

Apart from being taught in schools, the popular acceptance of foreign sports was die also to their promotion by the print media and Benesch mentions the high school baseball tournaments, which started in 1915 and are now celebrating their centenary. Then as now, the main sponsor was the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper and Benesch cites a source in one Nakao Wataru, who worked for the newspaper.

> "*'The games of this tournament are not a direct translation of the increasingly corporate American baseball, but rather the Japanese baseball founded in the* bushido *spirit.' Reports of the national tournaments tend to ignore that that it was a game played by middle school students, and instead invoked* bushido *and samurai imagery in their portrayals of the matches as battles between medieval warriors. The bushido spirit was also integrated into the games through the introduction of uniquely 'Japanese' greeting rituals, while emphasis was on players sacrificing themselves for the team and the importance of character-building, rather than victory.*" (Benesch, op.cit., pp.165-166.)

Benesch does not state when Nakao made the comment and he also makes the point that the popularity of baseball was primarily based on its 'modern' and 'international' character and that the *bushido* connection was applied retroactively. There is also some selectivity of the evidence here, since western sports like rugby and cricket are also renowned for character building, and Japanese league baseball is also highly 'corporate'. Nevertheless, the high school baseball tournaments played each year are still promoted by the Japanese media as untainted examples of 'youthful innocence' and the 'pure *bushido* spirit.'

By comparison with ‘western' sports, the traditional martial arts were left behind somewhat and had to rush to catch up. Again, the print media played a role here. There were two aspects to this: one was the importation of *bushido* into martial arts, such as *sumo*; and the other was the importation of *bushido* into schools. The aim was authenticate by means of *bushido* the superior nature and properties of Japanese ‘traditional sports' compared with the western ‘competition'. Benesch notes that the present-day organization of sumo was created at this time, with its ranks and ritual, and that:

> "*As the self-appointed guardians of ostensibly ancient Japanese traditions, martial arts organizations were often founded by nationalistic groups or maintained close ties with them.* Bushido *provided a useful link between the martial arts and the goals of nationalists, as in the* Bushido *journal of 1898.*" (*Benesch*, *op.cit.*, p. 166.)

The *Bushido* journal was published as the organ of the *Dai Nihon Bujutsu Koushuukai* [大日本武術講習会: Great Japan Martial Arts Lecture Society], which was one of many traditional' martial arts organization founded around this time. It was overshadowed by the *Dai Nippon Butokukai* [大日本武徳会: Greater Japan Martial Virtue Society], which had been established in 1895 and quickly expanded all over Japan. The *Bushido* journal attracted a large number of eminent contributors before ceasing publication a few years later. Benesch continues:

> "*This connection [the link between the martial arts and nationalist goals] was also reflected in Uchida Ryohei's 1903 book,* Judo*, published by the Amur River Society, and included a forward on the relationship between judo and bushido. Kano Jigoro, the founder of Kodokan judo, contributed to both publications and in 1918 co-authored a military physical training textbook that incorporated lessons in bushido. Similar to other military educational materials, this text relied on imperial bushido, strongly emphasizing patriotism and loyalty to the emperor, and frequently referring to National Morality.*" (Benesch, *ibid*.)

The connection between the ‘warrior spirit' and sports like judo and kendo was often emphasized, but the precise causal relationships were left unspecified.

***Bushido* and Education**

Despite the declining popular enthusiasm for it in the Taisho era, *bushido* was nevertheless an important feature of the promotion of education in Japan and this intensified after 1925, when military officers began to appear in Japanese schools. At this point *bushido* became a regular subject of school examinations. Benesch notes that the lengthy intervals between revisions of the curriculum meant that even in the 1920s, the content of school textbooks still reflected Japan's achievements in the two wars with China and Russia at the turn of the century and notes that there was considerable military content in music-related textbooks directly related to the Russo-Japanese War. Ienaga Saburo, the Japanese expert on textbooks, famous for court battles with the Japanese Ministry of Education over textbook censorship, stated that materials for the study of history, ethics, language, and many other subjects were filled with tales of modern wars and designed to inculcate a military spirit. (Benesch cites an article by Ienaga in the journal *International Security*, but Ienaga has spelled out the same message in his books, notably, *The Pacific War 1931-1945*, especially Chapter 2.)

There was some attempt to broaden the concept of *bushido* to take account of Japan's new international standing, but turned out to be an attempt to have one's cake and eat it.

> "*Stressing continuities with Japan's mythical past on the one hand, public education portrayed bushido as an adaptable ethic that had been strengthened through a modernization process which eliminated class divisions, suicide and other feudal elements.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 168.)

Thus General Nogi's loyal *bushido* spirit was emphasized, but not his suicide. The idea was to incorporate modern ideas such as humanism and human rights, while not losing its ‘ancient spirit of self-sacrifice, loyalty, and actionism.' These new ideas did not really have much effect in countering Inoue Tetsujiro and his National Morality movement, but had the effect of familiarizing newer students with the concept of *bushido* and maintaining its profile.

Japanese education is well known for its avowedly utilitarian character and this was as true in the Taisho era as it is today. In the Taisho era educators had to counter the ‘dangerous thoughts' of socialism and communism. Soldiers were exposed to these ‘dangerous thoughts' when they were used to put down the popular demonstrations that occurred with increasing frequency during this outbreak of ‘Taisho democracy'. There were also some differences according to the economic and social background of the military recruits. A majority of conscripts came from agricultural backgrounds in 1888—and their physical strength and lack of contamination by ‘urban vices' made them most suitable recruits. By 1920 the proportion of recruits from agricultural backgrounds declined and ideal late Taisho recruits had a primary education. They therefore possessed basic skills, but would not have been exposed to the dangerous liberal thinking encountered by students of higher education or from urban backgrounds.

> "*By the early 1920s, recruits were familiar with concepts such as* bushido*,* kokutai *and other nationalistic ideals that had been introduced into the educational system on a large scale in Taisho. In this sense, the content of spiritual education materials did not change significantly over the period, and the emphasis on ‘attack spirit', loyalty to the emperor,*

> *and the spiritual heritage of the samurai remained largely constant.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 170.)

Benesch cites a Japanese scholar, Hirota Teruyuki, on the attempts to 'nuance' the education given to officers. Hirota analyzed the diaries of student cadets in late Taisho and sees an attempt to balance the emperor system ideology with striving for personal success—both presented as *bushido*. However, this was not entirely successful.

> "*It was possible to tell all recruits what to think, but impossible to make them actually think it. Shortcomings in the military education programme became apparent in the young officers' movements in the 1930s, which, while using the same emperor-, nation-, and* bushido-*focused terminology found in spiritual education materials, were motivated by an entirely different and nonconformist ideology. In this sense, the cumulative exposure to certain concepts in Taisho education would have a profound effect throughout early Showa, but not always the ones intended by the formulators of educational policy.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, pp. 171-172, citing 広田照幸, 『陸軍将校の教育社会史—立身出世と天皇制』, pp. 238-301.)

Thus in terms of Hobsbawm's invented traditions, during the Taisho era, according to Benesch, the second aspects of *bushido*, namely, the establishment or legitimation of institutions, status or relations of authority, received much more prominence than the two other aspects, although these, of course, were by no means neglected.

3. Early *Showa Bushido*:
Cherry Blossoms and *Chuushingura*

Emperor Hirohito acceded to the throne in 1926 and several traditions were invented to mark his coronation. From the late 1920s onwards Japan became increasingly isolated and the popularity of the military enjoyed a major resurgence. These two factors ensured that *Bushido* made a major comeback in this early Showa era and the consequences proved to be quite devastating, both for Japan itself and for *bushido* in its prewar guise. As nationalism grew, the popularity of samurai epics increased. Yoshikawa Eiji produced his epic novel *Miyamoto Musashi*, which was serialized in the *Asahi* newspaper between 1935 and 1939. Benesch notes that *Chuushingura*, discussed earlier, was performed on the *kabuki* stage well over one hundred times between 1931 and 1945. The resurgence of *bushido* in early Showa is an oft-told tale and Benesch splits up his account into several connected themes and we will consider some of these, but first, we should glance briefly at another account of the *Chuushingura* performances in early Showa, given by a Japanese social anthropologist.

In her book, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms and Nationalisms*, Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney argues that the later theatre performances of *Chuushingura* served a more specific function. Her discussion aptly relates to the arguments of Benesch concerning the significance of the affair for *bushido*, but her analysis is somewhat more complex.

> "*Numerous productions in various media have made the play* [The 47 Loyal Retainers (Chuushingura)] *an all-time hit, popular from the time of its first performance and even today. This Edo-period play underwent profound changes during the Meiji period, and it played a crucial role in the development of the* pro rege et patria mori *ideology. The play was also important for establishing the symbolic association between falling cherry petals and the suicide of modern soldiers, whose image was superimposed over that of the warrior in the original play. It is an example of the state manipulation of a popular form in entertainment for its own purposes.*" (Ohnuki Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms and Nationalisms*, pp. 142-143.)

After a brief account of the original episode, Ohnuki-Tierney explains how the play was changed to fit the ideology of *pro rege et patria mori* ['to die for king and country,' which Ohnuki-Tierney interprets as meaning, 'to die for the emperor system'], which was imposed on the general population by successive Meiji and Taisho governments. Her account differs from those given by Benesch and Ikegami concerning the purpose of the play. The latter focus on the complexity of the issues underlying the play, but Ohnuki-Tierney regards the play as a veiled attack on the shogunate authorities.

Benesch does not explain the proverb, quoted earlier:

> 花は桜木人は武士
> *Hana wa sakuragi hito wa bushi.*

In fact, it is mentioned by Ooishi Kuronosuke (in the play he is Oboshi Yuranosuke) in Act 10 of the original *Chuushingura* play and Eiko Ohnuki-Tierney attributes the proverb's subsequent popularity to this fact. Benesch does not mention the impact of the play on the cinema, but Ohnuki-Tierney notes that over one hundred film versions of the story were produced in the period from late Meiji to early Showa. She mentions in particular a famous film version made by Mizoguchi Kenji in 1941-1942.

> "*The scene of Lord Asano's suicide occurs in the garden, and, although the act of suicide is not shown, the scene portrays the garden with cherry blossoms in full bloom. The symbolic analogy between the sacrifice of the warriors/soldiers and the cherry blossoms is established with powerful visual impact in this film, which hails the warrior's way, endorsed by the emperor. The story became a morality play par excellence in praise of* pro rege et patria mori." (Ohnuki-Tierney, *op.cit.*, pp. 149-150.)

Ohnuki-Tierney's view of the significance of cherry blossoms is summed up in the following paragraph:

"*From the beginning of the eighteenth century,* The Forty-Seven Loyal Retainers *has served as a hall of mirrors for the Japanese folk and later for the state. During the Edo period it expressed the desires and hopes of folk against the oppressive government. The popularity of the play was seized upon by the Meiji state, which, together with prominent playwrights, transformed it to a play embodying imperial loyalty. The 'transformation' was a construction, since imperial loyalty had no place in the original play. Cherry blossoms play important roles in various versions of the play. In the original, cherry blossoms as the king/queen of flowers represented the noble character of warriors who were at the top of the social hierarchy. After the play was made into a morality play extolling the virtue of imperial morality, the presence of cherry blossoms in Lord Asano's last poem, recorded in history, turns into a cascade of falling cherry blossoms under which he commits suicide in the* [Mizoguchi] *film, blatantly paralleling the state strategy to aestheticize modern soldiers' sacrifice for the emperor through the flower.*" (Ohnuki-Tierney, *op.cit.*, pp. 150-151.)

From the Way of the Samurai to the Way of the Warrior
One factor noted by Benesch was the revitalization of the mystical aspects of *bushido* and the subsequent downgrading of the importance of military hardware such as tanks and planes. Even in naval and aerial warfare, technological superiority was less preferable to 'fighting spirit' and some experts combined this with a highly romantic view of the chivalrous aspects of aerial dogfights in the early stages of World War I. The knightly ideal of aerial combat unfortunately diminished in proportion to advances in technology.

Benesch gives a detailed account of an important text used in the training of officers. This was *Bujin no Tokusou* [*Moral Training for Soldiers*: 武人の徳操] and gave a precise and detailed account of the history of *bushido*, together with a judicious selection of texts. The account is a classic presentation of the traditional account of the rise of the samurai and *bushido* and as such is the precise target of research carried out by modern scholars, like Oleg Benesch himself and Karl Friday.

To avoid placing any emphasis on Confucian influences, the origins of *bushido* were traced back to the *Man'yoshu* poems, before the arrival of corrupting foreign influences. The Heian period was a time of great decadence and the decline of *bushido* was stopped only by the appearance of the warriors of the northeast. Thus *bushido* became the dominant ethic of the Kamakura period. *Bushido* was further tested in the Sengoku period, but was not found wanting and so this period was of great importance for modern military education. Again, in the Tokugawa period, *bushido* might have disappeared, but for the establishment of the samurai class, the importance of which was deepened by the contributions of scholars like Yamaga Soko and especially Yoshida Shoin. With the Meiji Restoration, the *bushi* class disappeared, but the emperor's Conscription Ordinance at once transformed all soldiers into *bushi* and all Japanese into soldiers. The unfortunate influx of Western ideas was countered by the movement towards nationalism, and the work of Nitobe Inazo introduced bushido to the West. *Bujin no Tokusou* classified fifteen virtues of bushido into five broad categories, which are still regularly cited: loyalty [*chuusetsu*: 忠節], politeness [*reigi*: 礼儀], bravery [*buyuu*: 武勇], faithfulness [*shingi*: 信義], and austerity [shisso: 質素]. The selection of texts was 'judicious' in the sense that some historical periods were preferred to others. The Sengoku period was represented by fifty texts, while the period after 1868 yielded over one hundred examples of *bushido* practice.

The *Bujin no Tokusou* text was supplemented by other texts, including writings of two authors that bridged military and civilian thinking about *bushido*: naval captain, Hirose Yutaka, and Tokyo University professor Hiraizumi Kiyoshi. In 1933 Hiraizumi published *Bushidou no fukkatsu* [『武士道の復活』: *The Revival of Bushido*] and the work is still in print, having been republished in 2011. In this work, Hiraizumi declared that Japan was in danger of losing its fundamentally spiritual nature, due to the dominance of Western notions of individualism, materialism, freedom, and socialism. Asia had 'ceased to exist' and so Japan had a mission to become 'Japanese' again and become the leader of Asia. An important element in Hiraizumi's message was that all Japanese has become *bushi* in Meiji; the *bushi* were not eliminated, but expanded to include all Japanese. Incidentally, Hiraizumi paid a visit to the Kobukan Dojo to watch a demonstration of Morihei Ueshiba's *aiki-budo*. Hiraizumi was accompanied by another Tokyo University professor, Kakei Katsuhiko, and both played a role in Ueshiba's appointment as a professor at Kenkoku University in the Japanese state of Manchukuo.

There was some serious questioning of the historical roots of imperial *bushido*, but this did not have any effect in changing the official line of thinking and in any case, any open criticism would be interpreted as an attack on the imperial house. The proponents of imperial *bushido* simply distinguished between this and other kinds, emphasizing in the process that Japan had a deep-rooted dislike of conflict and that this was a major exception, in a world that was lacking in *bushido* spirit. This was the view of Hagiwara Sakutaro, who published an essay in 1938, just at the time when Japan was expanding its military expansion in China; the irony seems not have been noticed. Generally the argument was that samurai gradually came to see the importance of imperial loyalty, aided at various times by Buddhism and Confucianism, so that the warriors became conscious of the true way of the Japanese subject. This view was held by Watsuji Tetsuro, who also happened to serve on the committee that in 1937 produced the master text of imperial *bushido*: *Kokutai no Hongi* [國體の本義: *Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan*].

The other major questioning of the historical roots of imperial *bushido* came from another quarter and was much more serious. To deal with this threat, Benesch marks off what he calls ‘institutional *bushido*' from the imperial *bushido* he has been discussing so far. The threat was from the extreme nationalist groups within, or with close ties to, the military, who tried to effect a ‘Showa Restoration' in the 1920s and 1930s. The distinction made by Benesch actually serves to make clear what was the case all along: that the emperor never ruled directly, but was constantly ‘advised' by the old soldiers and bureaucrats who had close links to industrial groups. In his discussion Benesch deals with the rise of the Imperial Way faction within the military and notes that the ideological leader was General Araki Sadao (1877-1967), who was an active promoter of *bushido* in the military—and a student at Morihei Ueshiba's Kobukan Dojo. Benesch states that the ‘spiritual father' of this restoration movement was Kita Ikki (aka. Tetsujiro; 1883-1937), but does not mention the other intellectual forbears of the movement, such as Hozumi Yutaka, Uesugi Shinkichi, and Kakei Katsuhiko.

Kita had a very negative opinion of *bushido*, which was not at all likely to endear him to the proponents of imperial *bushido*.

> "*According to Kita, during the warrior-dominated period, ‘bushido became the oppressor of the imperial house', which suffered terribly for most of Japanese history. ‘Today's national polity theorists are angry at the warriors that arose along with bushido and indignantly protest against the weakening of the imperial house through the warriors'. At the same time, ‘they hammer on people's skulls with Japan's unbroken imperial line while shouting "bushido" and "long live the emperor!" Kita described Inoue Tertsujiro as the ‘village headman' of this tribe of bushido promoters. Kita argued that virtually all examples of seemingly loyal behavior throughout Japanese history could be explained by economic relationships and the only loyal retainers the imperial house had were the aristocrats who depended on them financially.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, pp. 194-195, quoting Kita Tetsujiro, *Kokutairon oyobi junsei shakaishugi*: 国体論及び純正社会主義, 1906, pp. 710-720.)

Benesch makes some mention of the various ‘incidents' that marked the opening of hostilities with China. These assassinations, achieved and attempted, in which the conspirators were punished for ‘failing to uphold the standards of *bushido*,' marked the end of the Imperial Way faction and led to the takeover of the government by General Tojo Hideki, followed by more intense preparations for total war in China and the Pacific. During this time, new versions of *Chuushingura* continued to appear and renewed attention was given to the *Hagakure*, with special emphasis placed on the essence of *bushido* as the *shini-gurui* [the death frenzy that is essentially irrational]. One aspect of the assassinations that is not mentioned at all by Benesch is the role of the utopian agrarian views of Tachibana Kozaburo and Inoue Issho in planning and preparation, which suggests that for Benesch, this ideology was a very minor sideshow and never played any major role in the rise, fall and resurrection of *bushido* that he charts in his book.

Thus, Benesch gives a clear and accurate account of the rise and operation of imperial *bushido* during the early Showa era, and his account fits the schema of ‘invented traditions' made by Hobsbawm. However, his account is of limited value for those who seek a clear picture of the connection of this imperial *bushido* with Deguchi Onisaburo and Morihei Ueshiba. For this, *AikiWeb* readers will have to rely on the primary and secondary research presented in earlier columns.

4. Late *Showa* and *Heisei Bushido*:
Death and Resurrection: *Bushido* and Postwar *Nihonjinron*

In an essay entitled "The Useful War", John Dower cites three phrases that describe different phases of Showa Japan. The first is the ‘dark valley' [*kurai tanima*: 暗い谷間], which refers especially to the fifteen years of militarism between 1930 and 1945. The second is ‘the new Japan' and refers to the period of the Occupation from 1945 to 1952. The third is the ‘Japanese miracle', which marks the emergence of Japan as an economic superpower from the 1970s onwards. (Dower, "The Useful War", Carol Gluck and Stephen Graubard (Eds.), *Showa: The Japan of Hirohit*o, pp. 49-70.) In 1945, Japan emerged from the ‘dark valley' with a particular distaste for *bushido*, but the ideology never disappeared entirely; it simply went below ground and when it emerged in the economic boom, it was the old *bushido*, of Nitobe Inazo and General Nogi, shorn of any imperialistic connections—at least, for the time being.

Bushido was generally ignored and in any case the allied occupation authorities blocked all avenues for a possible revival of the ideology. Those who had the energy to consider *bushido* attacked the ideology in general, not merely the imperialist interpretation, and many questioned the relevance of *bushido* in postwar Japan. However, as the occupation came to an end, discourse about bushido began to revive and people began to look beyond the imperial aberration at the ‘true' meaning of *bushido*. There was even some *Nihonjinron* argument and Benesch cites a Diet member, Toki Akira, who stated that traditional bushido meant that Japan would accept its responsibilities as a defeated nation, despite the fact that foreigners were unable to understand this fact. Benesch adds that:

> "*Similar arguments regarding the incomprehensibility of bushido to non-Japanese have proved resilient and are often used in response to criticism from abroad.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 217.)

One vehicle for the resurrection of *bushido* was film and a major task in this regard was to separate imperial *bushido* from the samurai and present a more nuanced picture of the

latter. One example is Kurosawa Akira's *Seven Samurai* [七人の侍: *Shichinin no Samurai*], which certainly did not present samurai as social models, even models of pre-imperialistic *bushido*. One Japanese critic has questioned those who seek 'samurai' or '*bushido*' values in Kurosawa's films "because there is a tradition of 'samurai discourse' in the colonial domestication of Japan by the West." (Yoshimoto Mitsuhiro, *Kurosawa*, pp. 72-73, Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 218.) Yoshimoto is in fact criticizing the tendency of some American critics to see Japanese films as studies in 'Japanese-ness', including *bushido*.

Removing *bushido* from the samurai and treating it in terms of its Meiji incarnation was one way of presenting the concept that proved very popular. In 1957, Watanabe Kunio produced *Meiji Tenno to Nichiro Senso* [明治天皇と日露戦争: 'The Meiji Emperor and the Russo-Japanese War']. This film, which is available on DVD, caused *The Times* Tokyo correspondent to wax lyrically

> "*What is the secret of this film's success? Critics emphasize that audiences are deeply stirred by the spectacle constantly before their eyes of Emperor, military, government, and people, one in mind and spirit, working for the greatness of Japan. In a sense, the film is militaristic; but its militarism is that of Admiral Togo, or General Nogi—not of Tojo and the leaders of the last war. It is a militarism suffused with the traditional Japanese virtues of* bushido*, the way of the warrior and deeply tinged with humanity. Unconsciously, audiences compare the chivalrous behavior of General Nogi, the commander-in-chief of the land forces at Port Arthur, who lost both his sons in the fighting, holding out his hand to General Stoessel, the Russian Commander, when he came to surrender, with that of General Yamashita at Singapore in 1942.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, pp. 219-220.)

Benesch adds that the report reflected 'dominant opinions' in the Japanese press and afforded a chance to 'rescue both *bushido* and modernity from the corruption of Showa militarists.'

The historical novels of Shiba Ryotaro have been discussed in previous columns, where it was noted that Shiba was very selective in his choice of subjects and tended to avoid anything from early (i.e., prewar and wartime) Showa. Benesch appears not to notice this, but simply notes that Shiba has been "instrumental in rehabilitating pre-Showa *bushido* in the popular mind from the 1960s onwards."

The Rediscovery of Nitobe and International *Bushido*

Benesch notes the year 1984 as a 'the most important date in the late Showa development of bushido.' (*Op.cit.*, p. 228.) A portrait of the 'then-obscure' Nitobe Inazo appeared on the new 5000-yen banknote. He adds that many research works on Nitobe have appeared, with "more than one hundred books published in the following decades." (*ibid.*) Benesch does not state where this material has been published, but according to the experience of the present writer, Nitobe's *Bushido* is one of the staple foreign-languages books to appear on the shelves of Japanese bookstores in the section headed, 'books on Japan': a distinction it shares with books on Japanese food, Japanese tea, *sumo* and *ninjutsu*, 'peaceful' martial arts like judo & aikido, and negotiation skills, especially Miyamoto Musashi's *Book of the Five Rings*. Thus I doubt that the new popularity of Nitobe is exclusively related to *bushido*. Foreign visitors are encouraged to read the work as part of their preparation for 'doing Japan' and the book's popularity rises and falls with the attractiveness of Japan as a tourist destination.

There is, nevertheless, a new preoccupation with *bushido* as one of the general features of the 'way of the warrior', as the following extract shows.

> "*'Your spirit is your true shield.' Morehei Ueshiba* (sic)
>
> *The warrior spirit, deep inside you, is what truly makes you a warrior; everything else is simply your tools. Your martial arts training, weapons training, meditation, visualization, mental training, character training, are all your tools and prepare you to walk the path of the warrior, but what truly makes you a warrior is what's inside you.*
>
> *Many people don't understand this. They can't get past their idea that a warrior is someone who goes to war. This idea is simply wrong. Warriors are found in every profession and in every area of life, not just the military, and some people who go to war, are not warriors; they simply made choices that led them to that point and once they were there, they had no real choice.*
>
> *Since it is your spirit that truly determines whether or not you are a warrior, your spirit is your true shield. That is where your courage and your power come from. There are those who have all the training in the world, but don't have a warrior's spirit, thus in the time of action, they falter and fail. Those with the warrior spirit will step up with courage, even if they have had no training at all. The warrior spirit will carry you through, but it can do a better job if you give it the tools that it needs to be better prepared.*"

The 'tools' come in the form of a best-selling book about 'modern *bushido*' and the writer would clearly have done well as a publicist for the imperial Japanese army and navy at the turn of the century, for it was the 'warrior spirit' that led to the Japanese victories in the wars with China and Russia. They had to do this because the equipment they used was clearly substandard and it was thought that the 'warrior spirit' would enable the soldiers to succeed where usual weapons and ammunitions failed. The above paragraph makes no mention of equipment and is addressed to the ordinary person, not the professional military or law-enforcement

officer. The author regularly offers nuggets of 'warrior wisdom' on *Facebook* pages, and I suspect that these are offered primarily to an American audience, where developing a 'warrior' mindset seems a necessary survival tool in an environment where being armed is taken for granted. In the years I have lived here, I have never come across a similar preoccupation with this aspect of 'modern *bushido*' in Japan.

***Bushido* and the World of Sport**

Benesch notes the importance of postwar 'internationalist' *bushido* in the world of sport and in this connection, Robert Whiting's *The Chrysanthemum and the Bat* is as likely to be on the shelves of Japanese bookstores as Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Whiting devotes Chapter Three of his book to "Baseball Samurai style" and duly mentions *bushido* as "a warrior's mode of behavior dating from the 13th century." His account offers a 'traditional' view of *bushido* that is similar to that given much earlier in *Bujin Tokusou*, against which research of scholars like Friday and Benesch is directed.

> "*It* [bushido] *sets forth rules of conduct that developed out of the intimate relationships between sword-wielding samurai and their masters. Incorporating elements from Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shinto, Bushido stresses such values as loyalty, self-discipline, reverence for nature, simplicity, modesty, and unquestioning obedience. In addition, it connotes a strong love for Japan and devotion to the idea of being Japanese.*
> *"Bushido, in its modified form, is still a force in Japanese life. Its influence is greatly felt in the most traditional, least westernized institutions like sumo wrestling and the criminal world of the yakuza. It has helped shape the everyday world of education, business, politics, and, of course, baseball.*"
> (Whiting, *The Chrysanthemum and the Bat*, p. 38.)

Whiting includes in his chapter a set of unwritten rules that he calls 'The Samurai code of Conduct for Baseball Players,' but most of the eleven articles he gives would apply equally in university martial arts clubs, especially those dealing with training and group solidarity.

Benesch devotes some space to the postwar reappearance of *bushido* in the martial arts and the military. He mentions two public figures, both of whom were connected with the military, who represent, in some sense, one aspect of *bushido* that is more conservative, in contrast to organizations like the Aikikai. One is General Tamogami Toshio, who was dismissed as Chief of Staff of the Air Self-Defense Force in 2008. Tamogami is still active and a search in *The Japan Times* archive revealed over 100 articles about him. According to Benesch, Tamogami believes that the SDF "admirably maintains the *bushido* spirit of our country" and that it is essential that the military is able to "draw on the nation's previous military traditions, including the Imperial Japanese Army." Thus, he believes that *bushido* needs to be reintroduced into the SDF, since SDF officers are the spiritual heirs of the samurai of the past, and should look to *bushido* for moral strength in the same way as their forebears.' (Benesch, *op. cit.*, p. 237.)

The other is Araya Takashi, who was a member of the Ground Self-Defence Force and headed a counter-terrorist group, based on the US Green Berets. Araya retired from the military in 2008 and became an instructor at the Shiseikan martial arts dojo, which is part of the Meiji Shrine in Tokyo. In 2009 he succeeded Inaba Minoru as Director. It is not stated which martial arts Araya practices, but from the photographs of Araya on the Internet, they would appear to be *kenjutsu* and aikido.

Benesch is on firmer ground when he discusses Araya's contribution to 'military *bushido*' and lists four precepts in his '*Bushido* for Special Forces Members.' The ghosts of Yamamoto Tsunetomo, the Ako Retainers and General Nogi are almost visible hovering in the background.

> *1. Having a definite spiritual standard (justice) and being decisive with regard to life or death;*
> *2. Having the courage to act without hesitation, and training the willpower that maintains this courage;*
> *3. Cultivating the real ability (wisdom, skill, physical strength) to accomplish one's task;*
> *4. Unifying speech and conduct and maintaining faith.*
> *(*Quoted by Benesch*, op.cit.,* p. 238*.)*

In 2010 Araya published a book, entitled *Tatakau monotachi e: Nihon no taiga to bushidou* [荒谷卓, 『戦う者たちへ 日本の大義と武士道』: 'To Those who Fight: Japan's Great Duty and Bushido']. According to Benesch,

> "*Araya's theories draw heavily on the ideals of Imperial bushido in their content invoking appeals to the bushido spirit of the mythical Emperor Jimmu, emphasizing the virtues of filial piety and imperial loyalism (忠孝), and positing the medieval hero Kusunoki Masashige as a model for the Special Forces Group.*"
> *(Benesch, op.cit., p. 238.)*

Benesch notes that Araya sees German and French students who attend international martial arts seminars and believes that they are more in tune with *bushido* virtues than the vast majority of Japanese. The assumption has to be that these seminars are held at the Shiseikan Dojo, of which the present writer has considerable experience. In this regard, the Shiseikan published a guide in 2008, to mark the 35th anniversary of the dojo. The guide was published in Japanese and English and contained a DVD. The title is 『日本の伝統 魂をみがく武道』 [*Nihon no Dentou: Tamashii wo migaku Budo*; English translation: The Tradition of Japan: Budo: Path of Spiritual Refinement] and the Editor-in-Chief was the previous Director Inaba Minoru. The senior teachers of the martial arts practiced in the Shiseikan (*kyudo*, kendo, judo, and a blend of *kenjutsu* and aikido called *budo*

kenshuu) give a short outline of the overall reasons for training in the respective arts, all emphasizing the virtues accruing from such training. What is very unusual about the book is that the word *bushido* is used, but only rarely. The heavy ideological weight give to the concept in Benesch's book is borne by the more general term *budo*. The implication is that at the Shiseikan, *budo* is practiced for all the right reasons.

So Benesch is probably correct when he states that the foreign students train at the Shiseikan dojo because they wish to understand *bushido*, but these students constitute a very small proportion of foreigners who come to Japan to train in the martial arts. To obtain a more balanced picture, Benesch would have done better to visit the Kodokan, or the Aikikai Hombu Dojo, where many more foreign students train—and for reasons other than to understand *bushido*, or visit one of the dojos where *koryu bujutsu* arts are practiced.

Bushido and Postwar Aikido
In the introduction to his book Benesch sums up the present-day ‘appeal' of *bushido* in Japan.

> "*Today,* bushido *frequently appears in popular Japanese culture, and is also invoked by politicians, business people, athletes, and other public figures.* Bushido *has been suggested as the key factor behind Japanese economic success in the 1980s as well as more recent achievements in international baseball and football (soccer) competitions. Commentators have credited* bushido *with the composed public response to the 2011 Tohoku earthquake, tsunami, and consequent nuclear crisis, while referring to workers at the damaged Fukushima power plant as ‘nuclear samurai'.* [Many references can be found in the relevant Google archive: https://www.google.co.jp/search?q=nu...oe=utf-8&hl=ja.] *In the past decade, some politicians have sought to reintroduce the ‘*bushido *spirit' into the Fundamental Education Law to address a perceived malaise among the nation's youth attributed to a lack of moral education. Promoters of* bushido *in the political sphere have been joined by senior military figures who use* bushido *in their arguments for a more assertive foreign policy, including overseas engagements. Given the role of* bushido *as a prominent ideological for Japanese militarism in Asia and the Pacific before 1945, this connection has similar problematic connotations as statements by Western leaders invoking Crusader imagery with regard to military action in the Arab world.*" (Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 2. Google reference supplied.)

I have argued elsewhere in these columns that in some respects the postwar history of aikido is a mirror-image of the postwar history of Japan as a whole, so, given the popularity of *bushido* referred to by Benesch above, it should come as no surprise that *bushido* is also invoked by some as a key factor in the postwar expansion of aikido and this is often emphasized by those who make speeches at major aikido events in Japan, such as the annual All-Japan Aikido Demonstration, held at the Nippon Budokan in May. It should also come as no surprise that there are similar tensions in the aikido world in Japan as exist in the other spheres of organized activity mentioned by Benesch.

Conclusion to Part Two
In some respects Part Two of this essay deals with similar issues to Part One, though the emphasis is perhaps different. As a concept, *bushido* is equivocal, in the sense it means different things to those people for whom it is a valid and useful concept. However, through a close analysis involving many proponents and opponents of *bushido* who are probably unknown to non-Japanese readers, Benesch has presented strong arguments for the general fragility of the traditions on which its validity and utility are based. On the other hand, there are some problems related to Benesch's account, hinted at in Ohnuki-Tierney's account of the *Chuushingura* story, which we will mention in the general conclusion to this essay.

Morihei Ueshiba and _Bushido_
Despite the reservations one might have over his uncritical acceptance Hobsbawm's view of ‘invented' tradition, Oleg Benesch has shown quite clearly in his book that there were several strains and functions of *bushido* and a consequence of this fact is that to use the term of Morihei Ueshiba without any further qualification is to invite serious misunderstanding of the man. Ueshiba was a man of his time and given the fact, as was stated earlier, that he was born in 1883 and lived through the evolution of *bushido* between the Russo-Japanese War and the defeat of Japan in 1945, it is likely that his view of *bushido* would not have been seriously different from those of his compatriots. A glance at Ueshiba's writings and lectures for the Omoto religion in the 1930s, for example, reveals a man with a strong commitment to *bushido* as it was interpreted at that time as an ideology of militarism. There is an ambivalence here, however, owing to the fact that Ueshiba became an active member of the Omoto religion, which was regarded by the authorities as a serious threat to social order and was suppressed twice. As a result Deguchi Onisaburo well understood the importance of adjusting his Omoto doctrine to suit the changing political climate. On the other hand, Ueshiba's position as a renowned martial artist and his circle of friends and students placed him at the very center of a particular strain of *bushido* ideology and in this sense he was indeed considered an embodiment of *bushido*, as this was understood in the circles in which he moved.

Part Three
One major conclusion to Part One, which can be stated with some confidence, is that the ancient texts and modern discussions reveal very little connection between samurai and agriculture. The earlier, more indigent, samurai may well have engaged in practical agriculture to some extent, but their higher ranked colleagues were really the Japanese counterparts of the English landed gentry, some of whom

were also dukes, earls and barons. In fact, the evolution of the samurai was marked by an increasing insistence that they were not peasant farmers and did not engage in activities that were more appropriate to peasant farmers—a point strongly emphasized by Yamaga Soko, and this insistence was made absolute by the rigid classification of society decreed by the Tokugawa shoguns into samurai, farmers, craftsmen, merchants and the rest. Admittedly this rigid classification became increasingly impractical as the *Pax Tokugawa* progressed, but Tokugawa samurai resorted to agriculture not because they wished to embrace bucolic virtues along with their martial skills, but because the stipends on which they were supposed to live and flourish as samurai became increasingly insufficient.

With the development of the concept of *bushido*, discussed in Part Two, we are on firmer ground, since *bushido* can be considered as an ideology, in the sense defined by Malcolm Hamilton and accepted by Oleg Benesch.

> "*An ideology is a system of collectively held normative and reputedly factual ideas and beliefs and attitudes advocating a particular pattern of social relationships and arrangements and/or aimed at justifying a particular pattern of conduct, which its proponents seek to promote, realise, pursue, or maintain.*" (M B Hamilton, "The Elements of the Concept of Ideology," quoted by Benesch, *op.cit.*, p. 9.)

The tying of samurai to agriculture can be seen as one of the interpretations of *bushido*, but there are strong grounds for attributing the earlier origins of this association to the nativist theories of *kokugaku* scholars in the Tokugawa period, especially the populist theories based on the doctrines of Hirata Atsutane, who, by chance, also had a major influence on Deguchi Onisaburo, the chief *consigliere ducale* of the Omoto religion. A consequence is that, compared with received traditions concerning the samurai and *bushido*, Japanese agrarianism cannot be considered a tradition with a very long pedigree.

1. Knights, *Bushi*, Samurai and Agriculture
There is a vast amount of evidence supporting the general thesis that Japan's traditional culture was an agrarian culture, symbolized especially by the growing of rice and, later, cherry blossoms.

However, there is a need for clarification here. First, the change from a hunter / gatherer culture to fixed communities engaged collectively in agriculture was in no way unique to Japan and cannot therefore be used as the main justification for agrarianism as an ideology. The fact that Japan became a rice-growing culture has been used as an explanation for the 'Japanese character' and one example is a book entitled *The Peasant Soul of Japan*, by Shoichi Watanabe, which is really an example of *Nihonjinron*. The early Japanese were actually taught rice-growing by immigrants from the Chinese mainland and Korea and the irony of this fact—something 'quintessentially' Japanese being imported from abroad—is not often noticed. There is a connected issue here, for the simple equation of the development of *bushi* with agriculture has been contested by some scholars. Watanabe stresses what he thinks is a major difference between a hunting culture and a rice-growing culture and suggests that the latter is a defining characteristic of the Japanese 'character'. However, there is a large body of evidence for the thesis that the early samurai were actually part of a hunting culture—which seems to make nonsense of Watanabe's distinction.

Secondly, the fact that Japan was an agrarian culture does not by itself show any connection between agrarianism and the warrior ethos. Early Japanese peasants who were male and of a certain age had an obligation to perform military service. The service was seen as a largely unwelcome respite to the equally burdensome tasks of the tilling the soil and providing enough rice to satisfy rapacious tax collectors and landlords —who were usually *bushi* anyway. Eventually, the conscript army was abandoned in Japan until after the Meiji restoration and the peasants resumed their principal role of providing the means of economic sustenance for everyone else, including the rapacious *bushi* tax collectors and landlords. So the supposed close association between *bushi* and the soil needs to be interpreted with some caution and also put into a proper historical context. It will not do to identify Japan's long tradition of agriculture with agrarianism as a romantic or political ideology—and leave it at that.

2. Some Background to Aikido Agrarianism
2.1. Agrarianism, 'Farm Bushido' and Japan's 'Soul'
The Tokugawa *bakuhan* form of government was in many respects an innovation, but it reaffirmed some received traditions concerning popular attitudes to agriculture. First, the Tokugawas family themselves controlled about one fifth of the productive land area in Japan, which was enough to maintain the *bakufu*. Secondly, the power balance swung to eastern Japan, a stronghold of traditional, farm-oriented Shinto beliefs, which also had more hierarchical social patterns, compared with the more egalitarian Kansai. Finally, the move to Edo had the effect of underlining the importance of agricultural production, as against promoting commerce and international trade. For these reasons, Thomas Havens concludes that wealth in land became the economic foundation for the Tokugawa government.

There were other aspects, also. The four-tiered classification of *shimin* [四民], discussed earlier, laid emphasis on agriculture as a means of social stability. It was a system in which all knew their place, especially the samurai at the top and farmers just below them.

> "*To prize the root and suppress the branches was the rule of the ancient sages. The root is agriculture. The branches are commerce and industry. Clearly, throughout history agriculture declines when commerce and industry rise. Samurai and farmers have permanently fixed occupations and depend*

> *entirely on the land for their survival. This is the proper basis of government.*"

Such was the view of the Confucian scholar Ogyuu Sorai (1666-1728), but his disciple Dazai Shundai took a dimmer, though perhaps more realistic, view of the peasantry. The samurai, after all, were the exclusive embodiment of Tokugawa virtue and, in the words of Steven Vlastos, farming was a "mandatory occupation of politically subordinate and morally inferior social class."

> "*Agriculture is the foundation of all other productivity. All classes are fed by the farmer. ... As the labour of the farmer, however, is essentially disagreeable, farmers are generally anxious to get out of their work. This must be strictly forbidden by law, else the production of the necessities of life will fall below the amount required.*" (Above quotations from Thomas Havens, *Farm and Nation in Modern Japan*, pp. 19-20.)

As Thomas Havens notes, agrarianism is a common theme in the history of most countries that have made the transition from a village-based farming economy to an economy based on industry and the existence of large urban centers of population. In Japan after 1868, agrarianism took the form of a variant known as *Nouhonshugi* [農本主義: 'agriculture-as-the-essence-ism'], whose adherents used farming as the vehicle for their visions of an ideal Japanese social and political structure.

> "*Not until a national policy of industrialization was implemented after 1868 did agrarianism arise as a conscious, if ill-defined, ideology that variously upheld farming on social, economic, political and spiritual grounds. Only when people began to question seriously whether agriculture should continue to be the most economically productive and ethically approved occupation did its diverse partisans, for diverse reasons, begin to defend it.*" (Thomas Havens, *op.cit.*, pp. 8-9.)

Havens correctly makes a distinction between these agrarian nationalists and the 'vast majority of farmers, agronomists, rural technicians and others employed in the countryside,' for whom farming was their life-blood, but who had little or no interest in theories of *yonaoshi* [世直し: changing the world for the 'better'] or in social or political activism.

Havens devotes his book, *Farm and Nation in Modern Japan*, to a complex analysis of the working of agrarian nationalism from its purported origins in 1870 till its demise in 1940 and his research provides the basis for any further discussion of modern Japanese agrarian nationalism. An essay by Stephen Vlastos, in his collection *Mirror of Modernity*, ties the matter of agrarian nationalism more closely to the themes of this essay. Space prevents an extended study of all the figures who came and went during the period covered by Havens and Vlastos. There were two strains of agrarianism, one bureaucratic and the other 'populist and romantic', and we can consider one example from each category: Yokoi Tokiyoshi, an academic exponent of what Havens terms 'farm bushido'; and Tachibana Kozaburo, the leader of a populist movement based on romantic agrarian nationalism, who also attended meetings in Morihei Ueshiba's Kobukan dojo during the early 1930s. The question then arises of any connection between agrarian nationalism, especially the volatile brand pursued by Tachibana, and Morihei Ueshiba.

2. 2. Yokoi Tokiyoshi [横井時敬] and 'Farm Bushido'
The 'farm bushido' of Yokoi Tokiyoshi (1860-1927) was one early attempt to undo the effects of the alleged evils of industrialization.

> "*The earlier agrarianism [before 1900] rationalized farming as a vital contributor to national wealth and insisted that it be promoted equally with trade and industry. From Yokoi's time onward,* Nouhonshugi *could no longer claim that agriculture was the main source of national wealth. As a result, a new justification appeared, stressing farming as the social, military, and ethical foundation of the country. Above all, it was the small cultivator, living in the classical farm village, who represented the ideal social type to twentieth century* Nouhonshugisha *such as Yokoi Tokiyoshi*."

> "*Thus in 1897 Yokoi drew together the diverse strands of nineteenth-century agrarianism into a pattern for almost all farm-first thinking down to World War II: the ethical virtues of village life, the military advantages of farm recruits, the ideological soundness of rural ways of thinking, and agriculture as a source of economic and spiritual vitality, no matter how much it had been eclipsed by manufacturing and trade.*" (Havens, op.cit., pp. 98,101.)

In later writings Yokoi expounded further on the three aspects of farm bushido, even though it "required a massive denial of the actual social division in Japanese agriculture." (Vlastos, *op.cit.*, p. 87.) Despite the fact that farmers who were called up into the army as a result of the Meiji conscription system made notoriously poor soldiers because of their poorer health and education (notwithstanding the striking example to the contrary of Morihei Ueshiba, as depicted in the pages of Kisshomaru's biography), Yokoi thought that all soldiers should spend as much time as possible in the countryside, in order to counter the corrupting effect of serving in cities. The farmers were supposed to exhibit a new class ethic, similar to the *bushido* of the samurai. This was because farm villages were superior to cities; farmers were superior to city dwellers; and in continuing the country's *bushido*, they were supposed to constitute a new model class and be outstanding examples of *makeji damashii* [負けじ魂: unyielding indomitable spirit]. These qualities would enable farmers to escape poverty,

revive the village economy and stop the flight of young men to the cities. Added to this was the close relationship between agriculture and the emperor, which Yokoi emphasized in his later writings.

> "*Thus in Yokoi's simplistic formulation, farmers served the state and throne both in the fields and in the* [military] *ranks, a conviction shared by nearly all bureaucratic agrarianists, and a number of generals and politicians as well, from this time right through World War II.*" (Havens, op.cit., p. 103.)

Unfortunately, Yokoi reckoned without the widespread consequences of the economic collapse that affected Japan after World War I. Alongside this economic collapse there also occurred a collapse of the façade of rural harmony and this had the effect of bringing about a confluence of agrarianism and nationalism. The result can be seen in the theories of Gondo Seiko and Tachibana Kozaburo, which combined a nostalgic longing for primitive rural society with radical structural reform, with the added ingredient of militant political violence.

2. 3. The Bucolic Assassins:
Gondo Seikyo [権藤成卿], Inoue Nissho [井上日召], Tachibana Kozaburo [橘孝三郎]
The aspect of agrarian nationalism that is of particular interest for students of Morihei Ueshiba is his association with two persons who were convicted of conspiracy to assassinate some important public figures from industry and politics. The assassinations and attempted assassinations have been discussed in previous columns, but the connection with agrarianism and agrarian nationalism has not. As background, we need to consider the theories of another agrarian nationalist, Gondo Seikyo [権藤成卿: 1868-1937], from whom the other two drew some inspiration.

Gondo came to prominence when he was arrested in connection with the *Ketsumeidan* [血盟団: Blood Brotherhood] incidents in February and March 1932. Born in Kurume, Kyushu, he was brought up in a farming family and also studied Western medical science. He had connections with the *Kokuryuukai* [黒龍会: Amur River Society / Black Dragon Society], of which his brother was a founder member, and spent some time in China and Korea. He taught at various institutions and at one point his pupils included Inoue Nissho, a Buddhist priest who was the leader of the *Ketsumeidan*. Gondo was never charged in connection with the assassinations and afterwards quickly faded from public notice.

Two major concepts in Gondo's thinking were *shashoku* [社稷: *shoku* can also be written as 食, meaning food] and *jichi* [自治]. The first denoted the Japanese people organized into self-governing units and subject to the emperor. Gondo's argument was that the rise of human society (*sha*) depended on the produce of the land (*shoku*).

> "*The development of society required cooperation between heaven, man, and earth: The three great keystones in our formulation of* shashoku *have been (1) obey the laws of heaven, (2) depend on the goodness of the earth, and (3) promote harmony among men.*" (Quoted by Havens, *op.cit.*, p. 195.)

Gondo believed that this had been decreed by Amaterasu the Sun Goddess and first implemented by the Emperor Sujin. He added that society existed to live in a state of 'utmost happiness', which was the result of the work involved in growing agricultural produce. The second concept promoted by Gondo was *jichi*: self-rule, which was brought about by following the laws of nature. The combination resulted in a harmonious, self-regulating society, at the top of which sat the emperor, who had purely ceremonial duties that were exclusively spiritual. As Havens summarizes Gondo's thinking:

> "*Gondo's use of myth and legend in lieu of historical evidence to describe the rise of Japanese society made his accounts interesting but unconvincing, especially when he maintained that agriculture was the sole basis of nation and government in early Japan.*" (Havens, *op.cit.*, pp. 197-198.)

The point made by Havens, however, is not that of historical accuracy. Rather,

> "*...what mattered in twentieth-century Japan was not whether his view of the past was jaded, but how he utilized these plausible, but probably imaginary, good customs culled from the past as a basis for social policy in the midst of the political and economic crises of the interwar years.*" (Havens, *op.cit.*, p. 198.)

The crucial point here is that Gondo simply identified his romantic concept of *shashoku* with the Japanese *kokutai* [国体: national entity], but one consequence was that the *kokutai* was not the emperor surrounded by the government and bureaucrats, but the emperor as the focus of the Japanese people themselves, all organized into networks of farm-villages. Another consequence was that Gondo attacked anything that threatened his concept of *shashoku* and *jichi*—and this included feudal clans, religious institutions, the warrior class as a whole, and the military, bureaucracy, and industrial conglomerates that had been created by the so-called reforms of the Meiji government, with its heavy emphasis on selfishness, competition, and social Darwinism. The result was that Gondo did not exactly endear himself to the said government.

Kyoudai Mura*, *Aikyoukai*,*Aikyou Juku
Tachibana Kozaburo was 25 years younger than Gondo and, apart from their utopian theories about agrarian nationalism, had little in common. Tachibana was born in 1893 in Mito, Ibaragi Prefecture. He was the son of a former samurai and entered Tokyo's most prestigious high school in 1912, but

dropped out before graduation and returned to Mito to work the farm inherited from his father. The farm, initially two hectares, eventually grew to five, and became the center of a community known as *Kyoudai Mura* [兄弟村: 'Brotherhood Village']. Later, he formed a producers' cooperative association called the 愛郷会 [*Aikyoukai*: 'Loving Community Society']. As we shall see below, Ibaragi was the center of much economic hardship and Tachibana's association was an attempt to deal with this.

Tachibana's manifesto was a mixture of 'bombast', to use Havens' phrase, and sound, practical assistance. The aim was to help the economically devastated farm villages and to this end the cooperative purchased seed, fertilizer, it bought and sold farm produce and was a clearinghouse for implements, farm machinery, arranged for tilling and grain processing, and also began insurance and medical care for members. These activities were very similar to what Morihei Ueshiba had achieved earlier in Hokkaido. Later, Tachibana continued and developed this initiative by creating the *Aikyou Juku* [愛郷塾: 'Loving Community School']. This was organized like a residential commune and taught the essentials of small farm management. The students were divided into an elementary group and a youth group, for young men aged eighteen and over, and Tachibana exacted a pledge that they would dedicate themselves to the movement. Havens notes that

> "*The school apparently taught mathematics, bookkeeping, natural history, farm management and other apparently non-ideological subjects, but it also included lectures on village rebirth and social reform, as well as a good deal of practical work in the fields. Fraternalism, hard work, and self-sufficiency were highly prized and students were forbidden to smoke, drink or squander their money. It seems likely that the tenor of the school was more idealistic than revolutionary, drawing on the fusion of spiritual and material aims which characterized the overall aim of the Aikyoukai movement.*" (Havens, *op.cit.*, p. 240.)

When Onisaburo Deguchi and Morihei Ueshiba created the dojos in Ayabe and Takeda, they used the farm-commune model, though this seemed less of a 'movement' compared with Tachibana's *Aikyoujuku*, they were organized on much the same model. These, too, were tied to a spiritual ideology based on the Omoto religion, which was in some ways just as idealistic as Tachibana's vision. Unfortunately, for Tachibana, however,

> "*Is was precisely such idealism which propelled the youthful farm activists on May 15. ... During the three busy years 1929-1932, Tachibana not only led the Aikyoukai in its unproductive economic, educational and political efforts and developed most of the social and political criticism which established him as a major agrarianist, but he also became acquainted with many of the young terrorists who eventually led the Ketsumeidan and May 15 uprisings in 1932. Like Gondo Seikyo, he first met would-be revolutionaries at lecture societies in the late 1920s. Inoue Nissho, the radical priest who founded the Ketsumeidan, is known to have visited Tachibana occasionally in Mito starting in December 1929 and Tachibana gradually expanded his circle of right-wing acquaintances until young officers from the Ibaraki airbase began attending lectures at the Aikyoukai regularly in August 1931. He also met a number of impatient patriots at study societies in Tokyo in the summer and autumn of 1931, among them some of the young military officers who later joined the May 15 upheaval.*" (Havens, *op.cit.*, pp. 242-243.)

Previous columns have discussed these upheavals in some detail, but it is clear that some of the meetings in Tokyo included the *Sakurakai* and took place at Morihei Ueshiba's Kobukan dojo. Enough has been stated, however, to show the close connection between agrarian nationalism and political action. Tachibana shared with Gondo and Inoue the ideals of *Nohonshugi* and the life of the farm-village in industrialized Japan, and also the nationalism that made agriculture the common heritage of the Japanese as a people. However, Tachibana criticized the reluctance of Gondo to act on his beliefs and instead believed in a necessary fusion of thought and action, in accordance with the Wang Yang-ming tradition of moral thinking that dominated thinking between the Meiji Restoration and the Showa 'restoration' of the 1930s. Havens shows no indication that he knew about Deguchi and Ueshiba, but his summing up of Tachibana's thinking reflects almost exactly Morihei Ueshiba's thinking on *budo* and agriculture.

> "*Accordingly, when we view the current situation, there is no better place to start looking for patriots than in the military system. And no one is better placed for acting in concert with them than the farmers. Japan has historically been able to be herself only because of the unity of agriculture and the military. In this unprecedented emergency the first things we must have are a sense of patriotism and a spirit of brotherhood. Needless to say it is you soldiers and we farmers who embrace these most strongly. The thing that will extricate Japan from this unprecedented crisis and cause the world revolution to open fire absolutely must be sought in the union of agriculture and the military which exists in the great patriotic reform movement of the Japanese people.*" (Tachibana, quoted by Havens, *op.cit.*, pp. 269-270.)

Havens notes that Tachibana's views confirmed the basic belief of *Nouhonshugi* in the concept of 兵農一如: h*einou ichin*, translated by Havens as, compatibility of farming and military service, which was the starting point for Ueshiba's early sojourn in Hokkaido. According to Kisshomaru, Ueshiba later changed the character 兵 to 武, to bring the concept more into line with his ideal of *budo*: 武農一如,

rendered in English as ‘the integration of the martial and agricultural lifestyles.' (Kisshomaru Ueshiba, *A Life in Aikido*, p. 83.)

3. Morihei Ueshiba and the Soil
As was stated in the first paragraph of this essay, Morihei Ueshiba took up agriculture at several times in his life and some have concluded from this fact that aikido is best practiced in a rural setting, with the ‘simple' life of training in the country held up as the best way of following in his footsteps. This conclusion is based on rather selective evidence and the following section attempts to place Morihei Ueshiba's agricultural activities in a wider cultural and social context.

3. 1. Tanabe
Morihei Ueshiba was born in what is now Tanabe, a small coastal city, located in the Kii peninsula, but now extending northwards to the Kumano mountain range. These mountains are the home of the Kumano shrines and Koya-san and for centuries have been a major destination for pilgrims. They are also the traditional home of *shugenja* [修験者] mountain ascetics and *tengu* [天狗], the long-nosed goblins generally feared by local people. In the general Japanese division of *toshi* -- *inaka* [都市田舎]: ‘city -- country' / ‘urban -- rural', Tanabe is definitely in the latter category.

Morihei Ueshiba lived at home in Tanabe for two principal periods in his life: during his childhood and after his discharge from the army in 1905, following the Russo-Japanese War. The main source of information for these periods is the biography written by his son Kisshomaru. In the second chapter of 『合気道開祖植芝盛平伝』, Kisshomaru gives a detailed picture of the town—a village, really—where the family came from, his father's birth, early childhood and youth. A few things stand out from Kisshomaru's portrait. The first thing is that the Ueshiba family was not a family of samurai. Tanabe was the base of the Tanabe domain, which was a sub-domain of those directly owned by the Tokugawa family. It was ruled by a lord named Ando, and yielded an income of 38,000 *koku* of rice. Kisshomaru makes clear that the daimyo's castle was surrounded by samurai residences, with those of farmers and fishermen on the periphery, the Ueshiba house being close to the shore. The Ueshibas were "middling farmers with about five acres of land" and also had some fishing rights. (Kisshomaru uses the Japanese method of measuring in *tsubo* [坪], which is the area of two *tatami* mats placed side-by-side. The family owned 2 *choubu* [町歩] of land, or 6,000 *tsubo*.) An important point to make here is that the Ueshiba family seems not to have suffered from the economic hardships that caused such devastation a few years after the Meiji Restoration. At least, Kisshomaru does not mention this.

The second thing to note from Kisshomaru's account is that Morihei Ueshiba was frail when he was young and that he was gradually toughened up by his father. This seems to have included *sumo* wrestling, spear fishing and lengthy hikes. Kisshomaru does not mention working the land (except perhaps giving some help at harvest time), but, given the family situation as owner-farmers, he would certainly have done this. Kisshomaru notes:

> 弱さから強さへと、しだいに心身の変貌をとげつつあった開祖は、社会にいつ、どのような己れの進路を見出そうとしていたか、明確にはつかみがたい部分がある。
>
> *"O Sensei gradually transformed himself from a frail boy to a man strong in body and mind. But it is not so clear just when he determined the path his life would take."*
>
> もとより武の道はいまが意識にのぼるはずもなく、母ゆきが望んだ僧籍も否定され、かといって農漁業はいささか体力がともないかねる感じだした。
>
> *"His father would not allow him to become a priest, as his mother would have liked, and he himself did not have the aptitude to become a fisherman or farmer; at this point, martial arts were not even a distant possibility." (『合気道開祖植芝盛平伝』, p. 56; A Life in Aikido, p. 60.)*

This lack of aptitude for farming does not seem to have changed after Ueshiba's sojourn in Tokyo and his discharge from the military in 1905. Kisshomaru does mention Ueshiba's display of strength when helped with the rice harvest and he might also have done this when he was younger, before his spell in the army, but there is no mention of any other agricultural activities before the sojourn in Hokkaido. There is no evidence at this stage in Morihei Ueshiba's life of any special attachment to the soil, or of any ‘spiritual' connection between training in *budo* and working the land.

Morihei Ueshiba and the Soil
3. 2. Shirataki
There is much controversy concerning Morihei Ueshiba's sojourn in Hokkaido. In his father's biography, Kisshomaru Ueshiba has sketched out some ‘received traditions' concerning that period, but these have been questioned by others, notably Stanley Pranin. One major problem is the size and importance of Morihei Ueshiba's martial and intellectual debt to Takeda Sokaku. This is downplayed by Kisshomaru Ueshiba and strongly emphasized by Mr Pranin, but this matter is only of peripheral relevance to the matter discussed in this essay.

Morihei Ueshiba seems to have had a preference for living in out-of-the-way places, for the place he moved to in 1912 is even now fairly remote. As with Tanabe, Shirataki is on a local railway line (which Morihei Ueshiba had a hand in building), in this case between Asahikawa and Abashiri, with its famous prison, and now has an interchange on the expressway, but Basho's famous adage of a ‘narrow road to

the deep north' holds truer of Shirataki than it did of the places he visited in Tohoku. Shirataki was actually part of Engaru, which had been administered by the Kisshu domain in Wakayama, which included Tanabe. So there was already a connection between Tanabe and Shirataki.

In his biography Kisshomaru Ueshiba gives a very detailed explanation of the move to Hokkaido, but the move by Ueshiba was actually part of a later stage of emigration. Kisshomaru suggests that Ueshiba had talked to a neighbor named Kurahashi Denzaburo, who had settled in Hokkaido as part of the *Tonden-hei Seido* [屯田兵制度]. The *Tonden-hei Seido* scheme was an arrangement for settling former samurai in such areas to give them something to do; farming was to provide a livelihood for those samurai, who would take up arms if the occasion required. The move was actually an extension of an earlier, more general, project to colonize Hokkaido that was systematized in 1869, with the creation of the Hokkaido Colonization Board. This secondary project was started in the aftermath of the independent Ezo Republic, which had been created during the Boshin War by Enomoto Takeaki in 1868, and had been abolished a year later. As Louise Young puts it:

> "*The emigration movement began in the 1870s when the northern island of Hokkaido became the first target of mass-colonization schemes as part of the nation-building project of the new Meiji government. Inhabited almost exclusively by the ethnically distinct Ainu population, settlement by ethnic Japanese was regarded as a prerequisite to the political and economic incorporation of the territory into the fabric of the new nation-state.*" (Louise Young, "Colonizing Manchuria: the Making of an Imperial Myth," in Vlastos, *Mirror of Modernity*, p. 96.)

In her book, *Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism*, Louise Young connects this early colonization of Hokkaido with the later extensive colonization of Manchuria and the establishment of the state of Manchukuo, after the Wall Street crash of 1929. The paternalistic role of the government in Hokkaido, which was a 'mixed colonization,' combining strong (Japanese) administration, and extensive immigration (of Japanese), was repeated in Manchuria, but without the same success. Morihei Ueshiba's move to Hokkaido in 1912 was part of this later stage of development, and the invitation to settle in Shirataki / Engaru did not include any obligation for military service.

There is no evidence that Morihei Ueshiba developed any special attachment to the soil, beyond subscribing to the propaganda value (at the time) of the government slogan used to promote the colonization of Hokkaido and the emigration of former samurai to Hokkaido. This was 兵農一如 [*heinou ichinyo*: fighting and farming are one: compare this with the 'farm *bushido*' of Yokoi Toshiyoki, discussed earlier]. Of course, a high level of practical knowledge and experience was required for surviving the harsh Hokkaido winters, and the area allotted to each family in Hokkaido was much larger (10 *choubu* 町歩: 25 acres) than the 2 *choubu* of the family farm in Tanabe. Kisshomaru also notes that Morihei Ueshiba was quite imaginative and innovative in his agricultural activities. However, we do not have any evidence from the contemporary sources that Ueshiba saw any specifically spiritual connection at this stage between the life he led as a practical agriculturist and the new *budo* skills he was learning at this time from his Daito-ryu teacher, Takeda Sokaku. Nor, of course, could Ueshiba have been expected to shed any tears over the dispossession of the Ainu from the lands that he was helping to cultivate.

Morihei Ueshiba and the Soil
3. 3. Ayabe / Takeda
After meeting Onisaburo Deguchi in 1919, Morihei Ueshiba overrode the objections of his wife and decided to move to Ayabe, the seat of the Omoto religion, so that he could be near his new spiritual mentor. He moved in April, 1920. In Ayabe, however, we do see some evidence of a nascent agrarianism based on the teachings of Deguchi and the Omoto religion. To put this in context, we need to take a sideways glance at the work of the populist *Kokugaku* scholar Hirata Atsutane, to whom Deguchi owed a large intellectual debt.

Digression 1: Onisaburo Deguchi and Omoto: Borrowings from Hirata Atsutane
Hirata Atsutane's collected works in Japanese run to 22 volumes of text, but very little of this has been translated into English. There are just four pages in the 2,000-page *Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume Two*, and he fares only a little better in the more recent and narrowly focused *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, with a selection of extracts from "The True Pillar of the Soul," which deals with Hirata's cosmology. There are relatively few studies written in English.

> "*Atsutane is … known to have an impact on the rise of new religions that took place in Japan during his lifetime. In particular, his insistence on retaining and attempting to invigorate native Japanese spirit beliefs and rituals in the face of pressure to modernize and rationalize religious thought and practices made him a hero and patriarchal figure to later Japanese spiritualists. Perhaps the most controversial of those figures who looked up to Atsutane as a seminal foundation of modern spiritualism was Deguchi Onisaburo (1871-1948) founder of the Omotokyo religion at the end of the nineteenth century.*" (Wilburn N Hansen, "Hirata Atsutane 平田篤胤 (1776-1843)" James W Heisig at al (Eds.) *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, pp. 509-510.)

Neither Hansen nor Heisig give any extracts from Deguchi's writings and Hansen is in error over one point: Deguchi Onisaburo was not the founder of the Omoto Religion, but the son-in-law of the foundress, Nao Deguchi. There is still

much research remaining to be done on how Hirata influenced Deguchi and also how Deguchi influenced Morihei Ueshiba.

Two areas where Hirata influenced Deguchi were cosmology and agrarianism. Hirata neatly combined the two by his claim that Okuninushi-no-kami, not Amaterasu, was the top deity of the hierarchy of native deities. In the *Kojiki*, Okuninushi gives the land to Amaterasu after major problems have been solved concerning the many ‘unruly earthly deities' and a contest held between one of his sons and Takemikazuchi no kami, who at one point sat cross-legged on the tip of a sword. The only condition Okuninushi sets is that they build a shrine for him. The shrine at Izumo is dedicated to Okuninushi and Susa no O. In the *Nihon Shoki*, however, the handover is much more complicated. It is first noted that Okuninushi, together with another deity, Sukuna bikona no mikoto,

> "*constructed the ‘sub-celestial world. Then, for the race of man as well as for beasts, they determined the method of healing diseases. They also, in order to do away with the calamities of birds, beasts and creeping things, established means for their prevention and control. The people enjoy the protection of these universally until the present day.*"

Later, Okuninushi declares that

> "*This Central Land of Reed Plains* [Japan] *had been always waste and wild. The very rocks, trees and herbs were all given over to violence. But I have reduced them to submission and there is none that is not compliant. ... It is I, and I alone, who now govern this land.*" (W G Aston, *Nihongi*, pp. 59-60.)

W G Aston supplied detailed notes to his translation, based extensively on the textual commentary made by Hirata. When Okuninushi gave over the visible world to Amaterasu, Hirata believed that he became the controlling deity of the ‘invisible world', but the ‘visible world', ruled by the emperor, was where people participated in the creative work of the *kami* by agricultural productivity. Hirata's teachings appealed to the peasant famers in rural Japan, exemplified in Shimazaki Toson's novel *Before the Dawn* [島崎藤村, 『夜明け前』], and his missionaries gave practical advice on increasing farm productivity through hard work and self-reliance, coupled with instructions on praying and holding rituals and festivals.

Deguchi followed Hirata's cosmology quite closely, but added a major role for Omoto in the creative work in the ‘visible world'. In some respects, Deguchi's Omoto ideology was just as radical as Tachibana's utopian agrarian nationalism and one major goal was the preservation of farming communities and developing their operations so that they were self-sufficient. Here Omoto combined utopianism with practical measures involving a return to traditional methods. Rather than use chemical fertilizers, for example, traditional farmers cut grass and buried it in the fields as a natural fertilizer. However, this agrarian ideology was grounded in the fundamental Omoto belief that nature, which was an unlimited spiritual power without beginning or end, was a manifestation of God or the divine. So, for Deguchi, as for Hirata, in a very real sense agricultural activity was an activity of divine creation.

In the light of the previous discussion, we can conclude that without question the early settlement in Ayabe in 1920 and the later branch of the *Dai Nippon Budo Senyoukai* in Takeda, established in 1932, combined *aiki-budo* training with agriculture, in accordance with Omoto teachings. It is instructive to compare Ueshiba's operations in Ayabe and Takeda with Tachibana Kozaburo's agricultural operations in Ibaragi. According to Kisshomaru Ueshiba's biography, in Ayabe and Takeda Morihei Ueshiba clearly accepted the old government slogan of 兵農一如 [*heinou ichinyo*: fighting and farming are one], and so all the students at the Takeda dojo worked the land in between training sessions. However Kisshomaru writes of the tensions in the Takeda dojo, where Ueshiba's *deshi*, some of whom did not subscribe to Omoto teachings at all and who were there because they followed Ueshiba, clashed with the Omoto believers, whose *aiki-budo* training might not have been as intense. This kind of problem did not arise in the Kobukan Dojo in Tokyo.

Morihei Ueshiba and the Soil
3. 4. Iwama

According to Kisshomaru, Morihei Ueshiba started buying land in Ibaragi Prefecture around 1335. As a result of the Dai Nippon Budo Senyoukai, created in 1932, there were a number of Omoto believers in Ibaragi, which would explain the choice of location, but it is not clear when he intended to move to Iwama (now part of the administrative city of Kasama) and why, and what he intended to do after he moved there. It might be that he intended to teach the local members of the Budo Senyoukai, but, clearly, there would be agricultural activity, for the land area is estimated by Kisshomaru to be 20,000 *tsubo* (about 16 acres). However, from some early photographs, it would seem that only a small area of land was worked, since the only occupants of the land in 1942 were Ueshiba and his wife, living in a small wooden building. Much of the information concerning the early years in Iwama, that is, before Saito Morihiro became a student in 1946, comes from Kisshomaru Ueshiba's other biographical work *Aikido Ichiro* [『合気道一路』: ‘One Aikido Path']. Kisshomaru gives an account of daily life in the first chapter—and ruefully admits that he did not have much aptitude for agriculture.

It is instructive to place Morihei Ueshiba's operations in Iwama in a context that is not specifically related to the martial arts and aikido. We have already looked at Tachibana Kozaburo's *Aikyoukai* and *Aikyoujuku*, both in Ibaragi Prefecture, and we will also briefly consider the works of two authors who also spent their lives in the same Ibaragi Prefecture, but whose respective experience of rural life was quite different—and different again from Morihei Ueshiba's.

Digression 2. Case Studies from Ibaragi: Takashi Nagatsuka's 'The Soil' and Junichi Saga's Memories of Silk, Straw, Wind and Waves.

Nagatsuka Takashi was almost a contemporary of Morihei Ueshiba (Nagatsuka was four years older), but although he lived in Ibaragi Prefecture, a few kilometers way from Iwama, it is very unlikely that their paths ever crossed. Nagatsuka died in 1915 and Ueshiba did not move to Iwama until over three decades later. Nagatsuka did, however, write a semi-historical novel entitled *Tsuchi* [土: *The Soil* / *The Earth*]. The novel is a sober depiction of farming life in Japan at precisely the time that Morihei Ueshiba was living in Tanabe, which was the period directly before and after his military service in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. It was serialized in the *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun* in 1910 and published in book form in 1912. I have called the novel 'semi-historical' because, unlike the novels of Shiba Ryotaro and Nakano Masao, discussed in previous columns, Nagatsuka's characters are fictitious, but are intended to portray real people, whereas the characters portrayed by Shiba and Nakamura are real people, but are engaged in activities that are strictly fictitious, though allegedly based on what actually happened. Junichi Saga's books, mentioned below, record conversations and reminiscences of real people, with their real names, who cannot be regarded as fictional at all.

The Soil records the activities of a farming family in the kind of dire poverty that was similar to that suffered by Nao Deguchi before she founded the Omoto religion. It was the kind of poverty that provided the impetus for the social and political activities of radical agrarians like Tachibana Kozaburo. *The Soil* chronicles the activities of a tenant farming family. The main characters are Kanji, Oshina, his late wife, who dies early in the novel, the daughter Otsugi, who becomes the surrogate mother to her younger brother Yokichi. Kanji is rather wayward and often gets into trouble, mainly by stealing food, and the rescuing of Kanji from his problems is the main device for presenting the larger community. Kanji farms about two acres of land scattered around the village, which he probably rents from the Master, always referred to by Kanji as East Neighbor. The novel does not specify how much land the Master has, whether owned or tenanted, or how much rent Kanji pays, but are told that, having paid it, Kanji does not have enough food to tide himself and his family over until the next harvest. He therefore has to seek paid employment in the winter months. Other members of the hamlet, such as South Neighbor, have larger acreages, and can grow other crops, such as mulberry or vegetables, which can be sold in the market. The day-to-day work of farming would be done by able-bodied family members and labor would be pooled for the major tasks like transplanting rice or maintaining the irrigation system. Nevertheless, it is clear that Kanji is at the very bottom of the social hierarchy of the hamlet. In the words of the translator, Nagatsuka is

> "*seeking to explain the 'old' agrarian Japan and its problems to the denizens of the 'new', urbanized and industrializing Japan, who were in a position to read the Asahi Shimbun and who usually gave no thought to those, still the overwhelming majority of the Japanese population, who were not full participants in the nation's transformation. ...*
>
> *"Only the more affluent local farmers can afford the new biological fertilizers; only East Neighbor regularly travels outside the community and has the literacy and savoir faire to deal with such 'alien' forces as the police; only his wife knows of, and is regularly able to take advantage of, the lower prices and higher quality consumer goods on sale in the town.*" Anne Waswo, *The Soil*, pp. viii, xii.)

Though *The Soil* became a 'fashionable' novel to read when it was first published, it was not a bestseller and my own copy was a 'printed-on-demand' volume. It presents a picture of acute poverty, but Nagatsuka's characters have been called 'stereotyped'. This is the term Ronald Dore uses in his introduction to another record of rural life in Ibaragi Prefecture, this time written by a local doctor named Dr Junichi Saga.

> "*There are, to be sure, plenty of descriptions of grinding rural poverty. This was the time—and Dr Saga's Ibaragi the place—of Nagatsuka's novel,* The Earth*, which attracted a great deal of attention when it was serialized in 1910, just about the time when the conscience of the urban intellectuals was being stirred by their uneasy awareness of the extremes of riches and poverty that their society contained. But neither in Nagatsuka's somewhat stereotyped characters, nor in the lively yet still very external pictures given us by foreign observers such as Isabella Bird ... do we get, as we get from the people who sat down to reminisce with Dr Saga, not only vivid detail of time and place, not only colorful incident and anecdote, but a sense of what it must have* felt *like to be growing up on the shores of Lake Kasumigaura three-quarters of a century ago.*" (*Memories of Silk and Straw*, p. 9.)

Saga's book was entitled 『土浦の里』 [*Tsuchiura no Sato*: 'Hometown Tsuchiura'] and was published privately. Eventually it was translated into English, with the title of *Memories of Silk and Straw*, and the translation was originally published in 1987. This was nearly thirty years ago, so Prof. Dore's dates need to be changed. The English translation proved so popular that the Japanese original, now out of print, was republished with some omissions and additions—and a new title, becoming 『田舎町の肖像』 [*Inaka-machi no Shouzou*: 'Portrait of a Country Town']. A few years later, in 1995, Junichi Saga compiled a second collection of conversations and reminiscences, with the title of 『霞ヶ浦風土記』 [*Kasumigaura Fudoki*: 'Kasumigaura Topography']. This book, also, was translated into English, with the title, *Memories of Wind and Waves*. Both books record life in rural Japan in the very early years of the

twentieth century. The two books, both illustrated with maps and sketches drawn by Saga's father, form a useful complement to Nagatsuka's volume and attempt to steer a middle course between the romantic optimism and the grinding poverty and pessimism mentioned in the first paragraph of this essay.

The two books by Saga became bestsellers, especially their translated versions, and regularly appear in the foreign 'Books on Japan' sections of local bookstores. The reminiscences recorded by Saga are wider in scope than the family activities recorded in *The Soil*, and Tsuchiura was a small town, compared with the hamlet of Kossho. Saga's position as a doctor was also different from Nagatsuka's (Nagatsuka was the son of 'wealthy' farmers and thus occupied a similar position in his family to Morihei Ueshiba in his). Saga also had a different relationship to the people he interviewed. Nevertheless, from the 88 vignettes presented in his two books, of people ranging from gangsters to geisha, from carters to charcoal burners, from boat builders to weavers—but not experts in the martial arts, one can obtain a vivid picture of life in rural Japan in the late Meiji era (1900-1926).

We can make a few comparisons between the respective pictures depicted by Nagatsuka and Saga, and Morihei Ueshiba's agrarian life in Hokkaido, Ayabe / Takeda, and Iwama. One is that Ueshiba was not born in Hokkaido or Iwama; he moved there for different reasons and his connection with the places he lived in was comparatively tenuous. He spent far more time there then he did in his native Tanabe. Secondly, even in Hokkaido Ueshiba had the leisure to devote himself to *budo* training. In Ayabe he was regarded as an Omoto member and lived the life of a believer; he opened the dojo on the recommendation of Onisaburo Deguchi and did his training and farming because of this. In a real sense the agrarian lifestyle was important, but secondary. Nevertheless, it is clear that from his experience in Hokkaido and Ayabe / Takeda, Morihei Ueshiba acquired much expertise in agricultural technique and easily took farming life in Iwama in his stride. In Iwama Ueshiba was regarded as well off, so much so that Saito mentions the possibility of him attracting hangers-on, who were after his money, but this would have been a few years after the end of the war, when the number of students increased.

Of course, Ueshiba moved to Iwama in 1942, almost twenty years after the end of the Meiji era. Things had changed since the time of Nagatsuka's novel and the scenes depicted in Saga's portraits, but the fact remains that 1942 marked the Battle of Midway and from then on Japan's economic situation became increasingly dire, in parallel with the worsening of the war situation. It is quite possible that Ueshiba moved to Iwama because he no longer wanted to remain in Tokyo: that is, the move was as much retroactive, in response to his worsening personal circumstances and relations with the Dai Nippon Butokukai, as proactive, to ensure the survival of the art, which is the impression we receive from Kisshomaru's biographies.

4. Japanese Agrarian Nationalism and Aikido
There is no direct evidence that Morihei Ueshiba subscribed to the radical theories of Inoue Nissho and Tachibana Kozaburo for which they were imprisoned, even though Iwata Ikkusai notes that in 1931 they attended meetings of the *Sakurakai* secret military society in Ueshiba's Kobukan Dojo. On the other hand, the evidence presented in this essay suggests that Ueshiba did indeed subscribe to the agrarian theories of Onisaburo Deguchi and modeled his own training environment in Ayabe and Takeda, and later in Iwama, in accordance with the lifestyle encouraged by the Omoto religion. It is also very likely that this agrarianism was certainly more than tinged with nationalism, especially in the 1930s and 1940s.

Conclusion to Part Three: Agrarianism and Aikido
We can develop a little further the conclusions about agrarian nationalism presented in the last section. The agrarian activities of Morihei Ueshiba in Iwama were continued by his student Saito Morihiro, who was born and brought up there. However, Saito, though imbued with the virtues of *Mito-kishitsu* [水戸気質], was an employee of Japanese National Railways and not a farmer, and his agrarian activities consisted of helping Morihei Ueshiba in his free time. However, his father's agrarian activities were not continued by his son Kisshomaru, who took a job in a Tokyo securities firm when the produce from Iwama was not sufficient to feed the *deshi*. (The pained reaction of Morihei Ueshiba when he found out makes interesting reading.) Certainly, Kisshomaru was born in Ayabe, but he was brought up and educated in Tokyo and was regarded by Ueshiba's own *uchideshi* as a 'city boy'. Kisshomaru's students, many of whom left Japan to teach aikido overseas, were given a hard time by the farming locals when they visited the Iwama dojo.

General Conclusion: Traditions, Received and Invented
This essay considered three related topics. The first part examined the samurai as commonly understood, and considered to what extent the samurai as a class, with a martial code, was a received tradition, extending back from the present right to the origins in the Heian period. The work of three scholars was considered, with each of them arguing for a different version of the early history, but with one scholar arguing for a more or less continuous development of the notion of status, or *mibun*, which can thus been seen as a common thread extending right through the tradition. The second part considered the related concept of *bushido* and examined the arguments of one scholar, Oleg Benesch, who presented a complex picture of the trajectory of bushido through the reigns of four Japanese emperors, and argued that as a tradition *bushido* was certainly invented. The third part considered one particular aspect of *bushido*, as applied to a general ideology of agrarianism & agrarian nationalism, and looked at the arguments of Thomas Havens and Stephen Vlastos that this, too, was certainly invented. The essay has

presented a great deal of evidence, but it is for *AikiWeb* readers to consider this evidence and come to their own conclusions.

Tradition is an important concept in the martial arts. In both *koryu* and *gendai* arts, following tradition and being able to depart from tradition are regarded as essential to the survival of the art. Tradition in general is instantiated in particular traditions and in the martial arts tradition is also tied to the associated concept of lineage. Being able to trace one's lineage as a martial artist means being part of a particular tradition and usually this being able to trace one's lineage to an origin, or important point in the tradition. A consequence is that the length and pedigree of a particular tradition is of some importance in evaluating the standing of the martial art or artist. As the student of Takeda Sokaku, Morihei Ueshiba represents both adherence to a continuing tradition and also a point of departure. He was certainly part of a tradition that, as this essay has attempted to show, is popularly regarded as going back to the Japanese samurai, and is related to the ideology of *bushido*. However, Ueshiba also created aikido, which is a 'new' martial art with a very wide reach, practiced by those who have no connection at all with either samurai or *bushido*. This wide reach profoundly influences the ways in which the history of the art and its antecedents are regarded and recorded.

It remains to consider one important question that discussion of 'invented' tradition sometimes ignores or takes for granted: having stated that a tradition is 'invented', what then? In what sense, if any, is an 'invented' tradition counterfeit or fraudulent? The case of martial arts is of interest because some critics of Hobsbawm have criticized the rather limited way in which he set up the issue to begin with, with its rigid distinctions between a tradition, custom, and cluster of rules and conventions.

At first glance, Japanese martial arts seem to be fertile ground for making the distinctions proposed by Hobsbawm and one could analyze a typical martial arts class or practice session, with the location, dress, rituals, and performances, and distinguish the traditions, invented or otherwise, from the customs and practical conventions that are also followed. However, in the case of a complex martial art like aikido, one would be hard put to decide which of the three-fold distinctions made by Hobsbawm would apply to each item, and other critics have found Hobsbawm's three-fold categories too rigidly separated and too rigidly tied to ideologies and the detection of falsehoods. We can look briefly at this issue by considering the concept of méconnaisance.

Méconnaissance

Méconnaisance is a concept used extensively by Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney in her discussion of cherry blossoms and 'nationalisms' and also by Denis Gainty in his study of the martial arts in Meiji Japan. For Ohnuki-Tierney, méconnaisance is a situation where communication is assumed to take place but does not. It is based on the assumption that a "signification—the meaning of a symbol in a given context of communication—is shared by those in communication. The English term 'communication' excludes the possibility of an absence of communication." (Ohnuki-Tierney, *op.cit.*, p. 281.) A moment's thought will show that the opposite state to communication is less easy to describe: it can be non-communication, assumed to an absence of communication, or miscommunication, which Ohnuki-Tierney calls 'talking past each other.' Ohnuki-Tierney regards méconnaisance as a common phenomenon and the reason she gives is that

> "*symbolic communication, either by words or by objectified symbols, does not force those in communication to identify to each other the particular signification he/she draws on.*" (*ibid*.)

She adds that the two most important factors that lead to méconnaisance are the aesthetics assigned to the symbol—its emotive connotations, and the presence of a vast field of meanings for the symbol.

Those symbols with only one meaning do not leave much room for méconnaisance, but most culturally important symbols have a rich field of meaning, and for Japanese cherry blossoms are a major example. It is Ohnuki-Tierney's major argument that the state was able to manipulate the symbolism of cherry blossoms because of this wide field of meanings.

> "*Méconnaisance is a crucial mechanism which facilitates the transformation of a symbol into a symbol of mass killing, without provoking people to whom the transformation of meaning is not apparent. Rather, people take the new meaning as 'natural,' or they keep reading their own meanings from the symbol. This is precisely because the field of meaning of a dominant symbol such as cherry blossoms is so rich, complex and vast.*" (Ohnuki-Tierney, *op.cit.*, p. 283.)

Terms like *budo* and *bushido* are open to the same kind of analysis that Ohnuki-Tierney undertakes with cherry blossoms and nationalism, and Gainty uses the same concept to examine the fields of meaning about Japan presented by the Dai Nippon Butokukai in its history. Gainty argues that the concept of 'invented tradition' is too narrow a framework to do justice to a concept like budo or bushido.

> "*I argue that the value of méconnaisance as an analytical tool lies in giving serious regard to all of the meanings produced and experienced under the auspices of the Butokukai. Beyond uncovering the secret suasions of state ideology, attention to méconnaisance can also yield insights into the creative agency of Japanese citizens precisely through the ambiguous but powerful realm of symbols and ideas arounf martial arts, nationalism*

and the state." (Gainty, *Martial Arts and the Body Politic in Meiji Japan*, p. 5.)

This, too, was the argument presented in different terms by my first aikido teacher, who contributed to the book produced to mark the 35th anniversary of the Shiseikan, discussed earlier. I recently gave a lecture on received and invented traditions in Japanese culture at Kogakkan University in Ise. My teacher and his colleagues readily accepted that traditions could be invented, but argued that the reasons for this needed to be examined much more closely; the substance of the tradition was what mattered to people, not whether it was invented or not. This line of argument seemed to me to be going too far in the other direction. Benesch has made a strong case that Hobsbawm's model works for *bushido* and Ohnuki-Tierney has made a strong case that her model of méconnaisance works for cherry blossoms. The discussion needs to continue.

Further Reading
Received Traditions
For all the topics discussed in this column, the classic work on invented tradition is essential reading: Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, 1983, Cambridge U P. A similar collection of essays relates more specifically to Japan: Stephen Vlastos (ed.), *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan,* 1998, U of California P. Most of the essays are relevant to this column, but the essays collected in Part Two, entitled "Village", are especially relevant. The final essay, by Dipesh Chakrabarty, raises some important questions about method and this essay should be compared with a new study of the Dai Nippon Butokukai, which also calls into question some of the assumptions lying behind the ideas of Hobsbawm and Ranger: Denis Gainty, *Martial Arts and the Body Politic in Meiji Japan*, 2013, Routledge.
Gainty makes use of insights and arguments developed by Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, who has produced several studies that are relevant to the issues discussed in this essay: Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *The Monkey as Mirror: Symbolic Transformations in Japanese History and Ritual*, 1987, Princeton U P; *Rice as Self: Japanese Identities through Time*, 1993, Princeton U P; *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History*, 2002, U of Chicago P.
An application of the theories of Hobsbawm and Ranger to the field of literature can be found in Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki (Eds.), *Inventing the Classics: Modernity, National Identity, and Japanese Literature*, 2000, Stanford U P.
The six-volume *Cambridge History of Japan* (*CHJ*) has been wittily criticized for being monumental (fixed in stone and out-of-date, much like an ancient monument) and there are few essays specifically devoted to the topics discussed in this column. Essays that are of some value include: Takeuchi Rizo, "The Rise of the Warriors," 1999, *CHJ*, Vol. 2, pp. 644-709; H Paul Varley, "Cultural Life in medieval Japan," 1990, *CHJ*, Vol. 3, pp. 447-499; Barbara Ruch, "The other side of culture in medieval Japan," 1990, *CHJ*, Vol. 3, pp. 500-543; John Whitney Hall, "Introduction," 1991, *CHJ*, Vol. 4, pp. 1-39; Furushima Toshio, "The Village and agriculture during the Edo period," 1991, *CHJ*, Vol. 4, pp. 478-518; Tetsuo Najita, "History and nature in eighteenth century Tokugawa thought," 1991, *CHJ*, Vol. 4, pp. 596-659; W G Beasley, "Meiji Political Institutions," 1989, *CHJ*, Vol.5, pp. 618-673; Kenneth B Pyle, "Meiji Conservatism," *CHJ*, Vol. 5, pp. 674-720; Anne Waswo, "The Transformation of Rural Society, 1900-1950," 1988, *CHJ*, Vol. 6, pp. 541-605; Tetsuo Najita & H D Harootunian, "Japanese Revolt against the West: political and cultural criticism in the twentieth century," 1988, *CHJ*, Vol. 6, pp. 711-774.

Warrior Culture
The list of books on ‘warrior culture' on *Amazon.com* runs to about 100 pages, but very few of these are relevant to this essay and even fewer are actually worth reading. Many books on warrior culture published in the USA deal with recent wars and conflicts fought mainly by the United States and tend to be biased in favor of or against a certain contemporary image of the ‘American Warrior' and this image also influences books on the martial arts. These works, sometimes full of discussions on how martial arts like aikido can benefit the ‘new warrior' or accounts of teaching ‘eastern' martial values to people like Marines, might well be very valuable in their own way, but are not general accounts or histories of warrior culture. Two books by Richard Strozzi-Heckler are good examples of such works: Richard Strozzi-Heckler, *In Search of the Warrior Spirit, Fourth Edition: Teaching Awareness Disciplines to the Green Berets*, 2007, Blue Snake Books; Richard Strozzi-Heckler, (Editor), *Aikido and the New Warrior*, 1995, North Atlantic Books. Shannon French's *The Code of the Warrior* is such a general study of warrior culture, but has been called "fairy tales" by one reviewer (wrongly, in my opinion): Shannon E French, *The Code of the Warrior: Exploring Warrior Values Past and Present*, 2004, Rowman & Littlefield. Her chapter on samurai and bushido is more or less orthodox, but somewhat uncritical, and in fact the first and last chapters are better than the others. The reviewer who called the work a "nice fairy tale" recommended Sandra Whitworth's book on UN peacekeeping as a "more realistic and in depth overview of a military culture," but this work is a mainly feminist critique of present UN peace-keeping operations: Sandra Whitworth, *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping: A Gendered Analysis (Critical Security Studies)*, 2007, Lynn Rienner Publications. The book deals with some very important issues, which are actually of some relevance to training in martial arts, but it is not a general account of warrior culture.

Samurai
With respect to samurai, there is much material available in English that is of very dubious quality. The works of serious scholars like William Wayne Farris, J Cameron Hurst III, Thomas Conlan, Karl Friday, and Eiko Ikegami are indispensable and those who plan to do some further study could do worse than look at the bibliographies in the works of these authors and go on from there. A collection of essays edited by Jeffrey P Mass contains a number of important

items: Thomas Conlan, "Largesse and the Limits of Loyalty in the Fourteenth Century"; Paul Varley, "Cultural Life of the Warrior Elite in the Fourteenth Century"; G Cameron Hurst III, "The Warrior as Ideal for a New Age", all in Jeffrey P Mass (Ed.), *The Origins of Japan's Medieval World: Courtiers, Clerics, Warriors, and Peasants in the Fourteenth Century*, 1997, Stanford U P. Jeffrey Mass has written or edited a number of works on the Kamakura *bakufu*: Written: *The Development of Kamakura Rule 1180-1250*, 1979, Stanford U P; *Lordship and Inheritance in Early Medieval Japan: A Study of the Kamakura Soryo System*, 1989; Edited: *Court and Bakufu in Japan: Essays in Kamakura History*, 1982, 1995, Stanford U P; Edited with William P Hauser: *The Bakufu in Japanese History*, 1985, Stanford U P.
The works of the 'serious' scholars mentioned above include: Karl F Friday, *Hired Swords: The Rise of Private Warrior Power in Early Japan*, 1992, Stanford U P; Paul Varley, *Warriors of Japan, as Portrayed in the War Tales*, 1994, Hawaii U P; William Wayne Farris, *Heavenly Warriors: The Evolution of Japan's Military, 500-1300*, paperback edition, 1995, Harvard U P; Eiko Ikegami, *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the Making of Modern Japan*, 1995, Harvard U P; J Cameron Hurst III, *Armed Martial Arts of Japan: Swordsmanship and Archery*, 1998, Yale U P; Thomas Donald Conlan, *State of War: The Violent Order of Fourteenth-Century Japan*, 2003, Center for Japanese Studies, U of Michigan; Karl F Friday, *Samurai, Warfare and the State in Early Medieval Japan*, 2004, Routledge; *The First Samurai: The Life and Legend of the Warrior Rebel Taira Masakado*, 2008. For those with access to all these works, they are best read in chronological order, as cited above.
Karl Friday also has an important paper published in a collection on *budo*: "Off the Warpath: Military Science & *Budo* in the Evolution of *Ryuha Bugei*," Alexander Bennett (ed.), *Budo Perspectives*, 2005, Kendo World Publications, pp. 249-265.
Karl Friday is also the editor of a new collection containing several essays on the samurai: Karl F Friday (Ed.), *Japan Emerging: Premodern History to 1850*, 2012, Westview Press; John Wiley; "The Dawn of the Samurai," pp. 178-188; David Eason, "Warriors, Warlords, and Domains," pp. 233-243; Thomas Conlan, "Medieval Warfare," pp. 244-253; Dennis Gainty, "The New Warriors: Samurai in Early Modern Japan," pp. 344-355.
Details of the work by Ishi Shiro discussed by Karl Friday: 石井紫郎, 『日本人の国家生活　日本国制史研究II』, 1986, 東京大学出版会.
Representative works by Robert L O'Connell include: *Of Arms and Men: A History of War, Weapons and Aggression*, 1989, Oxford U P; *Ride of the Second Horseman: The Birth and Death of War*, 1995, Oxford U P.
Issues of samurai status and class are discussed in a seminal article: Douglas R Howland, "Samurai Status, Class and Bureaucracy: A Historiographical Essay," 2001, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 60, pp. 353-380. Another seminal work was written much earlier than Howland's paper, but had the effect of defining the parameters of the debate by later historians: John W Dower (Ed.), *Origins of the Modern Japanese State: Selected Writings of E H Norman*, 1975, Pantheon.
A study by Maurice Keen of the supposed western counterparts of samurai offers a useful comparison with the latter: Maurice Keen, *Chivalry*, 2005, Yale U P. One can compare Keen's study with the complex work by Werner Jaeger on the evolution of the Greek warrior ethos: Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, 1944, Oxford U P.
Archetypal samurai figure prominently in a classic work on Japanese culture that needs to be read with some caution: Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan*, 1975, Tuttle. There is also a selection of texts about 'classical' samurai: William Scott Wilson (trad.), *The Ideals of the Samurai: Writings of the Japanese Warriors*, 1982, Ohara.
Mark Ravina, *The Last Samurai: The Life and Battles of Saigo Takamori*, 2004, Wiley. There is also an article by Ravina arguing that Saigo never committed suicide by *seppuku*. Journal of Asian Studies,
Romulus Hillsborough has produced much elegantly written historical fact and fiction concerning the samurai: *Ryoma: Life of a Renaissance Samurai*, 1999, Ridgeback; *Shinsengumi: The Shogun's Last Samurai Corps*, 2005, Tuttle; *Samurai Tales: Courage, Fidelity, and Revenge in the Final Years of the Shogun*, 2010, Tuttle; *Samurai Revolution: The Dawn of Modern Japan seen Through the Eyes of the Shogun's Last Samurai*, 2014, Tuttle.
Hiroaki Sato has collected various items on the samurai: Sato Hiroaki, *Legends of the Samurai*, 1995, 2012, Duckworth.
Constantine Nomikos Vaporis has made a sharply focused academic study of an important feature of Tokugawa Japan: *Tour of Duty: Samurai, Military Service in Edo, and the Culture of Early Modern Japan*, 2008, Hawai'i U P.

Chuushingura
The original version of the puppet play has been translated into English: Takeda Izumo, Miyoshi Shouraku, Namiki Senryu, *Chushingura (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers)*, Translated by Donald Keene, 1971, Columbia U P. Like works on the samurai, there is much material available in English on this subject that is of very dubious quality. The classic romantic account is of the Ako Incident is by A B Mitford: "The Forty-Seven Ronins," in *Tales of Old Japan*, 1871, 1966, Tuttle, pp.15-41. Mitford is very hard on Lord Kira and Stephen Turnbull makes an attempt to rehabilitate him that is not entirely successful. He explores the issues in a short book published in a series about famous battles: Stephen Turnbull, *The Revenge of the 47 Ronin: Edo 1703*, 2011, Osprey. A selection of views about the Ako Incident can be found in Wm Theodore de Bary, Carol Gluck, Arthur E Tiedmann (Eds.), *Sources of Japanese Tradition, Second Edition, Volume Two*, 2005, pp. 437-480. Another accessible essay is Henry D Smith II, "The Trouble with Terasaka," 2004, *The Japan Review*, Vol. 16, pp. 3-65. Some of the 'serious' scholars mentioned above have also discussed the issue.

Bushido

A fundamental text here is a new study by Oleg Benesch: Oleg Benesch, *Inventing the Way of the Samurai: Nationalism, Internationalism, and Bushido in Modern Japan*, 2014, Oxford U P.
Karl Friday has an essay on the subject: Karl F Friday, "Bushido or Bull? A medieval Historian's Perspective on the Imperial Army and the Japanese Warrior Tradition," 1994, Joseph Svinth (Ed.), *Electronic Journals of Martial Arts and Sciences* (EJMAS): Accessed at: http://rauschreading09.pbworks.com/f...%2Barticle.pdf
An accessible Japanese text of all 11 books of the *Hagakure* can be found in Iwanami's *Nihon Shisou Taikei* series, which also includes a volume of Yamaga Sokou's writings: 齋木一馬, 岡山泰四, 相良亨, 『三河物語　葉隠』, 1974, 「日本思想体系26」, pp. 213-579; 田原嗣郎, 守本順一郎, 『山鹿素行』, 「日本思想体系 32」, 1970, 岩波書店.
The latest English translation is by Alexander Bennett: Yamamoto Tsunetomo, *Hagakure: The Secret Wisdom of the Samurai*, 2014, Tuttle). Bennett's introduction is required reading. This edition is billed as 'the first complete translation' of the work, but this is not true and Bennett admits this on Page 33. Bennett has translated the parts claimed to have been dictated by Tsunetomo (Books 1 and 2), but has added 'selected vignettes' from the remaining nine books that are thought to have been collated by his *deshi*, Tsuramoto Tashiro. They appear as Book 3 in Bennett's translation.
There is a *manga* versions of the *Hagakure*, where all the 'myths' are depicted in graphic detail: *Hagakure: The code of the Samurai*, adapted by Sean Michael Wilson, Illustrated by Chie Kutsuwada, Based on the translation by William Scott Wilson, 2010, Kodansha International.
A relevant essay by Oleg Benesch can be found in a large collection of writings on Japanese philosophy: Oleg Benesch, "Samurai Thought," James W Heisig, Thomas P Kasulis, John C Maraldo (Eds.), *Japanese Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, 2011, U of 'Hawai'i P, pp. 1103-1112.
There are many editions of Nitobe's *Bushido: The Soul of Japan*. There are also a number of books in English on Nitobe that were consulted for this essay: Sukeo Kitasawa, *The Life of Dr. Nitobe*, 1953, Hokuseido Press; John F Howes, Ed., *Nitobe Inazo: Japan's Bridge Across the Pacific*, 1995, Westview Press. The most recent biography of Nitobe has appeared in Japanese: 草原克彦, 『新渡戸稲造 1862 -- 1933 』, 2012, 藤原書店.
Yamaoka Tesshu was another 'warrior' living at the end of the Tokugawa Era. The standard biography in English is by John Stevens, but this has been threatened—displaced, even—by a more critical study by Anatoliy Anshin: John Stevens, *The Sword of No-Sword: Life of the Master Warrior Tesshu*, 1884, Shambala; Anatoliy Anshin, *The Truth of the Ancient Ways: A Critical Biography of the Swordsman Yamaoka Tesshu*, 2012, Kodenkan Institute.
Some discussion of *bushido* can be found in a classic work: E J Harrison, *The Fighting Spirit of Japan*, 1955, W Foulsham.
Diametrically opposed views of modern *bushido* can also be found in the following works: Saburo Sakai, *Samurai!* 1957, 1991, Naval Institute Press; Shohei Ooka, *Taken Captive: A Japanese POW's Story*, 1952, 1996, John Wiley. The Japanese writer Fujiwara Ryozo has recently published a collection of essays on *bushido*: 藤原稜三, 『史談　武士道』, 2013, 史学研究会.

Agrarianism
An important general study of Japanese agrarianism was made by Thomas Havens: Thomas R H Havens, *Farm and Nation in Modern Japan: Agrarian Nationalism: 1870 -- 1940*, 1974, Princeton U P.
The works of Inoue Isshou and Tachibana Kozaburo, both of whom are mentioned by Ikkusai Iwata as attending the meetings of the *Sakurakai* that took place in Morihei Ueshiba's Kobukan Dojo, are under the same kind of taboo here in Japan as the works of Hozumi, Uesugi and Kakei, discussed in Column 22.
Though not dealing directly with the issues raised in the column, a more philosophic study of nationalism in the Meiji Restoration is of some relevance: George M Wilson, *Patriots and Redeemers in Japan: Motives in the Meiji Restoration*, 1992, U of Chicago P.
There is an English translation of Takashi Nagatsuka's work on Japanese farm life in the Meiji period. The Japanese original is *Tsuchi*: 長塚節, 『土』, 1910, 新潮社. The English translation is *The Soil: A Portrait of Rural Life in Japan*, translated by Anne Waswo, 1989, 1993, U of California P. Waswo has conducted much research on rural farming communities and her introduction is necessary reading. There are also several studies (unfortunately, published only in in Japanese): 紅野敏郎 (ed.), 『長塚節「土」を読む』, 1983, 青英舎; 山形洋一, 『長塚節「土」の世界』, 2010, 未知谷. These include a curious study of Nagatsuka's novel as *kotodama*: 山形洋一, 『「土」の言霊　歌人節のオノマトペ』, 2012, 未知谷.
Junichi Saga's books are also available in Japanese and English. The original publication, privately published and now unavailable, was 『土浦の里』 [*Tsuchiura no Sato*] and this was translated into English as, *Memories of Silk and Straw: A Self-Portrait of Small-Town Japan*, 1987, Kodansha International. Subsequently, the Japanese original was republished with changes and a new title: 佐賀純一, 『田舎町の肖像』, 1993, 図書出版社. This book was followed by 『霞ヶ浦風土記』, 1995, 常陽出版社, which was translated as, *Memories of Wind and Waves: A Self-Portrait of Lakeside Japan*, 2002, Kodansha International. The Japanese editions contain many more illustrations, drawn by Saga's father, than the English editions.
The collection of essays edited by Karl Friday, mentioned earlier, contains an essay on agrarian issues: Anne Walthall, "Peace Dividend: Agrarian Developments in Tokugawa Japan," Karl Friday, *op.cit.*, pp. 391-401.
Some scholars have pointed to the uncomfortable connection between agrarianism and racism, with other unfortunate consequences: Robert Gellately and Ben Kierman (eds.), *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective*, 2003, Cambridge U P; Ben Kiernan, *Blood and Soil: A World History of Genocide and Extermination from Sparta to Darfur*, 2007, Yale U P. See especially Gavan McCormack's essay on definitions in the volume edited by Gellately and Kiernan (pp. 265 -- 286) and Chapter 12 in the Kiernan

volume (pp. 455 -- 485), where killing and agrarianism in Japan are more strongly emphasized. Agrarian nationalism is not discussed by McCormack.

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